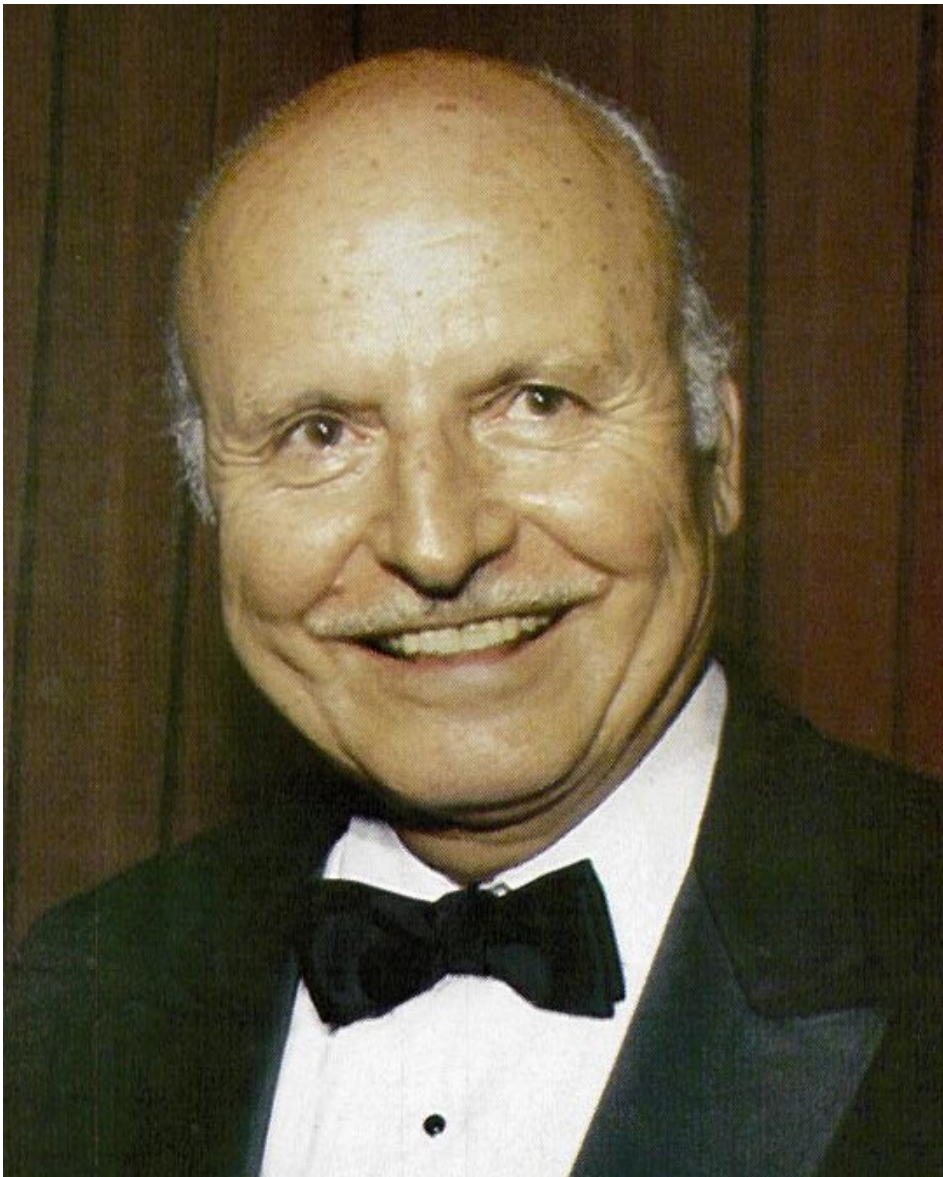


# AMIAA NEWS

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The Rev. Jirair Sogomian  
Editor



**In Memoriam**  
**AMAA Past President**  
**George Philibosian**  
**1915-2001**

## *Agents of the Abundant Life!*

**Jirair M. Sogomian**

*Have you ever wondered how companies and organizations function, thrive and survive? Have you ever wondered how, while boards, committees, chapters and auxiliaries meet periodically for strategic meetings and seasonally undertake fund-raising or social activities, the organization functions and performs daily? One would suppose that the majority of them do so driven by the profit or success motive. Financial gain or fame are strong enough motivations to sustain the involvement of thousands who otherwise would have been non-involved or neutral spectators. When the chips are down and specific concrete goals are not met, the CEO may become a favorite scape goat and investors or members drop out, not wanting to be associated with a sinking ship!*

**B**ut what about non-profit organizations like the Armenian Missionary Association of America or Canada? In the absence of the profit drive, what is the power or the incentive that drives these organizations to exist, function, serve and survive? What motivates individuals to be part of such an organization? To remain faithful in rain or sunshine, to give and not to count the cost, to sacrifice and not to heed the wounds? Perhaps we may find the answer to these questions in two AMAA stalwarts in whose memory the last two issues of the AMAA Newsletters have been dedicated.

H. Philip Hovnanian and George Philibosian, two past presidents and two individuals whose lives have been totally imbued and immersed with the mission and ministry of the AMAA, may provide us the answer as well as the inspiration of what it takes to be in mission! Two highly accomplished gentlemen in their respective fields, and yet two highly dedicated servants of the AMAA (perhaps one because of the other), who through the last several decades have served in the most prestigious yet most demanding post of president of the Association. But one would rarely find a president of the Association who has not also served in a variety of boards and committees over a stretched period of time, leaving us a legacy that is truly admirable and certainly worthy of emulation.

Through the twenty centuries of our Christian faith, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ has accomplished her mission in different cultures, geographical locations and contexts, driven by different mission paradigms and motivated by a divine passion with unequal power

of sustenance. From our Lord's statement in John 10:10, "*I came that they may have life and have it abundantly,*" to his Great Commission to immediate and future disciples to "*Go ... and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you,*" to Paul's haunting statements, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith,*" and "*Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel,*" the disciples of Jesus have been motivated to share their faith in word and deed, in verbal witness and acts of love and compassion, and in the process catch the spirit of their Lord and the existential impact of his words, "***I came that you may have life and have it abundantly.***"

Many are those, including Christians, whose motivation in loving, giving and sharing is tainted with the profit motive, and whose understanding of mission and ministry is mercenary and self-oriented. Such people will have difficulty in experiencing the truth of Jesus' words in their own lives, in tasting the abundant, joyful and peaceful life. But those whose giving is not conditioned by expectations of receiving, who share their lives with such a refreshing abandon that the "cost factor" is not taken into consideration, and who sacrifice their time, talents and treasure unaware of the consequences, are bound to leave a legacy that becomes a benediction to many. May their memory be blessed for ages to come, and may God increase their tribe to the sole glory of His Holy name! □

## GEORGE PHILIBOSIAN

(BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH)

George Philibosian was born in Konya, Turkey on November 15, 1915. His family was able to survive the massacres of Armenians in Turkey and emigrated to Rumania in 1921. There George completed high school and college and later joined the family textile business.

When WWII came, George became a commissioned officer in the Rumanian cavalry. Following the demobilization and the loss of his first wife, George decided to emigrate to the United States with his 3-year-old son Emil when the threat of communism loomed. He managed to get to Switzerland in 1947 and, eventually, was able to make it to the U.S. on January 8, 1948.

He arrived in the United States with few resources, but boundless hope and confidence. Despite hardships, he took a cross-country trip and observed the resources of his new country. Returning to New York, he attended Columbia University.

In 1951 he was married to Alice Babikian. Over the years the Philibosian family grew with the addition of three sons, Alan, Charles and Stephen and a daughter Anita.

With time and tireless effort, George's real estate business, Monarch Realty Corp., expanded and he became a successful and well-respected businessman in the industry.

More significantly, George became a contributor and leader in his local community. He served on various boards and assumed positions of leadership of the Boy Scouts of America, the American Red Cross, Englewood Hospital Board of Trustees, the John Harms Theatre, and the Englewood Rotary. He was granted highest honors by many groups, particularly the Boy Scouts and the American Red Cross. Recently, the American Red Cross honored him at a banquet in New York for his fund raising efforts in the restoration of the Red Cross Service Center in Englewood, a noted landmark.

George loved his Armenian community. There too he served in leadership positions in many of these organizations, which included the Armenian General Benevolent Union, the Armenian Day School of New Jersey, the Knights of Vartan, the Armenian National Sanatorium in Lebanon



*George Philibosian with his wife Alice at the AMAA's 69th Annual Meeting Banquet in his honor - October 22, 1988, Paramus, NJ.*

and the Armenian Assembly.

Closest to his heart were the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ, the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA). George had joined the Armenian Presbyterian Church in 1961 and became a pillar of its existence. Over the years he served in nearly every capacity, as Elder, Trustee, Chairman of the Building Committee that oversaw relocation of the church from West New York to Paramus, as well as singing in the church choir. He worked with the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America and served as Moderator of the Union, the only layman ever to hold that position. The AMAA always held a special place in his heart. He was on numerous boards and served as Chairman of the Budget Finance Committee, the Endowment Fund Committee, as Treasurer, and twice as President of AMAA (1971 to 1974 and 1980 to 1982). He attended his last AMAA Board Meeting on June 2 this year.

A successful businessman, a beloved leader within the Armenian and American communities, a devoted husband and father, George Philibosian passed away on July 10, 2001. He leaves behind his devoted wife of nearly 50 years, his beloved Alice, his son Emil, son Alan and wife Donna, son Charles and wife Dawn, son Stephen, daughter Anita and husband Serge and eight grandchildren.□

## In Memoriam: George Philibosian

Andrew Torigian\*

I think we all were stunned by George's death. It was only a month and a half ago that George was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. We who were close to George knew him as a fun-loving, dedicated, and service-oriented person. You might say, his credo was to have a meaningful life, to always better oneself, and to become involved with your church and your community. And indeed he was involved to the fullest. If I were to mention all the organizations that he donated his time, talents and services to, I would need at least another half hour.

At the AMAA, for example, whenever there was a need, George was there. You've heard the expression, "Let George do it". I think this saying was very appropriate for our George. You see not only was George twice the President of the AMAA, he also was the Chairman of our Investment Committee which grew dramatically under his guidance. He served as the AMAA Treasurer and Chairman of the Budget Finance Committee. He was Chairman of our Building Construction Committee which enabled the AMAA to move to its new location three years ago. I can't think of an important committee that George didn't chair. He certainly was a tremendous asset to the AMAA, and we shall deeply miss him and his beautiful smiling face.

A typical week just before he was taken ill, George, Ed Janjigian and myself went to see the Vehapar Karekin the Second on Monday, Memorial Day. On Wednesday, we had a Near East Committee meeting. On Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, we had the AMAA Executive Board Meeting. George took part in each of these. Then on the following Monday, we had the Armenian American Medical Philanthropic Fund meeting which George chaired in his office. This man was unstoppable in his exuberance and willing-

\* AMAA President Andrew Torigian's message delivered on July 14, 2001, during the Memorial Service for George Philibosian.

ness to always help in any way he could. For him, the magic words were mission and community service.

I personally cherish the friendship and extreme closeness I had with George over the last 25 years. In fact, George was instrumental in getting me involved with the AMAA.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention that his wife, Alice, was always by his side encouraging and supporting him.

Alice, to you and your lovely family, I realize that there is not much one can say to lessen your grief. Mere words alone sound meaningless in the face

of death and suffering. Yet our faith assures us that no matter how meaningless life may seem to be or how terrible death is, still there is hope for us human beings. When our spirits are down and when our hearts are full of pain, the only help we can have is the inner courage and the inner peace of spirit that stems from our trust and hope in our Lord Jesus who said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me though he die, yet shall he live."

The Good News and the comfort from these words of our Lord make all the difference. We are assured that death is no more



**George Philibosian, the chairman of the AMAA's Relocation Committee, addressing the guests at the dedication of the new AMAA headquarters in Paramus, NJ - October 17, 1998 (above). George Philibosian at the dedication of the previous AMAA headquarters, unveiling the plaque acknowledging the generosity of Mr. Stephen and Miss Ruth Philibosian who underwrote the total cost of the construction - March 25, 1971.**

the end of everything. Rather, it is the threshold of eternity. It is a momentary phase in our transition from this life to life eternal. And this fact gives meaning even to death.

To the deceased, death means that they are now free from life's hurts, and pain. They now dwell with God, who "shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any pain."

To the deceased, death also means going home and reuniting with beloved ones called

*(continued on the following page)*

## Mind Your Neighbor - Tribute to a Colleague and Friend

**Giragos H. Chopourian\***

"Then one of the lawyers, who had been listening to these discussions and had noted how well he answered, came forward and asked him, 'Which commandment is first of all?' Jesus answered, 'The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord your God is the only Lord; love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as well.' **There is no other commandment greater than these.**" The lawyer said to him, 'Well said, master. You are right in saying that God is one and beside him there is no other. And to love him with all your heart, all your understanding, and all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself—that is far more than any burnt offering or sacrifices.' When Jesus saw how sensibly he answered, he said to him, 'You are not far from the Kingdom of God.'" (Mark 2:28-34)

As I advance in age, I find myself wrestling to find the heart and core of what being a Christian is. Is it enough to say "I am in Christ; or I am redeemed, or my soul is saved and I shall have a place on the left hand side of God?" Such statements have turned to be unconvincing. One feels there is a selfish connotation of saving oneself, a fear of rejection by God. Such utterances are viewed to be unconvincing. In fact they induce theological arguments, lead to arguments, fighting, division. There was a time in the Middle Ages, when theologians argued as to how many angels can stand at the tip of a needle. We have overcome that notion, but unfortunately, today we find a thousand other heavenly presentations. Consequently, we do not get to the core of the heart of issues on hand.

\* The AMAA's Executive Director Emeritus, Rev. Dr. Giragos H. Chopourian's Tribute to George Philibosian, delivered on June 14, 2001, during the Memorial Service.

I am reminded of the way my father used to pick a watermelon in his watermelon patch, split it with a rock, and pick the seedless heart of the fruit to quench his thirst. That is touching the core!

My co-worker and friend, George, had the skill of going to the heart of issues. For some twenty years I observed his calm and cool style, when he would get to the core of problems, and *voila*, a consensus would be reached. I discovered this kind of operation was not solely in finance or administrative matters. It was the same in his Christian journey. He struck at the core of what a Christian journey he made.

Recollect the scripture I read. Jesus reached out way back to the Old Testament and brought to focus the New Age, the Kingdom of God. What was that focus? To love God with all you've got and to love your neighbor as oneself. **And Jesus said, there**

*(Continued from page 4)*

there earlier. And the deceased Christians will see Jesus face-to-face and will live in his eternal love.

Death, pain and suffering also bring us into a closer fellowship with one another and that in the final analysis, people are much more important than possessions, material wealth and other worldly vanities. We need each other; and more importantly, we need God. And this awareness makes us more willing to help others who are in need.

This service of worship for George can be a blessed occasion to us if we submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit; accept the teachings of the Word of God; place our trust and hope in our Lord, Jesus Christ; and determine to live righteously in this present world.

Let us pray that even this hour of pain and sorrow will be turned into an occasion for all of us to come closer to God and closer to one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen. □

**is no other commandment greater than these.** And remember it is our Lord saying it!

George was very philosophical. He had no problem believing in and loving God. But more important than that, he believed, as my discussions with him demonstrated, that no one is entitled to call himself a Christian if he failed to love his neighbor also. Now that spirit brought out in him **COMPASSION**, which ruled his life. And the AMAA, along with many other charitable organizations, became the medium of his caring and loving.

He also taught me an important lesson: to show no "anger" when justified proposals for crying needs were abrogated or killed by smooth-talking leaders. In all the quarter century that I came to know him I can't recall hearing one angry word. He must have done them in secret!

There you have it: He loved God with all his heart and his neighbor as himself. I cannot make a greater testimony, for that is touching the core of Christian living. Any one who can't so act cannot call himself a Christian. □

**In Loving Memory of  
GEORGE PHILIBOSIAN  
July 10, 2001**

### After Glow

I'd like the memory of me to be  
a happy one.  
I'd like to leave an afterglow of  
smiles when day is done.  
I'd like to leave an echo whispering  
softly down the ways,  
Of happy times and laughing times  
and bright and sunny days.  
I'd like the tears of those who  
grieve, to dry before the sun  
Of happy memories that I leave  
behind when day is done.

*(submitted by Alice Philibosian)*

## Requiem

Gen. 2: 1-3; Heb. 4: 9-11; Rev. 14:13

Peter Doghramji\*

There are times when we enjoy and want to hear each other's voices. Among them was the sweet, mellow voice of George Philibosian. Today that voice is silent, never to be heard again. As we gather to remember George in this memorial service, we do not want to hear any other voice, but that great voice from heaven which an elderly exile heard two thousand years ago. This is what the voice said: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth." Then he heard an echo of that voice, coming from the Spirit and confirming it. "Blessed indeed!"

Sometimes we describe certain deaths as "blessings in disguise," when death relieves a person of one's pain and suffering. Nevertheless, death is a curse and not a blessing, despite its openness or disguise. But the gospel of Jesus Christ pronounces that benediction, that special blessing both upon those who mourn and those who die. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." "Blessed are those who die **in the Lord**" not any death, but a death that cannot separate the believer from the Lord. Death is separation. St. Paul asks in one of the most eloquent passages of the Bible, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35). "For I am sure," continues the Apostle, "that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come ... nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Paul, like all the saints, died in the Lord. So did our brother George. Nothing could separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, that great voice from heaven, heard centuries ago by the author of the last Book of the Bible, is heard again today by all those who have ears to hear what the Spirit says.

\* Rev. Dr. Peter Doghramji is the minister of the Armenian Evangelical Church of New York. This message was delivered on July 14, 2001, during the Memorial Service for George Philibosian.



*George Philibosian with His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, at the AMAA Headquarters in Paramus, NJ (October 6, 1997).*

That is not all! The Spirit not only echoes the beatitude of those who die in the Lord, but describes the state or condition they are in, as that of **rest**. The Latin word for rest is **requiem**. Some churches have special services to celebrate this state of rest. It is often misunderstood or misused, as if through such services we help the "restless" souls of the departed to settle down and rest. We call the location their "final resting place." In fact, we place a marker on their graves and inscribe the words, "Here rests" a beloved soul. "Asd hankchi," we say in Armenian. But the rest that the Spirit speaks of is not our fabrication; nor is it a **requiem** to put the souls of our departed to rest. Listen to the voice of the Spirit: "That they may rest from their labors, for their works follow them." This is that **Sabbath rest** of God, which the author of Hebrews reiterates.

"So then," he writes, "there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God; for whoever enters **God's rest** also ceases from his labors as God did from his."

God created the Universe. God made heaven and earth and all that is therein.

Then God rested on the seventh day. Was God too tired to go on? All God did was to utter a few words, "let there be," and it was. This rest, God's Sabbath, was a cessation of labor for a very specific purpose – God wanted to celebrate the Universe God created. God looked back at all that was created and enjoyed them. God called them good! And God invited Adam and Eve to celebrate the works thus accomplished together with God.

God stopped working – so did George. God stopped to rest, so did George. God's deeds followed, as God looked back with joy at everything God had made; so does George's. God entered into the divine Sabbath rest; so did George. God did not die; God is alive. So is George!

That is why this great voice from heaven is heard by all of us, by George's family and loved ones, by his friends, and all who continue to live in the Lord. "Blessed are the dead, including George, who died in the Lord. They have rested from their labors. They have entered into God's eternal rest and celebrate with God all that they have accomplished on earth! Amen! □

## George Philibosian: As I remember

**John Cherkezian\***

I did not expect to be asked to speak today about our dear friend and brother George Philibosian. So I treasure the opportunity to speak about someone whom we have respected, loved and admired. Someone who is a hero to me and I expect to many of you.

In college, a professor cautioned us never to write a paper on too great a topic. He said "Rather than writing about the Civil War, select some small incident in the war. Otherwise, you will never do justice to your topic." To speak about George Philibosian in five or ten minutes is like trying to write the history of the world in 100 words or less. How and why God packed so many special qualities into one person is remarkable.

But even with all the time in the world, without any false modesty, who am I to speak to the family about what a good man he was? They know it far better than I. Each of us could see his devotion to them. Emil, Alan, Chipper, Stephen and Anita, and their spouses and children knew his love in ways that we could never know. Who am I to assure Alice what a great husband she had? She knew that far better than anyone. Only yesterday she told me she had been looking at some old photos of her and George, and she said how she could see herself falling in love with him more and more each year.

To the members of the Armenian Presbyterian Church, most of you know him as well if not better than I. You too have been with him while he so faithfully served this church. You have sat in this sanctuary singing hymns, praying and worshipping together. You have spoken and laughed with him. The same is true of the members of AMAA and our ministers of the AEUNA. You know the character and quality of George Philibosian. And to the many close personal friends, members of other Armenian organizations and charity organizations, which he served. So I do not pretend to offer a special insight, but just some of my experiences, my feel-

\* John Cherkezian is an AMAA Board member. This message was delivered on July 14, 2001, during the Memorial Service for George Philibosian.

ings and emotions.

I first met George Philibosian and his wife Alice just before I graduated college 30 years ago. Shortly thereafter, my father died, and George took my mother aside and told her that if she ever needed

any help or advice never to hesitate to contact him. One day when I faced one of those seemingly earth-shaking career decisions, she suggested that I ask George for his advice. I approached him at church. I expected a five-minute session during coffee hour. Instead I was invited to his home in Fort Lee that afternoon. When I arrived, he told Alice and the kids to leave us alone, he shut off the soccer game on TV (a major sacrifice that I was not aware of at the time), and we went to the basement and spoke for well over an hour. Can I repeat exactly what he said? Not really. What I remember far more was the fact that he was willing to make time for me and to listen to me. From that day, I began to learn about the quality of this very special man.

In 1950 the American author William Faulkner was given the Noble Prize for Literature. It was a period of gloom and great uncertainty. The cold war. The threat of the hydrogen bomb. The future of mankind was in question. Could he survive? In his acceptance speech, Faulkner had a different view. He said, "I believe that man will not merely endure; he will prevail. He is immortal **because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance.**"

That was the soul and spirit of George Philibosian. He epitomized that spirit of compassion, sacrifice and endurance. That was the spirit that brought him to this country, that allowed him to build a life here and develop into the person he became. He did not seek to merely endure and to just get by. He had a desire to make something better of



*George Philibosian presiding over the 63rd Annual Meeting of the AMAA held at the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus, NJ - Oct. 17, 1982.*

his life and the life of those around him and to improve this world.

That in of itself is noble. That is great. But what made George so extra special that it was done with joy – Christian joy - and modesty of Christian servitude.

Many people perform acts of compassion. But often it is done with the expectation of praise or pats on the back. Many people sacrifice and endure for others. But often it is done with little or no joy, and sometimes with complaint and regret. That was not part of George's character. He was far above that. Everything he did became gilded with gold and shone much more beautifully because of that joy he had in serving. And when he served, he did it whole heartedly and exceptionally well.

Some things I remember:

**His eyes and his smile.** He had such a glow about him. His eyes just sparkled. Even when he was not speaking, his eyes were talking to you. I would sit across from him at some meetings and you could see from his eyes what was stirring inside him.

**His common sense.** He was a most practical man. Sometimes in meetings, discussions would begin to drift and George would raise his hand and remind everyone to get back to the question and approach it in a clear and simple way. He did not get confused by some minor issues or the details along the way.

**His moments of philosophy.** There were times you could find George discoursing on

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## "You Will Certainly Be Remembered Dad"

Serge Buchakjian\*

I was asked to do three things: Be brief, be clear, be seated. I will try my best.

There aren't many greater honors that can be bestowed upon a person than being requested to provide a summation and reflection of another person's life. I stand before you today, the representative of a family in grief, but yet a family that refuses to mourn... only wanting to celebrate life. It is dad's final gift to all of us, that we have so much to be happy about today.

It's been said that all that we have, in the end, are the people we touched. Dad certainly had a way of doing that. In one way or another...I can not think of anyone here today that has not been touched with at least a hug, a kiss, or a smile by George. Male or female, young or old did not matter. His hug would start from across the room...the man could hug you through the phone...and you would know that he meant it genuinely.

There is nothing I can say that could capture his strength and tenderness, the power

\* *Serge Buchakjian is the son in law of George Philibosian.*

of his faith, the size of his heart, and the overwhelming depth of his love for his family. Dad understood himself and his world by a set of simple, very traditional values. The center of his universe was his family. As a husband and father, his role was very simple, and he judged his own success or failure by a single measure: Could he provide for Alice and the kids?

We was a man of both words and action. He truly believed in the value, the dignity and sanctity of hard work... Everything he did, he did with a loving attention to detail born of conviction that work was a holy thing. This was the single, best way he could demonstrate his love for his wife and children. And it was through this example, more even than his words, that he raised his children to understand what family really meant to him.

We will certainly miss dad's charm, intelligence, compassion, quick wit, loving spirit and sense of humor. His humor, what can we say about his almost British humor... Even as he was laying there with I.V.'s in his arm at Columbia Hospital only five days

ago, his doctor was examining him, trying to determine if he were in pain... "Do you feel pain here George?" As the doctor was palpating him... George growls "No"... "How about here?" ... Again negative... "Here?" ... No answer ... A bit frustrated, the doctor asked, "Where is your pain George?" George slowly turned over and with a cracked smile pointed at Alice...

George, you have truly been a good father, an honorable man. Our lives have been enriched because of your presence. You have instilled in so many of us a desire to be champions, to never give up. And as you've said ... and I quote: "And as we bow our heads in deep gratitude to our Creator for the amazing world around us, and try to develop a sense of purpose and determination in leaving our mark on the betterment of our family, our community and the world beyond, then will our passage become one of worthy remembrance."

You will certainly be remembered Dad.

May God love you and bless you. Know that the world has been made a better place because of you.□

(Continued from page 7)

the purpose of life, some theory of philosophy. The contrast of the practical mind and the philosophical mind demonstrated the expanse of his mental energy.

**His optimism.** He always believed *and made you believe* that things could be done. Nothing was impossible. I am sure that was what enabled him to move through his life with such seemingly effortless grace.

**His reach beyond Armenian community.** I was always delighted to see how George was so involved in work outside of the Armenian community. He recognized that there was a big world out there that didn't have "ian" at the end of its name. I believe his heart was so big that it needed more than the Armenian community to survive.

**His warmth for each person regardless of who they were.** George could be greeting an elder person at one moment and the next be talking with a young teenager. He would

be speaking with some special guest of honor and then approaching an unknown visitor who was standing in the corner all alone. I believe it was because he had known what it was like to be the stranger, to be alone.

**His faith.** George lived and demonstrated his faith in God and Christ through his life. He lived the second great commandment "Love your Neighbor as yourself". You can be sure that the first great commandment "Love the Lord your God with all your heart" was not far away and was the motivating force in his life.

At the last AMAA meeting on June 2, hints of George's fatigue were beginning to show. But despite that, you could see that his mind was still racing and he could not hold himself back from participating. And when one issue was being bounced around, he grabbed a pen did some quick calculations and declared how we should proceed.

To conclude, the book of Genesis tells the story of creation. How God created the world in 6 days. In days 1 and 2, there is no mention of God's reaction to his work. On the 3rd day when he created plants, the first form of life, it says God saw that it was good. On the 4th and 5th days, it says that God viewed his work and saw that it was good. But on the 6th day, when God created man, it says that God saw that it was VERY good. I think that when our Creator sits back and looks at the life and soul of our friend and brother George Philibosian, I don't think He will say it was good, or it was even VERY good. I think he will say it was VERY, VERY good. ***Because George lived his life as I believe God has intended for each of us. To live a life of love, of humble service to others, and live it joyfully.***

*Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. Amen.*□



## A Trip of a Lifetime!

### Robert Kachadourian

It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. However, words can't describe and indeed are inadequate to convey the myriad of emotions one had on this journey of journeys.

Armenia's 1700<sup>th</sup> Celebration of Christianity as its state religion can be remembered in many ways. There can be programs of state, religious ceremonies and even commercialization thereof.

Yet for eleven members of the ACC of Greater Detroit and for three hundred Armenian Evangelical pilgrims from the four corners of the world, its significance goes beyond a mere casual tour. It was a true pilgrimage!

This pilgrimage took us to our ancient homeland. Sites such as Sardarabad, Khor Virab, Etchmiadzin and all the well known tourist centers were visited. They are moments to behold and cherish as history came very much alive and relevant.

However, it is the new Armenia that gets your attention. It grasps you as you first enter this ancient land. These proud people with their hopes and aspirations immediately become part of your own ethos. How they survive, build and indeed thrive over so many obstacles amazes any visitor.

This spirit of hope is being enhanced by the Armenian Missionary Association of the America and the Armenian Evangelical World Council, under whose auspices the pilgrimage took place. From Gumri to Geghard, Sevan to Shushi and throughout the Araratian plain, the AMAA, under the able leadership of its representative Rev. René Léonian, is accomplishing great things.

This small group of dedicated individuals have built churches, schools, Christian Education Centers and restored confidence in a people who were in despair. Dental clinics, soup kitchens and child care centers are also appearing on the landscape.

Through the length and breadth of Armenia the AMAA's Executive Director Rev. Jirair Sogomian and our own pastor Rev. Dr. Tootikian, president of the Armenian Evangelical World Council, were able to see the effect of the Evangelical community's impact. It made us proud as we experienced the wonderful atmosphere of hope. This was

particularly evident in the children who represent the future of Armenia.

During this pilgrimage we also witnessed the opening of three centers: The first was the dedication of School #1 of Gumri as The Rev. Dikran Antreassian High School, a first in the history of Gumri, the second largest city in Armenia. The dedication ceremonies were highlighted by dance performances by local students and the unveiling and dedication of a plaque renaming the school after one of our well-known Musa Dagh Armenian Evangelical pastors. The other two centers were the Gumri and



*Opening ceremonies of Rev. Dikran Antreassian High School in Gumri - standing back row l. to r. Revs. Jirair Sogomian, Vahan Tootikian, René Léonian and the principal of the school (above). A group of Armenian Evangelical Pilgrims in Gumri.*

Goris Mission centers.

The height of the pilgrimage to some will be the excellent program held at the Aram Khachadourian Philharmonic Hall. There the worldwide evangelical community of about 1500 participated in a moving musical tribute to 1700 years of Christianity. It was a class act of music, speakers and a message of hope.

For me the highlight of the trip among many was the culminating program when Armenia's youth took the stage. Talented and eager with their music, songs, dance and reciting they

made many misty-eyed in the audience.

That is the real hope of Armenia! It was in the program where this nation's treasure is. It is in their children.

Yes, a picture is worth a thousand words. It is hoped that these few have given you a window's view of one observer's attempt to describe Christian Armenia.

Add it to the photo album of your mind's eye. You'll be pleasantly surprised.

May God bless our Armenia so that it may flourish. □

## AMAA 2001 Work-Mission Trip to Karabagh

Vicken Keshishian

**O**n July 5 a group of eight young people from the Cilicia church (Pasadena, CA) and three others from the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church (Havertown, PA) met at Heathrow airport and became the eleven members of the AMAA 2001 Work-Mission Team. Together, they continued their final leg to Yerevan and ultimately to Shushi in Karabagh for this year's work-mission effort.

From Pasadena: Rubina Aposhian, Albert Elmassian, George Hakopian, Krikor Hovaguimian, Mary Kegeian, Vartkes Marjik, Hripsime Moskovian and Lara Ourishian. From Havertown: Dan Kaiserian, Ed Kaiserian and Vicken Keshishian. Through the months leading up to June, each of the team members prepared themselves for the work, spiritual and mission aspects of the trip. They enjoyed widespread support from their own families and from their church family as they washed cars, held bake sales, dinners and other fund raisers.

Once they arrived, the team spent a few days touring briefly some of the historic sites of Armenia and the AMAA camp in Aghveran. Team members also enjoyed the local cuisine (especially khorovadz).

The Team piled themselves and their luggage into two vans and started for Karabagh. Twelve hours and two repaired transmissions later, they pulled into Camp Gargar in Stepanagert where they were accommodated during their stay. Fellowship thrived between campers and team members.

The first morning in Karabagh, the Team made an evaluation of the property to decide which of the many necessary jobs would be done this year. In spite of funding challenges, it was determined that the best use of the Team's talent would be to concentrate on one building, and prepare the ground floor as a large Sunday School room for over one hundred students. The Team was excited for the opportunity to make a difference for children.

Immediately, orders for material were placed; unfortunately, there was no Hardware store close by and materials had to be delivered in installments, arriving from a

number of distant places. The next challenge was that of payment: in addition to the AMAA's budgeted funds, Team members contributed their own spending money for the cost of the material. While waiting for delivery, everyone got right to work. The initial need was to level the floor—bringing stone from the outside, breaking and removing rocks from the inside because the dirt floor, in places, differed by as much as three feet. That took four days to do and had to be done by hand. An arrangement was made with the local fire truck for a supply of water to be put into a storage tank so that there would be water on hand to mix cement for the next step in preparing the floor.

Before other aspects of the room was begun, the electrical wiring was put into place. In the meantime, Vartan Marjik, the parent of one of our Team members, arrived on the scene, after making arrangements to come to Armenia two weeks earlier than planned. He brought additional donations with him to purchase the materials that would help the Team to complete the project during this year's trip. In addition, Vartan contributed skills and expertise from his extensive background in construction.

Team members mixed concrete, carried it into the building to finish the floor, then completed the floor by installing tile. They also stuccoed the walls and built a stage; painting was left to be done when the walls dried.

Even the overgrown playground was cleared of weeds and brush so that the children will be able to use the play equipment already there. A planter was installed to decorate the steps leading to the play area.

By the time the children arrive for Sunday School in September, over one hundred



wooden chairs and a podium, donated by the Armenian Martyrs' Congregation in Havertown, will have arrived and this year's Work-Mission project will be complete.

Each workday the Team members commuted nine miles from Camp Gargar to Shushi, eating breakfast and dinner in camp, providing ample opportunities to play with the young campers. Lunch was provided at the work site. Sundays were non-work days—either spent worshipping with the campers or visiting sites in Karabagh.

The work was appreciated by the local people. The Team members felt that it was a very rewarding experience seeing God's Word being taught in camp and the next part of His plan accomplished at the site in Shushi. The Team members will watch with eagerness in hopes that Shushi will become a full camp and a year-round gathering place for children to learn about God.

Personally, it was a joy and privilege to be able to work with this year's Team. They were a dedicated, hard-working, enthusiastic group who gave God glory through their words and actions. Thanks also to Dikran Youmshakian (AMAA Office Administrator), Rev. Rene Leonian (AMAA's Representative in Armenia) and Arsen Manassian (Armenian Missionary Association representative in Karabagh) for doing their best in facilitating necessary papers and travel arrangements from the States, as well as in every aspect of our stay in Armenia and Karabagh, including transportation, lodging, meals, work and sightseeing. □

*The Ordinations of Deacon Sasun Karakhanian and Brother Mihran Torossian*



*The Ordination of Deacon Sasun Karakhanian.*

**O**n Sunday, July 7, 2001, the Ordination of Deacon Sasun Karakhanian, the spiritual leader of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Sochi, Russia, was held during a special service in the local church. Officiating at the ceremony was Rev. René Léonian, AMAA's Representative in Armenia and the President of the Armenian Evangelical Union of Eurasia. Participating in the ordination was also the pastor of the local Russian Evangelical Church, Rev. Ivan Chekhunov.

Rev. Karakhanian was born in Abkhazia

in 1956. After his graduation from the local secondary school he has attended the extension school of Yerevan Polytechnic Institute, graduating in 1979 with a degree in Computer Science. He has followed the seminars held by the German Theologian Bill Wagner and in 1995 was ordained as Deacon and has started ministering the local Armenian Evangelicals who were worshipping in the local Russian Evangelical Church known as "Evangelical Home". In March 1997 he was appointed pastor to the newly established Armenian Evangelical Church of Sochi.

The ordination of Brother Mihran Torossian, the spiritual leader of the Armenian Evangelical Church of Sokhumi, took place on Sunday, July 7, 2001.

The service of ordination was presided by Rev. René Léonian, AMAA's Representative in Armenia and the President of the Armenian Evangelical Union of Eurasia. Also participating in the service was Rev. Vladimir Ousenko, the pastor of the local Evangelical Church of Sokhumi.

Several groups of Armenian Evangelicals in Sokhumi were meeting and worshipping in the local church since 1960, which later formed the local Armenian Evangelical Congregation. Since 1991, Rev. Movses B. Janbazian, the late Executive Director of the



*The Ordination of Brother Mihran Torossian.*

Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) has been constantly in touch with Brother Mihran Torossian and has encouraged Rev. René Léonian to visit the church. Since Abkhazia was in a war zone, that visit was not realized until this year. The AMAA has supported the church of Sokhumi by sending Bibles and spiritual literature and by supporting needy families in the area. Last year the AMAA provided funds to the church to replace Brother Mihran Torossian's bicycle with a motorcycle for his visitations. □

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

The Board of Directors of Haigazian University is accepting candidacies for the position of President of the University, starting the acadmeic year, 2002-2003.

Located in Beirut, Lebanon, Haigazian University is one of the leading schools of higher education in the region, serving the Lebanese and the Middle Eastern communities, emphasizing an Armenian and Christian Heritage.

Qualified and interested individuals should submit their candidacy and curriculum vitae to:

Haigazian University President's Search Committee  
 c/o AMAA  
 31 West Century Road  
 Paramus, NJ 07652  
 E-Mail: amaainc@aol.com

## *The Armenian Evangelical World Council Meets in Yerevan*

**O**n the happy occasion of the 1700th anniversary of the declaration of Christianity as the state religion of Armenia, the Armenian Evangelical World Council held its annual executive meeting - for the first time in Armenia - on Friday and Saturday, August 17 and 18, 2001, at the Armenian Missionary Association Center in Armenia.

Participating in the meeting were the president of the Council, The Rev. Dr. Vahan Tootikian; vice president, The Rev. Mgrditch Karageozian; secretary, The Rev. Gilbert Leonian; Council members, The Rev. Jirair Sogomian and The Rev. Rene Leonian; as well as advisory members, The Rev. Yuri Avanesian, The Rev. Avedis Boynerian, and The Rev. Joel Michaelian.

The executive committee of the Armenian Evangelical World Council examined and discussed the state of the Armenian Evangelical churches, establishments and organizations in all five continents. Reports from the representatives of church unions and organizations, who comprise the World Council, were presented to the Council. The Council echoed with grief the loss of two members of the Board: The Rev. Movses Janbazian and Mr. George Philibosian, who during the past year made their final physical departure. At the same time, the Council accepted the appointment of two new members to its executive board, The Rev. Jirair Sogomian and Mr. Albert Momjian, as treasurer.

The Armenian Evangelical World Council registered with gratitude the impact of the Armenian Evangelical Unions and the Armenian Missionary Association in the areas of church building, educational and benevolent fields. There were reports on the celebrations of the 1700th anniversary of the declaration of Christianity as state religion, as well as on the upcoming Jubilee events during this current year.

The Council also discussed, made recommendations and passed resolutions on its policy on evangelism, inter-denominational and inter-Union relationships, as well as on the preparation and continuing education of pastors and religious workers. Committees



*Armenian Evangelical World Council visiting President Robert Kocharian.*

were appointed on constitution and bylaws revision, as well as on the organization of a world-wide general assembly of Armenian Evangelical pastors. Decisions were also taken on the organization of the Armenian Evangelical archives, on the possibility of having an executive secretary and future publications.

The Armenian Evangelical Council expressed its concern on the critical exodus of people from Armenia, and decided, within the limits of its power and resources, to do its best in concrete ways to encourage citizens of Armenia, especially Armenian intellectuals, scientists and professionals, to remain in the fatherland and to contribute to its stability, welfare and progress.

The Armenian Evangelical World Council reconfirmed its position regarding the basic question of Karabagh: that this issue be resolved in peaceful and just means, that at this juncture of history it is good to aim at a resolution of this issue through negotiations. The Council also confirmed that it is essential that through these negotiations, Armenians in Karabagh have the right and the voice of self-determination. Finally, the Council believes that through these negotiations the essential security and territorial integrity of Armenia and Artsakh be protected.

The Armenian Evangelical World Council expresses its satisfaction that the visit of a delegation to the Catholicos of all Armenians, Karekin II, gave an opportunity to dialogue on the relationship of the Mother Church with the Armenian Evangelical

Church. Council members also visited his excellency, the President of the Republic of Armenia, Mr. Robert Kocharian, during which they reflected on the issue of emigration and the difficult economic situation of the people. Council members heard with joy from the President on the achievements already accomplished which will improve the situation and help our people reach greater well-being.

The Armenian Evangelical World Council echoed its satisfaction on the celebration of the 1700th anniversary of the declaration of Christianity as a state religion in Armenia on an inter-union basis at the Aram Khachadourian Philharmonic Hall in Yerevan, with the participation of its members, pastors representing different unions, 250 youth from nine different countries, and a large crowd of Armenian Evangelical believers from Armenia and the diaspora, on Sunday, August 19 2001, at 7:00 p.m. With the soul-stirring experience of the 1700th anniversary celebration in the Fatherland, and with the renewing influence of soul saving messages of God's Word, our hope was renewed that the Armenian people are being led to reaffirm the Christian faith, which they will justify and transmit from generation to generation.

The Armenian Evangelical World Council expressed its deep gratitude to authorities in Armenia and in particular, its host, the Armenian Missionary Association in Armenia and its director, The Rev. Rene Leonian, for their hospitality. □

# «ՀԱՒԱՏԱՐԻՄՆԵՐՈՒՆ» ՀԱՒԱՏԱՐՄՈՒԹԻՒՆԸ

«Իր տասը ծառաները կանչելով՝ իւրաքանչիւրին տասը տաղանդ տուաւ ու ըսաւ անոնց. "Բանեցուցէ՛ք ատոնք մինչեւ ես գամ"»  
Ղուկաս 19. 13

## Գրիգոր Եււմուշաբեան\*

Ներկայիս ողբալի երեւոյթ մը կը տիրէ եկեղեցիներուն մէջ: Այսպէս կոչուած «եկեղեցիի հաւատարիմները» այդքան ալ հաւատարիմ չեն եկեղեցիին գլուխը եւ տէրը եղող Յիսուս Քրիստոսի: Այս անհաւատարմութենէն յառաջ կուգայ հաւատարմութեան տագնապ մը: Եթէ համարակիմ արժէ՛ք եւ իմաստ փնտոնել մեր մէջ եւ շուրջ՝ պիտի հանդիպիմք բաներու, որոնք իմաստ կուտան ուրիշ բաներու, եւ անոնց՝ որ արժէ՛ք ու իմաստ կը ստանան ուրիշներէ: Տէր Յիսուսի անձին դիմաց մեր էութիւնը՝ իբր եկեղեցի եւ անհատներ, մեր գործն ու մեր խօսքը իրենց իմաստը կը ստանան Անոր հանդէպ մեր հաւատարմութենէն: Իսկ հաւատարմութիւնը մեր հարցն ու տագնապն է:

Տէր Յիսուս Իր սրբազան առաքելութեան վերջին հանգրուանին մէջ յատկօրէն խօսեցաւ գործի եւ պատասխանատուութեան փոխանցումի մասին: Ան եկած էր աշխարհ՝ որպէս Որդի Մարդոյ կորսուածը փնտոնելու ու փրկելու, եւ հիմա կը պատրաստուէր երթալու հոն ուրկէ եկած էր, անգամ մը եւս գալու խոստումով: Ան կը փնտոնէր հաւատարիմ ծառաներ՝ իր բացակայութեան Աստուծոյ գործը յառաջ տանելու համար: Իր խորհուրդները պարզելու համար առակ մըն ալ կ'ըսէ՝ մնասներու առակը: Առակին մէջ յիշուած հշմարտութիւնները կը ներկայացնեն հաւատարմութեան տարբեր պատկերներ: Հաւատարմութիւն տէրոջ հանդէպ եւ այս պարագային Տէր Յիսուսի հանդէպ:

Տէր Յիսուսի փնտոնածը սրբակեցադ նուիրեալ հաւատարիմներու հոյլ մըն է, որոնք ոչ թէ «հաւատարիմ» կոչուելու սիրոյն այդ պիտակը իրենց վրայ կրեն, այլ իսկապէս անոնք՝ որպէս Իր հետեւորդները հաւատարիմ ըլլան ու իրենց տրուած սրբազան պարտականութիւնը ամենայն երկիւղածութեամբ եւ նուիրումով կատարեն: Բաւարար չէ գիտնալ Քրիստոնէական կեանքի սուրբ կանոններն ու սկզբունքները: Պէտք է մեր գիտցածին հաւատարմօրէն հետեւիլ: Մեզ տարապեցնողը շատ անգամ մեր անհաւատարմութիւնն է: Անհաւատարիմ ենք Քրիստոսի, Աստուածաշունչին, Աստուծոյ սիրոյն, մեր ուխտին եւ մեզի տրուած պարգեւներուն: Այս է մեր տագնապը:

**1. Իրաւ հաւատարմութիւն** - Դէպի Երուսաղէմ Իր ուղեւորութեան ընթացքին՝ Տէր Յիսուս երեք անգամ կը խօսի Իր մահուան մասին: Ան կը փորձէ հասկցնել աշակերտներուն, թէ իրենց մտածած ձեւով չէ որ Ինք «Թագաւոր» պիտի ըլլայ: Անոնց ակնկալութիւնները Մեսիային մասին իրենց պատկերացումին վրայ հիմնուած էին: Անոնք հաւատարիմ էին... իրենց պատկերացումին: Կոյրը բժշկուեցաւ, մաքսաւորը փրկութիւն ստացաւ, Մեսիան եկաւ... շատ եիշդ: Սակայն Ան՝ Թագաւորը, կը խօսէր բացակայելու մասին. ուրեմն կը փնտոնէր մարդիկ, որոնք Իր անձին հաւատարիմ պիտի ըլլային՝ նոյնիսկ Իր բացակայութեան: Իրաւ հաւատարմութիւնը

Տէր Յիսուսի անձին տրուած հաւատարմութիւնն է:

**2. Սիրոյ Հաւատարմութիւն** - Հաւատարմութիւնը շատ դրդապատեաններ կրնայ ունենալ: Ոմանք հաւատարիմ կ'ըլլան իրենց շահուն համար: Ուրիշներ՝ վնասէ մը վախճալով կը փորձեն հաւատարմութիւն ցուցնել: Այսպիսի պարագաներուն՝ միայն մեր անձերուն հաւատարիմ կ'ըլլանք եւ ոչ թէ Տէր Յիսուսի: Ան կը փնտոնէ հաւատարիմներ, որոնք Ձինք ատող, Իրեն թշնամի մեծամասնութիւններու մէջ իսկ կը յանդգնին հնազանդիլ Իրեն: Կը հաւատան որ Ան պիտի գայ «Թագաւորութիւնը առնելով»: Ուստի սիրով կը սպասեն անոր՝ հակառակ շրջանակին նշումներուն եւ սպառնալիքներուն: Մէկդի կը թողուն «ոչ վնասեմ - ոչ շահիմ» քաղաքականութիւնը, «միայն տրուածը պահեմ» միջակութիւնը, եւ գործի կ'անցնին բարեխաւելու եւ աւելցնելու իրենց վստահուածը:

**3. Գործնական Հաւատարմութիւն** - Տէր Յիսուսի վստահելով գործելը Ձանիկա ճանչնալու եւ Անոր հաւատարիմ ըլլալու լաւագոյն նշանն է: Անոր թագաւորութիւնը ահող, զարգացնող իրականութիւն է՝ հոգ չէ թէ Ան մեռնելու կ'երթայ Երուսաղէմ: Ինչ որ ունիմք՝ պահելու համար չէ տուած Ան մեզի. այլ՝ զարգացնելու եւ աւելցնելու համար: Նոյնիսկ չենք կրնար մեզի տրուածին «հաւատարիմ» ըլլալով, գայն պահել: Տուողին հաւատարիմ ըլլալով, գործի անցնիլ պէտք է: Այսպիսի գործ՝ անպայման «շահ» կ'ապահովէ... «մնասներուն Տէրոջ»:

Հաւատարմութեան երկու տագնապներ կ'ապրինք այսօր: Նախ՝ հաւատարմութեան առարկան ընտրելու տագնապը, եւ ապա՝ սակաւաթիւ հաւատարիմներու տագնապը: Իսկ Տէր Յիսուս կուտայ Իր անձը, որպէսզի Իր վրայ հաստատուինք եւ պտղաբերինք որպէսզի այդ ձեւով մեր ալ կեանքը մնայուն արժէ՛ք եւ իմաստ ստանայ:

Հաւատարմութիւնը մեր բոլորին սուրբ պարտականութիւնն է: Եկէ՛ք Տէր Յիսուսի հաւատարիմ աշակերտները ըլլանք, գիտակցելով որ եկեղեցիին մէջ կարելի չէ խաղաղութիւն հաստատել առանց հաւատարիմ գտնուելու արդարութեան, խոնարհութեան, սիրոյ եւ զգաստութեան սկզբունքներուն:

Հաւատարիմ ըլլալու համար պէտք է մեզի վստահուած աւանդը պահել եւ յստկապէս մեր կատարած ուխտին հնազանդիլ ամենայն յօժարութեամբ: Տէրը հաւատարիմ աշակերտ կը փնտոնէ: □

\*Վեր. Գրիգոր Եււմուշաբեան հովիւն է Սիսեմի (Աւստրալիա) Հայ Աւետարանական եկեղեցիին:

**Alexander M. Phillian**

Alexander M. Phillian, 83, went to be with the Lord on April 14, 2001. Born in Hartford, Connecticut, he was one of three children of Moses and Mary (Chaparian) Phillian. He was predeceased by his sisters, Satenig and Shushanig.



As a child, he later settled with his family in Paterson, NJ, known at the time as "Silk City". There, his father plied his trade as a weaver, utilizing the experience he gained in Bitias. Alex's mother practiced her Christian faith by leading prayer meetings in her home with neighbors, and raised him and his sisters, in accordance with her deeply-felt Christian principles and faith. As a child, Alex was introduced to the First Baptist Church of Paterson, where his father brought him and his sisters and where Alex was baptized in 1935. He later served on the church council and remained a life-long active member. Alex would recall that during the great depression, he and his sisters would walk to church from south Paterson in order to save the nickel bus fare to have something to put in the collection plate.

In 1926, at the age of 37, Alex's mother was struck and killed by an automobile as she walked on a sidewalk in Paterson. Alex's paternal grandmother, Sarah Shishmanian, then in her nineties, burnished his faith and gave him the special kind of love known only to Armenian grandchildren. Throughout his life, she remained one of his most positive influences.

Six years after the tragic loss of Alex's mother, as illness took the life of his father at the age of 52, leaving Alex an orphan at the age of 15. It was during this period that Alex's Christian upbringing, coupled with the guidance of his older cousin, Alex J. Phillian, uncles Ohannes Phillian, and Garabed and Takvor Chaparian, that he made the transition from a teenager to a young man who would go on to serve his country, marry, raise his own family and serve his churches and his community. Like all Armenians, Alex Phillian believed in hard work. He graduated from Paterson's East Side High School,

where he was a member of the football team. He worked a loom as a young man, later recalling how he was unable to hear the bus driver on a trip home after being exposed to the deafening sound of so many looms running simultaneously. His real love was the outdoors and its accompanying freedom, which led to a job with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, inspecting and maintaining forest trees in northern New Jersey. Trees were a lifelong passion for Alex, and he surrounded his home with sycamores, maples and mulberries, taking care to prune them just the right way with the right tools.

A later opportunity to join New Jersey Bell Telephone Company as a lineman enabled him to continue to work outdoors, climb telephone poles and secure a good standard of living for the rest of his working life.

At the start of World War II, Alex took a leave from the telephone company to enlist in the Merchant Marines. When he expressed an interest in going to radio school, someone told him it couldn't be done. That clinched his decision to go ahead, get accepted and succeed. After earning his radio license, he served as a radio operator on ships that included the Ceasar Rodney, which ferried supplies across the Atlantic under treacherous conditions to the port of Murmansk, USSR. He received the Atlantic, Pacific and Mediterranean Middle East War Zone Bars for his service. In 1992, at a ceremony at the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C., Alex and his fellow seamen were presented with medals from the Russian government to commemorate their heroic role in helping the Soviet Union to defeat the invading Germans. Alex maintained close friendships with the men who served with him during the war as an active member of the Hoffman Island Radio Association.

After the war, the next phase of his life would find Alex driving from Paterson to Holyoke, Massachusetts, on weekends to visit a lovely young lady named Victoria Renjilian. Victoria, who lost five siblings in the genocide, served in the WAVES during the war years. The two were married in July, 1947.

As their family began to grow, the Phillians left Paterson for the suburbs next door. Establishing a home in West Paterson, Alex was a founding member of the town's Boys' Club, a little-league baseball coach and a Democratic County Committeeman.

Having resumed his job with the telephone

company after the war, he continued as an installer and union official. He was active in many union causes over his long working career, serving as a General Delegate for the Telephone Workers Union, an officer of the Passaic County Labor Council and a Union representative to the United Way of Passaic Valley. Alex retired from New Jersey Bell in 1982, after 42 years of service.

Alex was a passionate advocate of the statement "Do not deprive yourself of the joy of giving." He said he learned this from his father who, despite the hardship of the Great Depression, was always willing to part with a coin to help someone on the street. Alex was a volunteer neighborhood collector for the American Heart Association and most recently in his retirement, a volunteer for World Vision, placing collection boxes throughout the neighborhood and forwarding their contents to the organization.

Even into old age, he would sit down at the dining room table to write checks to his favorite charities, often resulting in a stack of envelopes to be taken to the Post Office. The many solicitations that still arrive in the mail addressed to him are a testament to his support of worthy causes.

In March 1998, Alex's wife, Victoria, was called by the Lord after fifty years of marriage. Her love and support was the foundation for Alex's life.

In the final phase of his life, Alex had the great fortune of meeting Rev. Movses Janbazian, who, as a fellow Musa Daghighian, introduced him to the Armenian Missionary Association of America and to the Armenian Presbyterian Church in Paramus. The two developed a closeness like that of cousins, visiting and lunching together regularly and taking great pleasure in conversing in their beloved Svedia dialect. It was this close friendship that led Alex to establish the Alex and Victoria Phillian Endowment Fund with the AMAA. It also enabled Alex to augment his membership in the First Baptist Church of Paterson by joining the Armenian Presbyterian Church, where late in life he felt that he had truly found a home. The arrival of Easter on the morning after his passing, with its fulfillment of the victory of life over death through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, had a profound significance in the summation of the life of Alexander Phillian.

Alex leaves a daughter, Valorie of New Jersey, a son, William of New Jersey, a son, Gregory of North Carolina, his wife, Beth and their two children, Lisa and Sam. □

**Maritza Chijian Talanian**

Maritza was born in Turkish Armenia on August 28, 1905, in the village of Mezre (province of Kharpert) to devoted Christian parents. In 1910, her sister, Haigoui, was born, and life was very good until 1915 when the Turkish government decided to rid the country of all Armenians.



One day, Turkish soldiers came into Mezre and rounded up all the men, Maritza's father among them. They were taken outside the village and shot. Anticipating what was to come, Maritza's mother entrusted her two girls to the care of a sympathetic Turkish family for safekeeping. Sometime later the soldiers returned and force-marched the women and children across the desert to Syria. Most died in the desert, Maritza's mother and grandmother among them.

For the next ten years, Maritza and Haigoui (Helen) were moved from one orphanage to another in Armenia, Syria, Greece, Yugoslavia and France. Maritza experienced hunger, uncertainty, loneliness and fear. She had nothing in this world but her sister, a seed of faith that had been planted in her at an early age, and a loving God who would walk closely by her side for the next 86 years.

Care, housing and schooling for Maritza and Helen were provided by American missionaries and by a generous Christian family in Detroit, Michigan, that gave monthly financial support. Years later, when Maritza would relate the experiences of those years in the orphanages, it was not with bitterness but rather with a profound sense of thankfulness to God for the many ways that He protected and provided for her and Helen. She consistently acknowledged His kindness and mercy.

In 1928, a distant relative in Boston sponsored Maritza's coming to the United States. They brought her into their home and enabled her to attend college. Soon after, she met and married (in 1930) Hapet Talanian, also from Kharpert. They worked hard together to start a small grocery business and were blessed with three children.

In 1940, Maritza experienced a spiritual renewal and made a fresh commitment to seek God and follow Him more closely. For the next 60 years, she nurtured a close relationship with God through daily prayer, scripture reading, and meditation.

Maritza lived a quiet, humble life. She didn't have furs, expensive jewelry, or a big house, but she was rich in peace and contentment that intimacy with God provided. She was a thankful, compassionate, and loving woman, fulfilled by her roles as wife, mother, and homemaker, and excelling in them all.

By 1983, she and Helen were both widows, and Maritza moved to Florida, just a few houses away from Helen. For eighteen years the sisters enjoyed the wonderful companionship of each other, as God "restored the years the locusts had eaten", giving them in their senior years what they had missed in their childhood.

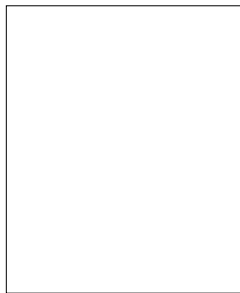
Maritza lived independently in her own home, cooking, washing, hanging clothes, etc. until December 2000, when her health began to deteriorate. Her children, sister, and many loving people from a Hospice cared for her until she passed away on June 28, 2001.

She left this earth just as she desired to leave – surrounded by her family, comfortable, free of pain, content, at peace, and looking forward to seeing her Lord. He was faithful to her up to her last breath.

We miss her greatly, but we are comforted knowing that she is enjoying the life she longed for. Her faith sustained and enriched her throughout her life and especially in her final months. We are thankful to have had her as a sister, mom, nanny, and great-nanna, and are blessed to have witnessed her Christian faith. □

**Makroohie Khosrofian**

Makroohie Khosrofian of Maryland, passed away on July 27, 2001. She was born on April 15 1905 in the city of Harpoot. She was the daughter of Arakell and Khatoon Arakellian. After



Makroohie's and her brother Aram's birth, her mother died during her third childbirth along with the baby. Later Arakell remarried and from this second marriage had two daughters, Araxie and Rebecka. Unfortunately, tragedy struck a second time and Araxie died of an unknown accident. Later, Her brother Aram was taken away into exile and probably adopted by some Turkish family. Due to some financial difficulties Makroohie was put into an orphanage.

Makroohie and her friend from the orphan-

age booked passage to America where she was introduced to her friend's brother, John Khosrofian. They were soon married. They had two sons and a daughter, Harry, George and Joyce who passed away eleven years ago. Through John's hard work and Makroohie's wise advice the result was a nice home and a measure of good security.

Like most Armenians of her generation, Makroohie lived a hard life. But none the less, she was a dedicated Christian, always ready to serve the Lord. □

**The AMAA Board of Directors and staff extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased friends whose names were submitted to us for publication in the AMAA News:**

- Abdulian, Anoush**  
Encino, CA
- \* **Cardelucci, Jackie**  
Newport Beach, CA
- \* **Hintlian, John**  
Pasadena, CA
- \* **Hollisian, Levon**  
Cambridge, MA
- \* **Hovanisian, Ralph**  
Kingsburg, CA
- Hovenanian, Sara**  
Winchester, MA
- Manoogian, Peter**  
Yorktown, VA
- Margosian, Zaven**  
W. Bloomfield, MI
- \* **Muradian, Lem**  
Kingsburg, CA
- \* **Najarian, Margaret**  
Cranston, RI
- \* **Orchanian, Rose**  
Flushing, NY
- Sarafian, Vernoica**  
Emerson, NJ
- Sarian, Jessie**  
Los Angeles, CA
- \* **Simourian, John**  
Lincoln, MA
- \* **Tarpinian, Alex**  
Levittown, NY
- \* **Zobian, Grace**  
Media, PA
- \* **Dodakian, May**  
**Kassardjian, Lydia**  
**Manoogian, Madeline**  
**Melkonian, Azadouhi**  
**Nazarian, Richard**

\* **Memorials were designated for AMAA**  
\*\***Bequests Assigned**

## TO KARABAGH WITH LOVE

**D**riving into Karabagh for the first time last month, I fell in love with the land and I mentioned that to President Kocharian. But we all know that true love is costly and always demands self-denial and sacrificial giving. What makes Karabagh lovely and precious to us are its people, those hardy souls who, true to their ancestral faith and tradition, are willing to sacrifice all to inhabit the blessed land and to nurture it with their sweat and blood. They are our people, children of Noah and Haig, who share with us a history and tradition that fills our hearts with pride and joy. The least we can do is to be our brothers' and sisters' keepers, and take care of the needs of the least of those little brothers and sisters of Christ.



One of the places I visited in Shoushi was the only Kindergarten in that city of 4000 inhabitants. It happens to be AMAA's Kindergarten, run in one of the three buildings that is usable, providing education, joy and hope to 75 children. But there are some 200 children in Shoushi who could benefit from a Kindergarten, except that the other two buildings in the compound are not usable. They need a minimum of \$80,000 to convert them to buildings worthy for our precious little children in Shoushi. Right now, a hundred plus children are staying home and are deprived of the precious education we can impart that will give them a head start in life. All it takes is one or more noble souls whose love for our people in Karabagh urges them to give sacrificially, to share generously, and to make a difference in the lives of our children in Shoushi. If the Spirit motivates you to respond to this appeal, please let me hear from you soon! Yours in Christ, JMS

**Armenian Missionary Association of America**  
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