

April 6, 2005

His Eminence Eduardo Cardinal Martinez Somalo
Cardinal Chamberlain
Vatican City

Your Eminence:

On behalf of the Armenian Evangelical World Council, we hereby extend to you our profound condolences and heartfelt sympathies on the passing of His Holiness John Paul II.

With his passing, the Christian Church has lost a great Shepherd and the world an outstanding leader.

He was one of the strongest public voices for the Christian Church in the past 26 years with the spoken as well as the written word. He bore witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and his vision of the Church. He spoke with forthrightness about the great contemporary issues and expressed his views sharply and clearly.

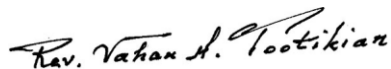
His superb record speaks for the unparalleled leadership and service he gave during the tenure of his pontificate.

His magnetic personality, dignified demeanor and his innate capacity to care left a great impression upon the members of the Armenian Evangelical delegation when they met him in 2001, in Yerevan, Armenia, on the occasion of the 1700th Anniversary of the declaration of Christianity as Armenia's national religion.

His Holiness viewed himself first and always as God's servant, and his commitment to Jesus Christ and the Church remained steadfast to his last breath. His ecumenical spirit, courage and strong sense of service endeared him to many people. His spiritual guidance left a lasting impression on all who knew him.

Undoubtedly, as one of the greatest leaders in modern history, his presence will be missed, but his legacy will remain. May God bless his precious memory.

Fraternally yours,



Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian
Executive Director, Armenian Evangelical
World Council.