



GREETINGS OF CHRIST-GRANTED LOVE AND BLESSINGS TO
THE CATHOLICOS OF THE SUPREME PATRIARCHATE OF THE
GREAT HOUSE OF CILICIA, TO THE ARMENIAN PATRIARCHATE
OF JERUSALEM, TO THE PATRIARCHATE OF TURKEY, TO
ARCHBISHOPS, BISHOPS, VARTAPETS, PRIESTS, TO PARISH
CHURCH COUNCILS, TO ARMENIAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS
AND THE PRESS AND TO THE ENTIRE BELOVED FAITHFUL
ARMENIAN PEOPLE

The Armenian nation, along the tempestuous road of its history, once more crowned itself with victory at the close of World War II.

On the 9th of May, 1945, the seven heads of the Hitler monster were crushed by the united heroic battles of freedom-loving peoples and particularly by the peoples of the Soviet Union. Fifty million people had fallen victims, twenty million of whom sons of Soviet republics.

Our motherland also, side by side with the Russian people and all of the Soviet brother nationalities, sacrificed, with equal selflessness and inspiration, the sacred blood of her courageous sons for the great victory of the fatherland.

Archbishop Gevorg, deputy of the Patriarchal Chair of St. Echmiadzin, had, on the 30th of July, 1941, addressed a historical appeal as an expression of the conscience of our people, to all Armenians alerting.

„A new brutal force has appeared, the German fascism, which is opposed to freedom, inimical to Christianity..., carrier of despotism, destroyer of material and cultural values created by nations. That very brutal force has treacherously invaded ourland bringing ruin and death“.

And Archbishop Garegin Hovsepian had, on the 11th of September of the same year, echoed the appeal of the Mother Chair with intense anxiety.

„Unexpectedly Germany is directing its forces onto a people who is only yearning for peace.

... Clouds have piled up on the twenty-year-old peace-fully bright skies of our beautiful and beloved fatherland; those clouds can change into hail-storms and totally destroy our young self-governing democracy. That is why we are anxious about the plight of our people, most intensely anxious.

Let the Lord deem the calamities befallen us until the present enough“.

The Armenian combatants took part in almost all the battles from Kiev till Kerch, till the Volga and the shores of the Baltic Sea and till Berlin, with the clear knowledge that they were defending the frontiers and freedom of their Soviet family and that they were defending also the honour and existence of their reborn fatherland-Soviet Armenia.

Many sons of our church and people also sacrificed their lives in battles and opposition movements by allied States for a salutary victory.

The bright victory on the banks of the Volga was particularly fateful for Armenia, for it spared the country from aggression threatening also from the west, where our centuries-old enemy was waiting in readiness for the outcome of that big battle, to invade Transcaucasia and annihilate, first of all, East Armenia. The heroes sacrificed on the banks of the Volga saved also the Armenian motherland and the people at the cost of their lives.

For the sake of the victorious conclusion of the Patriotic war, the Diaspora Armenians also stood as one man by the side of their brothers of the fatherland and did their duty donating the „Sasoontsi Davit“ tank division to the Soviet forces.

On the 9th of May, 1945, history registered the greatest victory of all times at the cost of multimillion victims. To the extent that the war years had been full of suffering, to the same extent joyful was the world-startling victory which opened new horizons also for Armenia's unprecedented progress and ever new achievements and in economy and in town-building and on the way of the development of science and national culture.

During these recent forty years, in conditions of peace and security, our people has been able to raise to new peaks the reconstruction and flourish of the country through the creative genius and strong arms of its sons and daughters.

It was during the post-war years, too, that Armenia wide opened its gates before its children in emigration in different countries, hence more than one hundred and fifty thousand Armenians immigrated into the motherland, thus becoming, to a considerable extent, useful in the economic and cultural development of the country. Immigration in the course of the past forty years brought some four hundred thousand citizens into the fatherland, thus favouring the growth of the country's population.

In these days of solemn celebrations of the fortieth anniversary of the historical great victory, we possibly realize more clearly and through greater spiritual consolation the abundant good and the enjoyment thereof ensuing from that very victory.

It is becoming to invoke, with pious gratitude, the memory of all the known and unknown heroes of the Patriotic war and to pray for the eternal enlightenment of their valiant souls, since they sacrificed their lives for the sake of their country, freedom and ever-shining future, peaceful and secure life.

Truly, such was the conviction of those who survived forty years ago, that no war would ever darken the horizon of our Earth, that no

State would ever raise a sword against others, and that no mother would mourn the loss of her son. The oath of the United Nations' Organization was sealed with that dream and tenet.

We believe that in these days of the invocation of the fortieth anniversary of the slutary victory, it is the imperative duty of all peoples, of all great and small countries to outlaw war and to destroy all its implements of death and destruction so that the blood-thirsty and ruinous monster called war may never again be able to raise its head and so that all militarists may remember the message of Jesus, „Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword“, (Matth. 26—52).

That message both inspires and guides us as the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of all Armenians, for we realize full well that a new world conflagration will annihilate in its flames our reborn and freely developing mother country with its over three million population.

One cannot be a servant of God and Church, one cannot be a son of the Armenian people and not perceive that horrible peril.

The safety of our motherland, the security of the inhabitants' lives and their peaceful existence are beyond any extrinsic considerations and ideological predilections.

We, with that consciousness, feel to be the follower of the mission of our magnificent patriarchs from Nerses Ashtaraketsi—the creator of a fatherland—until Patriarch Ormanian and Khrimian Hairik, until Gevorg VI and Garegin Hovsepiants; all of whom carried on, in the conditions of their times, the same sublime struggle for the safety of their people's lives, welfare and everlasting existence.

In our days, for the Armenian Church and the Armenian people „beyond anything“ is the prevention of the forces of war, general disarmament, the realization of world peace, and the solidary cooperation of all the countries under the light of justice and evangelical humanitarian principles.

Glory and blessing to the memory of the heroes fallen during the Patriotic war.

Glory and blessing to the rebirth of our motherland, to the heroes of her creative work and to the fighters of her peace.

By this our pastoral we instruct that on the Sunday nearest to the 9th of May of this year a holy Mass be officiated in all Armenian churches for the repose of the souls, a prayer be conducted for the memory of the heroes fallen during the Patriotic war, and also prayer for the solidarity of nations, and peace all over the entire world.

„God is not a God of confusion, but of peace; as in all the churches of the saints“ (First Corinth. 14—33), and „The God of peace shall be with you“ (Phil. 4—9).

Catholicos of all Armenians

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