



The initiative to visit Armenian-populated regions and to organize spiritual and cultural events i
n local churches
has
become a tradition in the
Diocese
of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia

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This time the
place to visit
was Shahumian
settlement
in
Marneuli region

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On the 15th of June the Head of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia, His
Grace Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan

accompanied with creative groups of the “Hayartun” Center of the Diocese made a pilgrimage from Tbilisi to Shahumian. The schoolmaster of the local public school Artyush Urumyan, Edward Gasparyan, elected from Shahumian village to Marneuli regional council, and others welcomed the visitors.

In the morning at Surb Asvatsatsin Church (of Blessed Virgin Mary) in Shahumian settlement, which was built in the first half of the 19th century, the Divine Liturgy was served. Spiritual shepherd of the Armenian communities in Marneuli region, Priest Movses Ashuryan conducted the service.

At the end of the Liturgy the Head of the Diocese delivered a sermon. Bishop Vazgen Mirzakhanyan urged the community members to continue the preservation of the Christian and folk traditions in the community. In his sermon he mentioned that the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Holy Church on the 15th of June celebrates the Feast of Discovery of Relics of Saint Gregory the Illuminator. The Head of the Diocese explained to believers that Right Hand of St. Gregory the Illuminator, kept at Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, is a venerated relic of the Armenian Church, which is used to bless the Holy Chrism (

Muron

), and like all Armenian Churches the Divine Liturgy in connection with the holiday was also served at the local church.

After the religious ceremony a cultural event featuring solo performers and dance ensemble "A ni "

(choreographer Angelina Nazarian-Kochian) of the "

Hayartun"

Center of the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Georgia was held. Levon Chidilyan, who is Center Director and the Head of the Department of Culture, was the host of the event. The festive atmosphere prevailed in the community, the schoolmaster of the local public school Artyush Urumyan on behalf of the village community and all inhabitants thanked and highly praised the guest from Tbilisi.

After the celebration at the village school a table was laid for the guests from Tbilisi. Despite the scorching sun and hot weather , the pilgrimage has left an indelible impression o n the villagers and visitors from Tbilisi.



