



On April 18, 2018, a meeting of parents of students of the “Surb Movses Khorenatsi” (Saint Moses of Khoren) preschool (operates under the auspices of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia) and the officials of the Armenian Diocese took place in the Calouste Gulbenkian Hall of the “Hayartun” Center at the Armenian Diocese in Georgia.

The meeting was honored with the presence of the Primate of the Armenian Diocese in Georgia, His Grace Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan, accompanied by Rev. Father Manuk Zeynalyan, spiritual superintendant of the “Hayartun” Center.

Irina Zhamkochyan, Director of the N104 public school in Tbilisi; Hasmik Papyan, Deputy Director of the N103 Georgian – Armenian public school; Gayane Mkhitarian, teacher of Armenian language and literature; as well as teachers, parents of the students were also present at the meeting.

The meeting started with the Lord's Prayer and blessings of the Primate of the Armenian Diocese. Afterwards, the Diocesan Primate announced the purpose of the meeting, in particular, to direct the Armenian graduates of the pre – school group to Armenian schools.

The Primate of the Armenian Diocese touched upon the kind-hearted attitude of the Georgian authorities towards other nations, emphasized the permanent support of the country's authorities for the education in the native language of national minorities, in particular, on the way to getting secondary, vocational and higher education.

The Diocesan Primate mentioned that currently there are 122 Armenian schools operating in Georgia, two of which are in the capital, but the number of students in these schools is minimal. Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan regretted that a number of Armenian schools in Tbilisi, Batumi were closed only because of absence of schoolchildren.



“Many Armenians nowadays, like in the period of the Soviet Union, are trying to take their children to foreign – language schools. Most of the teachers and schoolchildren in Russian schools in Tbilisi are Armenians, but the benches in the classes of Armenian schools are vacant.

A foreign – language school absorb schoolchildren, removes them from nation and nationality, which becomes noticeable after years, when perceives differences between religion, culture, traditions and habits. Thus, Armenians depart from their roots, religion, lifestyle and become a half-person”, - the Diocesan Primate highlighted in his speech.

Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan spoke about “Surb Movses Khorenatsi” preschool's graduates, who are well-known for their knowledge. Children actually know in perfect program of elementary school and fully prepared to go to school, perhaps in a foreign-language school, this

knowledge can soon be forgotten and lost.

The Diocesan Primate also highlighted the influence of the moral and psychological environment, within which Armenian child grows with a spirit of pride, patriotism, freedom and independence. In terms of knowledge of language, the Armenian school is very convenient, here students are fluent in Armenian, Russian, Georgian and foreign languages, there are many examples of this.

Rev. Father Manuk Zeynalyan, spiritual superintendant of the “Hayartun” Center spoke about the knowledge, the correct upbringing and the care, with which students of Armenian schools are surrounded by both the directorate of school and the teaching staff. He also highlighted the children’s safety.

Afterwards, the heads of the Armenian schools in Tbilisi delivered speeches. The Armenian school N104 and the Armenian branch of the N103 Georgian-Armenian school operates in good conditions, all the necessary conditions and school supplies are provided, schools are renovated, have a heating system as well as have several medalist graduates every year. Most of the school graduates are successfully admitted to the universities and completed it with high performance.

Levon Chidilyan, Director of the Department of Culture and Eugenia Markosyan, Director of the Department of Education delivered speeches, highlighting the fact that Armenian schools closes due to the drop in the number of schoolchildren and this can't be justified by the fact that their parents do not know Armenian language.

The parents, in their speeches, tried to justify their intention to direct the child to the Russian language of Georgian language schools and received proofs of the advantages of the education in the native language.

The meeting took place successfully, but the making right decision depends only on the parents. We just have to remind that closing of the educational institutions is very easy, but it is extremely difficult to re-open and keep it working out of the motherland...