

Armenian Christmas in Istanbul

ISTANBUL—The Armenian community in Turkey, with the Armenian Patriarchate as its spiritual center, follows the Gregorian ecclesiastical calendar, adhering however to the ancient tradition of celebrating the Birth and Baptism of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ on 5 and 6 January.

The celebration of the 2000th anniversary of the Birth of Christ Jesus commenced in the Armenian community of Turkey with a solemn Divine Liturgy in the Holy Mother of God Patriarchal Church in Kumkapi, Istanbul, on Saturday, 1 January 2000. His Beatitude Armenian Patriarch Mesrob II of Istanbul and Turkey presided over the liturgy, assisted by Their Graces Archbishop Shahan Sivacyan and Bishop Aram Ateshian. Patriarch Mesrob delivered a homily in which he reminded the faithful that 2000 was a holy year for Christians and an opportunity for all to renew their baptismal vows. Following the liturgy, according to local tradition, prayers were said for fruitfulness of the new year, thousands of pomegranates were blessed and distributed to the people who filled the large patriarchal church and the small piazza outside.

That afternoon, in anticipation and preparation of the Holy Feast of Theophany, the Patriarch, the Bishops and the Hieromonks of the Patriarchal See began a visitation of the larger city parishes to spread the Good News of the Coming of the Lord and the Year of Grace. Thus patriarchal visits were made to the parish of the Holy Mother-of-God in Ortakoy on 1 January for vespers, the parish of Saint George (Surp Kevoork) in Samatya on 2 January for the Sunday liturgy, the parish of Saint Gregory the Illuminator (Surp Krikor Lusavoritch) in Galata the same afternoon for vespers, the parish of Holy Trinity (Surp Yerrortutian) in Beyoglu the afternoon 3 January for vespers. At each station, the Patriarch prayed with the faithful, delivered a homily and visited the clergy, parish councils, choir associations, ladies' auxiliaries, teachers and students of the parish schools.

On 2 January, Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m., a Jubilee festival had been organized in the Bezciyan Hall of the Patriarchal

Military Helicopter Crashes in Armenia

YEREVAN - A transport helicopter of Armenia's Air Force crashed in the southeast of the republic, sources in the Armenian Defense Ministry said last Thursday, Jan. 21.

The helicopter flew from Yerevan on Wednesday noon to bring to Nagorno Karabakh three doctors from the Central Military Clinical Hospital.

The helicopter ran into a blizzard near the district center of Sisian, which might have caused the crash.

According to unofficial sources, radio contact with the helicopter was lost 90 minutes after the takeoff.

The search, directed by Kadzhik

Stepan W. Baghdassarian, Esq., Elected President of YEA

LOS ANGELES, CA - Los Angeles attorney Stepan W. Baghdassarian, Esq., was unanimously elected as the President of Young Executives of America, during the organization's first meeting of the year, which was held on Thursday, January 13, 2000, at the prestigious Regency Club in Westwood. Young Executives of America (YEA), is a national organization with a mission to preserve the entrepreneurial spirit of America through a pro-business agenda that focuses on fiscal conservatism and public policy conducive to entrepreneurial activity.

Special guest speaker for the evening was Steve Soboroff, trusted advisor to Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan and a mayoral candidate. After congratulating Mr. Baghdassarian and the entire



Left to right, Mr. Stepan W. Baghdassarian, Esq. with Mr. Steve Soboroff

board of directors, Mr. Soboroff spoke about his candidacy for the mayor of Los Angeles and about challenges facing Angelinos at the dawn of the 21st Century.

The goal of YEA is to develop a net-

work of professionals and business people who will become increasingly effective in the governmental process as they advance in their business and professional pursuits. YEA seeks to provide the opportunity to become acquainted with key issues and concerns facing the business community at the international, national, state and local levels. YEA supports, with its State and Federal PAC's, pro-business candidates, elected officials, and political issues with financial continuations to qualified candidates and political causes.

Mr. Baghdassarian, whose law firm is located in Encino, California, specializes in business and immigration law. He is admitted to practice before all courts in the state of California, United States District Courts, United States Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit and United States Tax Court. Mr. Baghdassarian is on the arbitration panel of the Los Angeles County Superior/Municipal courts.

Church by Fathers Zacheos Ohanyan and Dtrud Uzunyan which was attended by 580 children from various parishes. The Patriarch attended the festival and delivered a message specially to the children, reminding them they would remember in the future this memorable jubilee which should change their lives in some profound way. On 3 January, Monday at 8 p.m., the Patriarch attended the Ecumenical Theophany Concert which has become an annual event. The concert took place in the Armenian Church in Ferikoy with the participation of the Vartanants church choir, St. Esprit Cathedral Choir, the orchestra and choir of the German Evangelical Church, and a quartet of music students from Mimar Sinan University led by Melikcan Zaman.

On 5 January Christmas Eve, Patriarch Mesrob presided over the Christmas services, celebrated the liturgy and delivered a homily in the Armenian Church of the Holy Mother-of-God in Bakirkoy. Following the liturgy, a candle-light service of Christmas Carols was held in the church yard, attended by hundreds of believers.

On 6 January Christmas Day, the Patriarch presided over the Holy Theophany (Birth, Baptism, Revelation of Jesus Christ) services in the Holy Mother-of-God Patriarchal Church in Kumkapi. The patriarchal church and the piazza outside were packed full of the faithful in spite of the fact that it was a work day in Turkey. At the end of the church services, His Beatitude the Patriarch was led to the Patriarchal building in a long procession of deacons, acolytes and choir members. The traditional service for blessing the homes was held in the audience room of the Patriarchate, at the end of which the Patriarch distributed pomegranates to all who were present. At 15:00 hours the same afternoon, Their Graces Archbishop Shahan, Bishop Aram, the Latin Bishop of Istanbul Mgr. Louis Pelatze, the Armenian Catholic Archbishop Mgr. Hovhannes Tcholakian, Rabbi Itshak Haleva of the Chief Rabbinate, the Syrian Orthodox Metropolitan Mar Philixinos,

church of Surp Vartanants in Ferikoy, delivered a homily and participated in the table of love in the parish hall that followed.

On 10 January, Patriarch Mesrob visited Bishop Louis Pelatze of the Roman Catholic Church, the Salesian Brothers in the cathedral of Saint Esprit, the Mekhitarist Armenian Catholic Fathers and Metropolitan Mar Philixinos of the Syrian Orthodox Church on the occasion of the Feast of Theophany. A visit to the Armenian Catholic Archbishop Mgr. Jean Tcholakian had also been scheduled, how-

ever his sickness prevented the patriarchal visit. At 14:00 hours the same afternoon His Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomaios I visited His Beatitude the Armenian Patriarch and congratulated him for the Christmas feast of the Armenian Church and community. Around 200 ladies' auxiliaries in the 38 churches in Istanbul visited the Patriarch at 15:30 hours and received his blessings and directives on putting a special emphasis on the family during 2000.

L.R.A.P.E.S.

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA ANNOUNCES THE MIHRAN S. AGBABIAN PROFESSORSHIP

The American University of Armenia (AUA) is now accepting applications for the Mihran S. Agbabian Professorship. Dr. Agbabian is President Emeritus of the University and its founding President. In selecting the recipient of the professorship, preference will be given to individuals who are beginning their academic career. Candidates should be interested in spending one to three years at AUA to participate in the teaching and research programs as well as the projects of the AUA Centers.

Applicants must possess excellent academic credentials in any one of the major disciplines of the AUA. Recruitment for the Professorship will be widely publicized and will be competitive. Recipients of the Agbabian Professorship may be appointed for a term of up to three years. Interested applicants should send their curriculum vitae to Marie Westbrook-Takhounts, Coordinator of Faculty Recruitment, American University of Armenia Corporation, 300 Lakeside Dr. 4th Floor, Oakland, CA 94612.

The American University of Armenia (AUA) was founded in 1991 as a graduate University based on the American model of higher education. It is formally affiliated with the University of California. To date, the University has grown to provide six Masters' level programs in Industrial Engineering and Systems Management, Business Administration, Political Science, Public Health, Teaching of English as a Foreign Language, and International and Comparative Law. The mission of the AUA is to provide teaching, research, and service programs that prepare students to address the needs of Armenia and the surrounding region for sustainable development, in a setting that values and develops academic excellence, free inquiry, scholarship, leadership, and service to society. Further information is available on the AUA website at www.aua.am.

AMAA's Orphan/Child Care Raises Over \$60,000 in Boston

The Boston members of the AMAA Orphan/Child Care Committee...