



Paros

Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church

October/November/December 2021



POINTS OF LIGHT

For the past couple of years, it has seemed nearly impossible not feel enslaved or at best, controlled in ways never experienced by most Americans, who have almost taken their rights to liberty and freedom for granted for too long. So many restrictions, mandates and control measures have come down upon us from Government, by so called leaders, who base their “rules” on their own interpretations and understanding of their version of “science” presumably seeking what is best for “us” and sometimes what is best for “them” often without consideration to what their constituency feels, believes, aspires for or what the social consequence of their laws may be! People have grown tired and many feel lost. The social cost has been great and some can’t believe the world can ever return to normal?

I cannot help but think that the Jews in the time of Jesus, or even for that matter, our own ancestors living under the Ottoman “Yoke”, felt the same way, the weight of oppression and the restriction of their God given freedom. Afterall, our own ancestors loved America for what the Declaration of Independence states the “inalienable rights” to Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

Just when we thought that things were better, after we followed all the orders, kept giving in to the ever changing “science” trusted that what was being done is for the “common good,” we find our freedom yet restricted and even our churches, rather than a place of “sanctuary”, a place where some might feel or be made to feel afraid, or worse, maybe unwelcome because of arbitrary “status” or behavior.

I have watched and lived with and among our community through all of this and I am proud by the magnificent efforts, contributions, concern and reason showed by most!! I have been inspired by and large, by the willingness of most to do the right thing in spite of the “rules” and instinctively showing over all a concern and care for others as if to imply an altruistic love for others, being led by God and not out of compulsion! We have not stopped being a church and nothing has kept us from being a family. We have walked in light, in spite of this darkness and you have been generous in your love and in your support keeping our church together before God who alone can we trust. Nothing can separate us from his love that we enjoy best in community.

(Continued on Page 4)

I just want to know when Jesus was born on. ~Fr. Shnork Souin

Throughout my ministry as a priest, many have asked the question; “If Jesus was born on December 25th, then why do we celebrate on January 6th?”

For some, today, the date is December 25th, others January 7th, others January 6th and again for others January 19th. So, are there 4 dates for the celebration of Christmas? What gives?

The answer to this question is not as plain nor as obvious as one might presume. Yes, while it’s true that we really don’t know when exactly Jesus was born, the fact remains that He was born, although God’s self-revelation in human history makes the actual date of this glorious celebration moot and quite

beside the point. In fact, during the very early years of the Christian church His birthday was not celebrated at all!! Many early church fathers omit it entirely from their lists of feasts.

Without going into the history of all the pagan window dressing associated with the modern yuletide season, the true celebrations, according to the ancient tradition of the church, was a culmination of events related to God’s Incarnation. This was not called “Christmas” but rather Theophany which means “revelation of God,” and was universally celebrated on January 6th by all Christendom, hi-lighted by the remembrance of Jesus’ Baptism. Although, ironically today, Christmas is a celebration of Jesus’ birthday, it wasn’t until later that the Nativity was incorporated into the January 6th celebrations of the Theophany.

The question about dates must be answered in 2 parts. There are actually only 2 dates for the observance of Jesus’ birth and not 4. They are December 25th and January 6th. The confusion of the other 2 dates, January 7th and 18th are due to the use of two calendars, the Gregorian and the Julian. While most of the known world, such as Canada, is on the Gregorian calendar (named after Pope Gregory of Rome), some Orthodox Christians maintain their liturgical calendars according to the ancient Julian calendar. Thus, the January 7th date actually corresponds with December 25th on the “old” Julian Calendar while January 19th corresponds to January 6th on the Gregorian calendar. Those who observe January 7th, December 25th on the Julian calendar, are referred to as “old calendarists.” Despite the calendar usage, all these churches observe the Epiphany or the Baptism of Jesus twelve days following the Nativity.

Secondly, the Armenians, who observe the Gregorian calendar except in Jerusalem, maintain to this day the ancient date of January 6th as the dual celebration of Jesus’ birth and baptism, where all the major events related to the Theophany are recalled, from the revelation of Jesus as the “Son of Man” the Incarnate Word, to His revelation as the “Son of God” the Prince of Peace and the King of Heaven. Therefore, this celebration includes everything from the Nativity of Christ in Bethlehem, the visitation of the Magi who came to “witness” Him as the Divine Revelation, the infancy narrative... His naming, His presentation in the temple, His circumcision and His Baptism in the River Jordan whereby His formal ministry of redemption was inaugurated by the opening of the heavens, the descent of God the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove, and the Voice of God the Father proclaiming that “This is my beloved Son.” The dual Theophany/Epiphany was celebrated on January 6th until the 5th century when the Council of Chalcedon (451 ad) formally declared December 25th as the date for the celebration of “Christmas” separating the Nativity from the Baptism of Christ by the “12 days of Christmas” remembered today in the popular Carol.

Although there are many compelling theories as to the reason for moving the celebration of the Nativity to December 25th, suffice to say that it is generally believed that the date was changed in order to override and subdue pagan feasts and practices dedicated to The Winter Solstice, because at the time Christians also used to continue their observance of these pagan festivities. The pagans called this celebration Saturnalia, in honor of their god Saturn, a festival lasting from the 17th to the 25th of December culminating with the “Birth of the Unconquerable Sun,” as the days began to lengthen, because among pagans it was generally believed that the sun who dies during the winter solstice rises from death thereafter. Since the date of the Epiphany or Baptism was more ancient, and was of primary importance as a liturgical feast, it was not possible to move it while the secondary and later addition of the nativity could be moved without great offense.

Armenia however, whose Christianity is of ancient Apostolic origins, did not adopt this change for the simple fact that there were no such pagan practices left in Armenia in the 5th century allowing them to remain faithful to the traditions of their forefathers. To this day, Armenians have continued to celebrate the Nativity on January 6th along with the Epiphany which is crowned, as with other Orthodox Church’s, in the observance of Christ’s Baptism, with a glorious “Blessing of the Waters” in whose climax a Cross is plunged into the water as a sign of God’s Saving mystery in Christ’s life from Womb to Tomb. The blessed water is offered to all as a sign of God’s manifestation in the glorious waters of the Jordan from which the Savior was revealed and it becomes possible for humanity to be born again to new life.

SIGN UP FOR YOUR 2022 STEWARDSHIP AND DUES COMMITMENTS WITH EASY MONTHLY CONTRIBUTIONS!



Ordination of Deacons on the Feast Day of Saint Stephen the Proto-Deacon

On December 25, the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church celebrated the Feast Day of Saint Stephen the Proto-Deacon and First Martyr, which is also the feast of the deacons serving in the Church.

On the occasion of the Feast, in the Holy Mother of God Church of the Diocese of Armavir (Etchmiadzin City), with the blessings of His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians; 19 seminarians from the 5th level of the Gevorkian Theological Seminary, were ordained into the diaconate, by His Grace Bishop Vasken Mirzakhanyan, Director of the Office of Social Doctrine of the Mother See.

During the Divine Liturgy, following the Holy Sacrament of Ordination; His Grace Bishop Vasken blessed the newly ordained deacons with the Holy Relic of Saint Stephen; then referred to the behavior of the Saint and the Martyrs of the Christian Church, noting in part: "...It is thanks to those Martyrs that we exist today as Christians, our Church exists, because, as according to the words of Tertullian, the basis of the Church is the blood of our Martyrs. Like a year ago, thousands of our brothers and sisters, our sons and daughters martyred for the holy land of Artsakh, Armenia, to preserve our Fatherland and faith. It means we are responsible to them. We must bow down to their sacred memory to live an honest and true life and stay away from all satanic deceptions".

Addressing the newly ordained deacons, Bishop Vasken urged; "Dear Deacons, it is appropriate to remember the message of our Lord from the Gospel that says; "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me (Matthew 16:24)". I believe that you have heard this message, taken up your cross and followed Christ. You have voluntarily chosen this service. Throughout your future service, you will build that path of the cross on which you will move. The path you will walk must be through prayer, bowing, service loving and devotion. You must be full of love towards the faithful and humanity in general. That great love that will establish the peace and the Divine power in you, which will guide you throughout your service. Be merciful, forgiving, always understanding the people".

During the sermon, the Celebrant Bishop Vasken also expressed his deep gratitude to the parents of the Deacons for granting their sons to the Church of Christ. In the conclusion, His Grace conveyed his congratulations to the Brotherhood and staff of the Educational Institutions of the Mother See, on the occasion of the Feast of Saint Stephen the Proto-Deacon and ordination of the Deacons.



THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE OF BISHOP DANIEL My Dear People,

It brings me great joy to greet you during this holy season of Christmas, the birth of Jesus Christ, the revelation of God in our world.

I am joyful even though this year, once again, we search to find the happiness that Christmas should bring us: the relentless waves of the pandemic continue to devastate. Our great nation is wracked by strife and discord. Anxiety, depression and violence strike close to home. All of this as our brothers and sisters in Armenia and Artsakh are grieving loss of life, and sacred lands, and they yearn for a secure future for their families.

And so, as we wrap our gifts and adapt our festivities to the dangers that lurk about, we long for the wholehearted joy that Christmas used to bring; the joy that Christmas should bring: the assurance that with the birth of Jesus, Almighty God's goodness, truth and healing have come into this world.

Saint Paul refers to that deep longing as our "Blessed Hope." The Hope he refers to is not an emotion, not a mental attitude, but a person: Jesus the Son of God Himself.

Writing to his disciple Titus, Saint Paul proclaims: "the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all humanity ... [and we] await our Blessed Hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" [Titus 2:11, 13].

Christmas is the celebration of a grand paradox: The Savior has "appeared." But still, we "await" Him. As we sing every Sunday in the Holy Badarak, "Christ is revealed amongst us"! But we still "await" Him! God has done his part. Now it is time for you and me to do our part: to turn ever more resolutely to the Lord, day by day: in spirited, constant prayer and worship, in recommitment to our calling as children of God and children of the Armenian Church; in patience and radical care for one another; in stepping outside our own lives and allowing our comfortable ways and convictions to be challenged; by rethinking our customary ways. In a word—a biblical word—by repentance.



Christmas is about God's gift and our call to action. The Son of God appeared in a troubled world such as ours these days. This reality should bring "Blessed Hope" to all humanity, a gift that people across our world so desperately crave.

I pray that each of you, with your families and loved ones, may reclaim for yourselves "Our Blessed Hope" during these holy days. For peace and stability in our world and for the glory of God.

Our "Blessed" Hope is born and revealed!
Blessed is the revelation of Christ!





Chairman’s Corner-December 2021

As 2021 comes to an end, we prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of our Lord. It is a time of great joy as we gather with family and friends during this holy period on the Christian calendar. It has been a very busy year.

While we continue to move our way around and through the pandemic, it is obvious that our parishioners have found a way to return to church and get involved in the many events that have taken place. We had a very successful Bazaar this year. I want to thank Marc Janigian, his committee and a cast of thousands that helped make this year’s bazaar very successful. Our Cultural Committee headed by Maestro Konstantin Petrossian continues to offer weekly programs for our community and held a very successful Christmas Concert. Our Woman’s Guild held its annual Cookie Stroll and will once again host an Armenian Christmas Dinner.



Please circle February 20 on your calendar. We will be holding our annual Parish Assembly. In addition to discussing things that have happened and look forward to what is to come, we will elect new

members to the Parish Council, Nominating Committee and Auditing Committee. Please consider running when asked by our capable Nominating Committee. Your Church needs you to be successful. We have come a long way and we still have a long road ahead. You can make a difference.

As we pause for the holidays, let us remember our loved ones who have left us this year. We are comforted by memories that will last a lifetime. It is my wish that you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,
John Megrđichian
Parish Council Chairman

Updated COVID-19 Guidelines for Pastors and Parishes
iocesan Primate Bishop DANIEL issues directive to the clergy of the Eastern Diocese, outlining updated guidelines to address the ongoing COVID-19 situation. The present directive has been sent to share these guidelines, and their underlying concerns, with our Diocesan leadership.

The guidelines respond to mounting societal concerns about the pandemic, as some locales show a recent rise in infections—a reality that has also been felt in the community of the Eastern Diocese.

It is the Primate’s intention to review the requirements on a monthly basis, and adjust them as appropriate, in accordance with the state of the pandemic.

“As our people have learned in so many ways over the past two years, we must care for one another, and be responsible for each other’s wellbeing. That is surely one of the hallmarks of our identity as Armenians, and as followers of the Lord Jesus Christ—beautifully expressed by his ardent disciple, Peter: 'Above all, love each other deeply, for love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer care to one another without hesitancy. Use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its diverse forms' (1 Peter 4:8-10).”

[COVID-19 Guidelines PDF](#)

FEAST OF THE ENLIGHTENERS THADDEUS AND BARTHOLOMEW

Saints Sahag and Mesrob-providence On Saturday December 5, the Feast of the Enlighteners Thaddeus and Bartholomew, Father Haroutiun Sabounjian was invited by the Pastor, Father Shnork Souin, of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church in Providence, to return as a priest since his ordination and appointment to Holy Resurrection, following a one and one half year internship at Saints Sahag and Mesrob. Father Haroutiun was much loved and respected during his tenure and brought great value the ministry of the parish and great support Der Shnork especially in time of shut down and pandemic. Joining Father Shnork along with a grateful and proud parish were Frs. Simeon Odabashian, and Nerses Jebejian along with the deacons, sub-deacons and Choir, Jr. Choir of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church.

Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church was so pleased to worship with and receive the blessing of Father Haroutiun Sabounjian and wish him the very best in continued service to the parish and faithful of Holy Resurrection of New Britain, Ct.



Fr. Haroutiun receiving the “gifts” from Dn. Megrđichian. Below: distributing the blessed sacrament to the faithful of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob-(Pictured: Nick and Sebu Souin)



(Pastor's Points of Light - Continued from Page 1)

Paul says that as we were formerly in "darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord's;" we "walk as children of Light." Ephesians 5:8 As we enter this new year, and celebrate the glorious theophany of our Lord Jesus, o the dual celebration of his Birth and baptism, we are reminded once again that the Lord has made an eternal covenant with us sealed in Christ's own blood. As children of this NEW and ETERNAL covenant, we are told by God, first by the Prophet Jeremiah, then in the letter to the Hebrews that "I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 11 No longer will they teach their neighbor or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. 12 For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." (**Hebrews 8:10-12**)

Dear faithful, we are the children of the Eternal Covenant, the New Israel. We do not live yoked "under the law, but live under Grace" (Romans 6:14), knowing God whose law of LOVE is etched in our hearts and minds. Our freedom is won by the sacrifice of his blood, he is our priest and at the same time the sufficient and eternal sacrifice, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. With this Nativity season and the New Year, we trust in our Father that through his Holy Son, and by the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit we will bring him Glory through our unwavering Orthodox faith, our charitable works of love and our gathering as his Body to sing songs of praise and thanksgiving at his Holy Table from which we receive the precious and life giving Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus, born to be our savior and to bring us into his father's Kingdom of God " so that (his)y joy may be in (us), and (our) joy may be made full. (John 15:11)

Have a Happy and Blessed New Year, a Merry Christmas! Christ is Born and Revealed, blessed is the revelation of Christ.

Sponsored Child Nare in Armenia

Nareh Gasparyan KP-167 I am Nareh Gasparyan. I am mourning for my father and for other killed soldiers. My father's name is Garik. I love him very much and I miss him. I've got an elder sister. Her name is Marie and she is 2 years older than me. I am 8. I go in for dancing and I want to become a dancer. Soon there will be summer holidays and I want to go to Yerevan to my grandparents. My uncle, Sophie, and Agnes also live there. I love them all.

I am in the 2nd grade and of course I already can write myself. We are taking distance learning with my mother. I learned English letters at home, with the help of grandmother as my mother works, in the mornings. I have my dance classes in the evening. My mother takes me and also piano and Art school. I like dancing very much. During the summer holidays I visited my grandmother and grandfather who live in Yerevan. I felt happy there, as there are my relatives. I was very scared when the war started. My uncle took me and my sister to Yerevan, where we stayed for a month. Meanwhile, my mother and grandmother were still in Qajaran. My mother was working. Now we are all together, and I am very happy for it. I love my mother very much.

Love
Nare Gasparyan

14-Year-Old Armenian Figure Skater Makes History
Armenian-Russian figure skater Adelia Petrosian has made history as the first female to perform two quadruple Rittberger jumps in a program.

The 14-year-old reached the milestone in the free skate at Russian Figure Skating Championships.

Earlier this season, Petrosian became the first female skater to perform a quadruple Rittberger in a women's competition.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbrnwEuTtkk>

**VETERANS DAY COLLECTION/DONATION
Thank You Letter**



"My club went to Veterans for tomorrow last night and delivered 20 Christmas packages for the Veterans who live there. Thank you again for the Church donation"

~ Jake Taraksian

Attached are a few pictures of the club members as well as the residents that received the gift.

Jake Taraksian expressed his thanks for the Veterans Day plate offering helping to make many RI veterans happy for Christmas.



Gary Nahabedian, Honorary Guest Jake Taraksian, Fr. Souin and Dn. Alex at Veterans Cemetery Exeter on Veterans Day



**St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Armenian Church
Our Parish Pilgrimage to Armenia
Led by Fr. Shnork Souin, Pastor
June 5 - 18, 2022**

**Registration
Deadline:
Jan. 15, 2022**

Featuring visits to:

Etchmiadzin-Yerevan & Armenian Genocide Memorial - Khor Virap & Noravank - Lake Sevan & Dilijan - Garni & Geghard - Lori and Gyumri

Trip includes: Round-trip airfare from BOS; Full transportation and transfers in Armenia as specified in itinerary; Breakfast and Lunch/Dinner according to the itinerary; Air Hotel accommodation (Double occupancy) Entrance fee to all sightseeing destinations; Tour Guide (English)

Cost per person (based on double occupancy) \$2,975
Space is limited.



For more information, contact:
Fr. Shnork Souin: (201) 306-4304
SIMATours@gmail.com (610) 359-7521

[Registration Form or Call Fr. Shnork 401-272-7712](#)

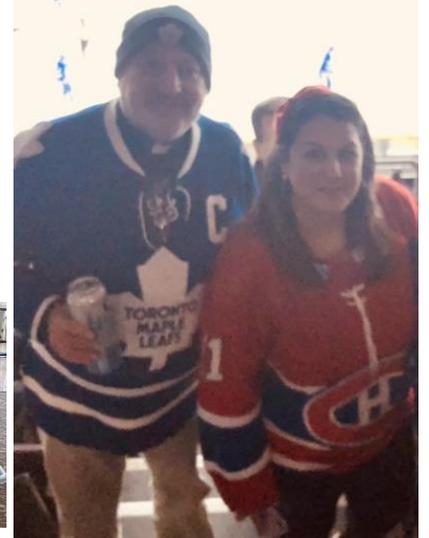
Cultural Committee

Tribute to David Ariyan

Virtuoso Kamancha player - 12/28/2021

David Ayriyan belongs to the constellation of instrumentalists who, with their mastery, have left their mark on history. As a virtuoso kamancha player he performed in many countries, played Armenian folk music. Several Armenian composers have written music especially for him. His performances in Rhode Island with the orchestra and with various groups were always warmly received by the public. On the master's birthday, December 28, the Cultural Committee of the Church in the Armenian Cultural Hour program presented the participation of famous musicians and singers.

View concert [HERE](#)



Top: 1st Day of Sunday School Dn. Alex at Bazaar with children
Below: Golden Age Fellowship

Sunday School Children receive a special blessing following Der Hayr's Children's Sermon
Below: Children's Bazaar Food Collection



Cultural Committee

The Arts Education Program ended the first semester of the academic year 2021-2022. Students attend lessons in drawing, sculpture (teachers Anna and Artur Ovanesian), violin (Gregory Ayriyan), piano (Mari Panosian, Gregory Ayriyan), vocals (Gohar Manjelijian), guitar (Vahan Grigorian). Of particular interest is the dance group "Nazeli" (choreographers Narine Lemme and Lusine Corsini), in which 20 boys and girls participate, which prepares new dances. A dance program as well as an Art Exhibition of students' work will be shown at the beginning of June in the traditional Talent show.

The Arts Education Program invites children to participate. Second semester The Arts Education Program will begin on January 8, 2022. All lessons are held on Saturdays, Nazeli dances on Mondays from 6 to 8. Applications can be obtained from the church office. For all questions, please contact Mrs. Janna Guegamian, Program Chair (401) 861 3573, e-mail: petroskon@aol.com

Christmas Concert "O Holy Night"

A festive Christmas concert was held at Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church. It was initiated by the Armenian



Mari Megrđichian Soloist

Armenian Sacred Music Concert by Church Choir

The Cultural Committee of the Church on Friday, December 3,



presented the program of the Armenian Cultural Hour, dedicated to Armenian spiritual music. Our Church choir presented a beautiful program. The Church's musical director, Maestro Konstantin Petrossian, chose hymns and melodies that are played during various church services. The performers are the members of our Church Choir Stephanie Masoian, Satenik Emdjian, Yeretsgin Julie Souin, Leona Tovmasian-Bailey,

Chorale of Rhode Island and the Cultural committee. The Armenian chorale of RI, soloists, students of the Armenian school of the church took part in the concert.

Artistic director, Conductor and Chairman of the Cultural committee Maestro Konstantin Petrossian presented an interesting program, consisting of Armenian and traditional Christmas carols. The audience warmly greeted the performances of the chorale, pianist Mari Panosian, and soloists Gohar Manjelijian, Mari Megrđichian, Satenik Emdjian, violinist Gregory Ayriyan. The performance of children from the Armenian school, who sang New Year's songs, as well as Christmas carols with the Armenian Chorale, was warmly received.

As the Pastor of the Church, Rev.Fr. Shnork Souin, said at the end of the concert, this concert was long-awaited due to the



Covid-19, and became an inspiring factor in the resuming of the cultural life of the community. He thanked Maestro Petrossian, members of the chorale, soloists, and students of the Armenian school for the wonderful Christmas present. The evening was concluded at Egavian cultural center with the reception, which was organized by the Cultural committee of the Church Mari Megrđichian, Gregory Yehtikian, Peter Taraian, Gary Nahabedian, Vahan Grigorian, whose organ was played by the church organist Janna Guegamian. All the songs to be performed were presented by Dn. Alex Sargavag Calikyan, who, after graduating from Saint Nersess Seminary, now holds the position of pastor's assistant of our church. The recording and technical editing done by **Daniel Ayriyan**





What is Holy Communion? By Dn. Johnny Chadoyan

During his two week visit to Rhode Island, graduate of St. Nersess Seminary, Dn. Johnny served our church, not only at all liturgical gatherings, but also participated in many ministries and activities, from attending the Youth Hockey Outing, Singing at the Evening In Honor Of the Holy Mother of God at St. Francis Church with Dn. Alex, where Fr. Shnork was invited to speak about the unique Orthodox perspective and focus of the Blessed Virgin, as well as delivering foods and gifts to local charities with Fr. Shnork and Dn. Alex. Fr. Shnork asked him also to provide a theological mediation for the Paros.



Throughout the Armenian Churches around the world, participating in the Divine Liturgy has been an important aspect of our Christian lives that gives us more than something on our tongues in our house of worship; being united with Jesus Christ. Our most valued aspect of the Divine Liturgy is receiving Holy Communion; body and blood of Jesus on our tongues for the transgression and remissions of our sins. What does it mean to receive the bread which the priest prepares that is dipped into the wine? Is it some kind of magic that will turn us into super human beings that can make us sinless like Christ? Or is it rather a sign of Christ? Or could it be something we eat because we become hungry in Church? When we come to receive Holy Communion in the Armenian Church, we are not only receiving the body and blood of Jesus Christ, but more importantly, we as one family in the house of worship are being unified, and become one with God in heaven because we are receiving the blood and body of Jesus Christ. In this essay, I will describe how the events of the Old and New Testaments are connected to the Armenian Church tradition's notion of Holy Communion, namely, the establishment of the Covenant of Abraham, and depictions of the Last Supper according to the various gospel accounts.

Throughout the Old Testament, the sacrifice of animals are depicted. The Old Testament is mainly the history of Israel; the Lord establishing a covenant with the chosen people of Israel, the Jews. The covenant was God's promise to protect the Jewish people of Israel as long they kept their obligations; keeping the Lord's commandments and worshipping Him. This covenant was first introduced to Abraham in the book of Genesis: 'When Abraham was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram, and said to him, 'I am God almighty; walk before me, and be blameless. And I will make my covenant between me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.' Then Abraham fell on his face; and God said to him, 'Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall you your name be Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your descendants after you. And I will give to you, and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojourning, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.' And God said to Abraham, 'As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is my covenant, which you shall keep, between me and you and your descendants after you...' (Badarak and the Bible, pg. 7, OT. Gen 17:1-10) In this passage of Genesis, God is promising to Abraham that he will transform him into an honorable king of nations and give him success and wealth. As a result of giving Abraham all of this authority and power, he wanted his people, the Jews, to keep the covenant, acknowledging that he is the only God and worshiping no one else.

The people of Israel agreeing to a covenant with God also meant performing animal sacrifices. In Exodus, it gives an example of the animal sacrifices: "All the words which the Lord has spoken we will do." And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the people of Israel, who offered burnt offerings and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen to the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people: and they said, 'All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient.' And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, 'Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord had made with you in accordance with all these words.'" (The Badarak and the Bible, pg. 9, Exodus, 24:3-8) In this passage, it not only shows the sacrifice at the Holy Altar, but it also shows a meaning behind the distribution of the blood; it is essentially a unification and participation with Jesus Christ by being purified through Him. In doing so, the people were given a new beginning by being sprayed with the blood of the animal's sacrifices; this was the covenant between the Lord and the people of Israel. This also meant being united to God as one with him. Now I am going to transition to the New Testament historical events and interpretations of the gospels of Matthew, Luke and John in relation to Holy Communion.

The Eucharist is also referred to as the body and blood of Jesus Christ. It is considered to be older than any of the books in the New Testament. Christians had celebrated the Eucharist prior to any of the books that described the Last Supper. When each of the Gospel writers wrote their interpretations of the last supper, it was based off of their experience of partaking in the Eucharist within their



Fr. Adam Young, Pastor St. Francis of Assisi with Frs. Shnork and Nick of the Greek orthodox Church and young Armenian Deacons for a night honoring the Holy Mother of God in the Western and Eastern Traditions.

Fr. Shnork delivering gifts and Holiday Outreach to Mary House to Fr. James Ruggieri with Dns. Alex and Johnny



Christian communities. The earliest writing of the last supper was in 54 AD, in Paul's letter addressed to the Corinthians (Corinthians 11:23-26), written twenty years after the last supper occurred. The gospels were written a decade or even later than that. The New Testament writings were for Christian insiders who knew the church and Christian message; indeed, they did not include all details of the last supper. As we have seen throughout the Old Testament, the covenant of God freed the people out of slavery and established sole worship to the Lord, in addition to performing animal sacrifices with the blood as the symbol representing purification. There is a new covenant between God and the Son, Jesus Christ. During the last supper, Jesus told his disciples: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood." (Findikyan, pg. 10) When Jesus was referring to his "blood," (Findikyan, pg. 10) he was talking about his crucifixion on the cross the following day. In a way, the blood shed during Christ's death on the cross shed was the sacrifice that validated the new covenant between humankind and God; this was the new covenant and incarnation. Now, I will show the interpretations of the last supper in the Holy Gospels: Matthew, Luke, and John.

Matthew's description of the last supper: "Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my father's kingdom.'" (Findikyan, pg. 11, Matthew 26:26-29) Here, Christ is presenting his body and blood to the disciples as his new covenant, a sacrifice for not only the disciples, but for the forgiveness and transgressions of all of humanity's sins. This receiving of Holy Communion through Jesus Christ also unites us as one with God. Likewise, we also participate in the Divine Liturgy by receiving Holy Communion just as the Disciples ate together in the last supper and who were in fellowship and were united through Christ to oneness with God.

Luke's description of the last supper: "And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And likewise, the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'" (Findikyan, pg. 14, Luke 22: 19-20) This interpretation of the last supper is quite different because it has an emphasis on remembering Christ when consuming his body and blood. When we receive the holy communion in the divine liturgy, we are also remembering the last supper, but also remembering Christ; being united as one on earth as in heaven, united to God.

The gospel of John gives a description of the feeding of the five thousand and connects this event to the Passover meal. The feeding of the five thousand and Passover meal is described as follows: "Jesus went up on the mountain, and there sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a multitude was coming to him, Jesus said to Phillip, 'How are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?' This he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Phillip answered him 'Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.' One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon peter's brother said to him, 'There is a lad here who has five barely loaves and two; but what are they among so many?' Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was such grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost.' So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from five barely loaves, left by those who had eaten. When the people saw the sign which he had done, they said, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!'" (Findikyan, pg. 16, John 6:3-6) In a way, when we are sinful and are seeking fulfillment in God, Jesus feeds us his love, humility, and forgiveness. In the same way, he feeds the five-thousand, whose hunger was nourished by his miracle. It is the same when we are in Church having fellowship in the Divine Liturgy, receiving his blood and body; he fills us up with his love and holiness and we become one with Christ as the heavenly Church. In the feeding of the five thousand, they were feed and became filled up by Christ's miracle; this is the same as when the priest breaks the holy bread to distribute the body and blood to the congregation in the Divine Liturgy.

In verses 32-34, John gives an example of being united as one with God: "Jesus said to them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven, and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Lord, give us this bread always.'" (Findikyan, pg. 20, John 6:32-34) In this passage, Christ refers to the bread as himself; when he comes down to the earth through incarnation, he is not just healing and proclaiming the word, but he is primarily unifying all of humanity to oneness with God, just as we are unified as one body in God, through Holy Communion.

In one of our hymns of the Divine Liturgy, one of the lines pertains to Holy Communion: "This church has now become one soul." (The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church, Findikyan, pg. 27) In this one line of the Divine Liturgy, it is referring to us as the Church, having become united together as one family. As a result of the incarnation, Christ was born into the world as God and human. Christ changed the course of humanity in his ministry, not only because he healed and preached, but also because he was crucified and resurrected from the dead. His people became united together, as one with God in heaven, thus making the earth heavenly because God sent his son into the world as divine and human. This is what we call the incarnation.

This calls into question: how can we as a Church stay unified as one body through Christ and remain one with God in the 21st century? My understanding is to keep ourselves united as one body in the Armenian Church, with God treating the Church as the heavens. We must as Christians remember when we take Holy Communion, that we recognize Jesus Christ through the body and blood. We all come together as one body in the Armenian Church, neither because we are all Armenian, nor may we share some of the same interests, but rather through Christ and His incarnation, because we have been enabled to become one body and see the Church as heavenly, because we are in the presence of God and are one body, unified with God the father. As we recall, we remember two important events that pertain to Holy Communion; the Lord's Last Supper and his crucifixion, which was his ultimate sacrifice and the initiation of the new covenant with God. Thus, this one term, koinonia has each of the following meanings: fellowship, participation, and becoming

We all come together as one body in the Armenian Church, neither because we are all Armenian, nor may we share some of the same interests, but rather through Christ and His incarnation, because we have been enabled to become one body and see the Church as heavenly, because we are in the presence of God and are one body, unified with God the father.



On Sunday January 2, 2022 after a fight with COVID-19, "Baron Bogos" Gyulerserian , a genocide survivor, graduate of the famous Melkonian School in Cyprus, "the man in the front pew", passed away peacefully after a life of faith, and devotion to the Armenian Church, never willfully missing a Sunday in church. May the memory of the Righteous be eternally Blessed. *This was a recent photo from September 2021*

one body. In participating in Christ's ultimate sacrifice as one body in the Armenian Church, we are forgiven for our transgressions and are remitted of our sins. That is incarnation at its finest.

In conclusion, while the covenant of animal sacrifices was a prophetic imperfect precursor to a participation of Holy Communion by being purified through Christ, the gospels interpret the last supper and Christ by means of distributing his body and blood to his disciples as a meal and fellowship. Second, the feeding of the five thousand is connected to Holy Communion because they who ate were filled with his holiness just as we are with Holy Communion because, just as their hunger was fed, we are hungry to receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ for the sins we commit. Furthermore, when we participate in Holy Communion, the church becomes one body, simultaneously becoming one with God the Father. Lastly, the church must remember Jesus Christ in order to stay as one body, the last supper and his ultimate sacrifice being the incarnation that enabled us to be forgiven for our sins.

PHOTO GALLERY



Left: Sunday School Tree Decoration Rt: Our Concert with RI Armenian Choral & M



Below Left:: Armenian School Christmas Hantess; Right: Youth Outing at the DUNC following a Pizza Party hosted by Ayzavian Family at the church



Below: Sdn. Anthony Maldonado & Der Hayr deliver gifts to Mary house for Christmas



A MAN OF FAITH: JOSEPH THE CARPENTER



Active meeting assessing the needs of the Parish Assembly on February 20, 2022 Holy Resurrection Church New Britain



Food Preparations for Bazaar



Understanding Joseph's role in the first Christmas can be the first step in approaching Jesus—and learning what it means to be a person of faith.

Behold, the Lord's angel came to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, fear not to take Mary as your wife: for she has conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will bring forth a son, and you will call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:20-22)

Despite the warm, peaceful feelings Christmas evokes, the story of Christ's birth could have ended in tragedy—cut off before it had barely begun.

It was one man's calling to lift it out of tragedy—and through his actions, to allow the warmth and sweetness of Christmas to prevail. That man was Joseph: the husband of Mary, and the earthly father who raised and instructed Jesus.

Joseph the Carpenter is an indistinct figure in three of the four gospels. He doesn't appear at all in Mark. In John he's only present in the "family name" of our Lord: "Jesus son of Joseph." In Luke he's cast as a witness: a pious bystander standing off to the side, who "marvels" as divine revelations unfold before him. That is certainly the image reinforced in our traditional picture of the Nativity.

But in Matthew's gospel we truly get to meet Joseph, and even to listen in on his thoughts. His is the story that actually begins the New Testament. And this tells us something about the way the earliest Christians regarded Joseph. To them, understanding his role was the first step in approaching Jesus.

With evident respect, Matthew assures us that Joseph was "a righteous man." At the same time, he gives indications that Joseph's nature tended towards caution and timidity. But three visionary dreams from "the angel of the Lord" effect an amazing turn in his personality. Joseph becomes a man of action, undertaking swift, daring measures to protect his wife, rescue the infant Jesus, and defy the malignant powers arrayed against the Holy Family.

At three critical junctures—standing by Mary in her time of pregnancy (Mt 1:20-24); preemptively stealing away from Bethlehem to escape King Herod's wrath (Mt 2:13-15); and returning from Egypt to take up a new life in Nazareth (Mt 2:19-23)—Joseph's actions turn the tide of the story, allowing it to move forward.

But what impels him to act? Not some native cunning or energy, but rather his trust, his confidence, in the messenger of God. In this way, Joseph is revealed as the quintessential man of faith.

Reading Joseph's story as Armenian Christians, one can hardly overlook the arresting parallels with our own forebears: Armenian parents who lived near the turn of the last century. They, too, were roused from slumber due to some premonition

of danger. They, too, gathered up their children, and left hearth and home seeking refuge in a strange land. All of them were trying to escape death on a mass scale, just as the infant Jesus was. Many of our ancestors did not survive. But we today are the living testament of those who did: who found salvation and a new life. This parallel is a reminder of how people living centuries apart found courage within their hearts, because of their faith.

A Tender Father

After his dramatic role in Jesus' youth, Joseph as a character recedes from the gospels. But not before he leaves an indelible impression on the rest of the narrative. It would have been Joseph who taught Jesus how to practice his trade, how to manage a household and the affairs of commerce, how to perform the pious offices of the Hebrew religion. The gospels testify to Jesus' profound familiarity with these things later in life; they are the inheritance Joseph left to his son.

Yet this influence may have had another aspect. Joseph probably did not live to an old age of 80 or 90. Indeed, tradition has it that he died while Jesus was still relatively young. The Gospel leaves tantalizing clues about the way this emotional passage may have had a meaningful effect on our Lord's later ministry.

A recurring theme in Jesus' teaching concerns the tenderness of a father: often a father who has been separated from his child in some way, but whose love never dies. We see it in parables like the Prodigal Son, and especially in Jesus' beautiful descriptions of God's loving concern for mankind.

This theme in Scripture seems to originate with Jesus: search the Old Testament and you will find nothing quite like it. Of course, God was always the Father of Creation (as Jesus would teach in the Lord's Prayer). But God never knew the experience of having a father until, incarnate as man, He came under the tutelage of Joseph. So perhaps this touching emphasis in the adult Jesus' message owes something to the gentle, fatherly ministry he received as a boy from Joseph the Carpenter.

One could hardly imagine a more consequential effect of one man's humble ministry to Jesus Christ.

And for us today, Joseph's example can inform our own efforts to be faithful to Jesus, and take up his ministry in the world.

We have already noted that while Joseph himself is absent from most of the Gospel, his influence re-emerges every time someone refers to "Jesus, the son of Joseph." It is as if people in those early days first encountered Jesus by knowing his relationship to Joseph. Surely the father's reputation for justice and righteousness persuaded doubters to listen to Jesus, and consider his words.

The lesson for us is profound. For to the world at large, we—Christ's modern followers—are an entry point for getting to know Jesus. Our own faithful ministry, humble though it may be, has the potential to open the door for others to come to our Lord.

Be mindful of that role as we proclaim Christ's birth to the world. And as we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, in the devotion of Mary, and in the blessing of God's love for mankind, find inspiration in the man of faith, Joseph, whose tender ministry allowed the first Christmas, and every Christmas, to ring with joy and peace.

By Christopher H. Zakian

CHRISTMAS THEOPHANY 2022

In spite of the ever changing challenges facing our nation and our state, we are thankful to allmighty God that we have enjoyed the family fellowship of a wonderful Holiday season, with a wonderful Cookie Stroll sponsored by Women's Guild, along with their Christmas Luncheon, a Liturgical Music Festival and Concert, Christmas Eve Carols and Candles, and Eve of Theophany, and Feast of nativity and Water Blessing with John Stickler as Godfather of the Cross. I wish you all a very Blessed New Year.

**Christ is Born and
revealed**

**Blessed is the Revelation
of Christ.**

**Let us Glorify Him with
our Faith, Hope and Love.**

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Ձեզ եւ մեզ մեծ
աւ ետիս :



SAINTS SAHAG & MESROB
ARMENIAN CHURCH

Սբ. Սահակ եւ Ա. Մեսրոպ Հայաստանեայց Առաքելական Եկեղեցի

Fr. Shnork Souin, Pastor

cell: 201-306-4304



darshnork@gmail.com



office: 401-272-7712

NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2022

Re: Parish Assembly Slate Nominations

We, the members of the 2022 Nominating Committee, are actively looking for members of our Church to help where needed. There are a number of vacancies to fill our ballots come February and we are asking you to please consider giving of your time, talents and experience.

If a nominating committee member approaches you to consider nomination in any position, please carefully consider giving a positive answer. You are wanted and needed; your support and services are a valuable stewardship for our parish.

If you have been thinking of giving more of yourself to our church, helping in any way that you can, becoming more involved, following in your parents' and grandparents' footsteps, call one of us.

Please do not wait for us to call you, we may not know your intentions but are ready and willing to accept them.

The positions we will be looking to fill will be:

- Chairman of the day
- Secretary of the day
- Parish Council members
- Auditing committee
- Nominating committee

If you would like to volunteer your candidacy, please speak with nominating committee member or Fr. Shnork Souin

Sincerely

- Stephanie Masoian (401) 862-6323
- Krista Janigian (401) 523-6335
- Debbie Megrdichian (401) 529-8873

**Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church
Annual Parish Assembly
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2022
The Nominating Committee
WANTED
~A FEW GOOD STEWARDS~**

STEPHANIE MASOIAN 862-6323
KRISTA JANIGIAN 523-6335
DEBBIE MEGRDICHIAN 529-8873

VACANCIES

CHAIRMAN OF THE DAY-2 TO BE NOMINATED
SECRETARY OF THE DAY-2 TO BE NOMINATED
PARISH COUNCIL 6 TO BE ELECTED-9 TO BE
NOMINATED
AUDITING COMMITTEE-2 TO BE NOMINATED
NOMINATING COMMITTEE-5 TO BE
NOMINATED

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER YOUR
CANDIDACY, PLEASE SPEAK TO ANY OF US OR FR.
SHNORK SOUIN, PASTOR 201-306-4304.

**TIME. TALENT. TREASURE
RESPOND TO OUR LORD'S CALL TO SERVE**

PLEDGE YOUR PARISH STEWARDSHIP/DUES NOW FOR 2022

**\$175/PERSON; \$125 SENIORS and
\$100/STUDENTS**

**Pay monthly or all at once by setting up
convenient monthly payments NOW!!!**

Click: www.stsahmes.org/dues



THANK YOU TO APET AND ANOUSH VARTANIAN

The pastor and parish of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church are very grateful to Apet and Anoush Vartanian for generously Having our front ceremonial doors renovated and refinished. They have done this in memory and in honor of their parents. May God bless their offering and the Vartanian family.



THE SERABIAN FAMILY CELEBRATED THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF THEIR FATHER AND FAITHFUL PARISHIONER NUSHAN SERABIAN IN DECEMBER 2021



DECEMBER 13 - THE WOMEN'S UOLD HOSTED A VERY BEAUTIFUL AND SUCCESSFUL COOKIE STROLL ATTENDED BY OVER 75 WOMEN WITH DELICIOUS AND ASSORTED COOKIES, PRIZES, ENTERTAINMENT BY DJ VAHAN AND DESSERT.



YOUGHAKIN OFFERINGS "FOR THE OIL LAMPS" & CHRISTMAS DONATIONS 2021-22 TO SAINTS SAHAG AND MESROB ARMENIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

*Fr. Shnork & Yn. Julie Souin
The Ararat Association, Alan
Zartarian, President*

*In Loving Memory of my beloved
husband Gerald, and our precious
grandson Nicholas Mall - By
Lillian Norigian*

Robert S Simonian

John A Derderian

Karen & William Brannon

Carol A Ghazarian

Robert Zartarian

Margaret Chevian

Melanie Krikorian

Linda L Angell

Steven & Joanne Zaroogian

Arthur R Ventrone

Allen & Lori Ann Ovaginian

Robert & Barbara Muksian

John & Maureen Melkonian

Marilyn J. Woloohojian

Joyce Avedisian

Kenneth & Carol Pjojian

Ronald & Rosemary Sepe

Jeff & Dianne Boghossian

Linda Grant

Grigor & Nayiri Odabashyan

Faith Danielian

Vernon & Cynthia Samoorian

Susan Tashjian

Aurora Emdjian

Agnes Killabian

Ed & Irene Eranosian

Gary Dombrowski

Barbara Stone

Nathalie Yaghoobian

Marjorie Martiesian

Michael & Barbara Ohanian

Gregory Yekhtikian

Sue & Ann Ayrassian

Mrs. Martha Chakoian Mantaian

Martha Jamgochian

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

*The Ararat Association, Alan Zartarian, President
John & Maureen Melkonian*



MEMORIES FROM THE 2021 WOMEN'S GUILD COOKIE STROLL



ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS THE FEAST OF THE THEOPHANY

“Armenian Christmas,” as it is popularly called, is a culmination of celebrations of events related to Christ’s Incarnation. Theophany or Epiphany (or *Astvadz-a-haydnootyoon* in Armenian) means “revelation of God,” which is the central theme of the Christmas Season in the Armenian Church. During the “Armenian Christmas” season, the major events that are celebrated are the Nativity of Christ in Bethlehem and His Baptism in the River Jordan. The day of this major feast in the Armenian Church is January 6th. A ceremony called “Blessing of Water” is conducted in the Armenian Church to commemorate Christ’s Baptism.

It is frequently asked as to why Armenians do not celebrate Christmas on December 25th with the rest of the world. Obviously, the exact date of Christ’s birth has not been historically established—it is neither recorded in the Gospels. However, historically, all Christian churches celebrated Christ’s birth on January 6th until the fourth century.

According to Roman Catholic sources, the date was changed from January 6th to December 25th in order to override a pagan feast dedicated to the birth of the Sun which was celebrated on December 25th. At the time
October/November/December 2021

Christians used to continue their observance of these pagan festivities. In order to undermine and subdue this pagan practice, the church hierarchy designated December 25th as the official date of Christmas and January 6th as the feast of Epiphany. However, Armenia was not affected by this change for the simple fact that there were no such pagan practices in Armenia, on that date, and the fact that the Armenian Church was not a satellite of the Roman Church. Thus, remaining faithful to the traditions of their forefathers, Armenians have continued to celebrate Christmas on January 6th until today.

In the Holy Land: January 19th

In the Holy Land, the Orthodox churches use the old calendar: Julian Calendar (which has a difference of thirteen days) to determine the date of the religious feasts. Accordingly, the Armenians celebrate Christmas on January 19th (January 6 in Julian Calendar) and the Greek Orthodox celebrate on January 7th (December 25 in Julian Calendar). On the day before Armenian Christmas, January 18th, the Armenian Patriarch together with the clergy and the faithful, travels from Jerusalem to the city of Bethlehem, to the Church of Nativity of Christ, where elaborate and colorful ceremonies take place. Outside, in the large square of the Church of Nativity, the Patriarch and his entourage are greeted by the Mayor of Bethlehem and City officials. A procession led by Armenian scouts and their band, advance the Patriarch into the Church of Nativity, while priests, seminarians and the faithful join in the singing of Armenian hymns. Afterwards, church services and ceremonies are conducted in the Cathedral of Nativity all night long and until the next day, January 19th.

Source: St. Andrew Information Network

Outreach donations and benevolence from SSMAC 1/ PAROS FOUNDATION



11/19/2021

Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church
70 Jefferson Street
Providence, RI 02908

On behalf of The Paros Foundation please accept my sincere thanks for the generous donation of \$250.00 in support of our organization. Our mission is to leave a long and lasting positive impact on Armenia and her people through cultural, educational, humanitarian and development projects implemented in a transparent and efficient manner. The support we receive from our sponsors around the world, like you, continues to allow us to help children, families, the arts and people with disabilities throughout Armenia and Artsakh.

The Paros Foundation has identified and is closely working with six exemplary organizations that harness Armenia's artistic talent and human potential. These organizations include our namesake, the Paros Chamber Choir, the UNISON NGO-Supporting People with Special Needs, Manana Youth Center, Vanadzor Art School, Ghoghhanj Children's Center and the Vanadzor Museum of Fine Arts. Each of these amazing organizations contributes significantly to Armenia and her people.

In 2015, we successfully reached our goal of implementing 100 projects in Armenia and Artsakh through our 100 for 100 Projects for Prosperity initiative commemorating the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide. Since then we have chosen to continue our work in Armenia using the same project based model and we call this initiative "Projects for Prosperity." Be sure to visit www.parosfoundation.org to learn more and get involved.

Once again, thank you for your generous support.

Warmest regards,

Peter A. Abajian
Executive Director

Please retain this receipt for your donation to the: Paros Foundation, 2217 5th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710

Donations to the Paros Foundation, a U.S. based 501(c)3, non-profit organization may be tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Our EIN number is: 20-5094630. No Goods or services were provided in exchange for this contribution.

Received From:	Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church
Amount:	\$250.00
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Date:	10/25/2021

2217 5th Street, Berkeley, CA 94710
Telephone: (510) 649-2182 Email: info@parosfoundation.org Web: www.parosfoundation.org



DIocese OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA (EASTERN)
ԱՊՈՍՏՈՂՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՀԱՅՈՑ ԱՍԵՆՈՒԿԱՅԻՆ ԱՐԵՎԵՆԵԱՆ ԹԵՍԻ

Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate

12/13/2021

Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church
Rev. Fr. Shnork Souin
70 Jefferson Street
Providence, RI 02908-4923

Dear Fr. Shnork:

Thank you for your generous contribution of \$400.00 dated 12/01/2021 to the Haiti-Lebanon Emergency Relief fund. We have witnessed the heartbreaking images from Haiti, which experienced a mammoth earthquake last month. As Armenians, news of this natural disaster summons up the compassionate feelings we had in the aftermath of the earthquake that rocked our homeland in 1988. Less visible in the general public sphere -- but profoundly urgent to us as Armenians -- is the ongoing crisis in Lebanon. More than a year after the catastrophic explosion in Beirut's harbor, the country is still burdened by the destruction and loss of life that occurred. As such our Diocese has offered support to His Holiness Aram I for our Armenian brethren in Lebanon which will be used to provide relief aid to those still afflicted by this disaster. Thank you for answering the call and helping Haiti & Lebanon and for all you do to support our Diocese! We are truly grateful. We wish you and your loved ones the very best of health and to remain safe during these challenging times.

The Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) is dedicated to upholding our centuries-old faith and traditions. With your support, we are able to develop and implement ministries and programs to ensure that the Armenian Church remains vital in the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

Please note that no goods or services were received and that your contribution is tax-deductible (ID# 13-1628202) to the fullest extent of the law.

Thank you once again for your support.

Warm regards,

Laurie Onanian
Development Director



400 W Cummings Park, Suite 3725 | Woburn, MA 01801 | 617-926-8733 | info@armeniatree.org

November 19, 2021

ARMENIATREE.ORG

Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church Saturday School
70 Jefferson St.
Providence, RI 02908

Dear Friends,

On behalf of Carolyn Mugar and Armenia Tree Project, thank you for your donation of \$250.00 (gift date 10/25/2021). Now more than ever, we are relying on the financial support of our donors and friends to continue our operations, which include planting, environmental education, and employing our staff and seasonal workers.

With your support, ATP is able to make an economic impact in Armenia with just not planting trees, but creating jobs and revitalizing communities. Here are some recent highlights:

- During this unprecedented time, ATP took early measures to distribute fruit trees to villagers, and in doing so, aided those with the fewest resources first.
- We also partnered with the Ministry of Environment on a planting project designed to alleviate financial hardship brought on by the pandemic. Thousands of willow trees were planted earlier this spring, and hundreds of Armenians earned much-needed income.
- One of ATP's biggest concerns for the security of Armenia is the well-being and prosperity of its border villages. Our work is concentrated in the most vulnerable communities with the most need for greenery.
- ATP's Environmental Education department continuously adjusts its teaching approaches and strategies to the best international practices. Our Building Bridges Initiative focuses on educating and bringing awareness to students outside Armenia, while providing them the opportunity to be connected with like-minded students in Armenia.

We believe in the power of community, and your gift has given us the opportunity to continue our mission of planting trees, and help improve the standard of living for Armenians, while focusing on aiding those with the fewest resources first. Thank you for allowing us to continue this important work!

Respectfully yours,

Jeanmarie Papelian
Executive Director

The Armenian Assembly Tree Project is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization (#52-1614093) in the U.S. No goods or services have been received for this contribution. Please retain this letter to document your contribution for any available federal income tax deduction.

2/ARMENIAN TREE PROJECT

3/ HAITI/ LEBANON - FAR

More Armenian POWs Freed



Toivo Klaar, EU's special representative to the South Caucasus, with the freed POWs on board a chartered plane

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Azerbaijan freed and repatriated at the weekend ten more Armenian soldiers captured during deadly fighting on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border that broke out last month.

The soldiers were flown to Yerevan by a plane chartered by the European Union. Toivo Klaar, the EU's special representative to the South Caucasus, was also on board.

The EU said their release was the result of an agreement reached by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at their December 14 meeting in Brussels hosted by European Council President Charles Michel.

“An important humanitarian gesture follows the efforts by the EU to work with both countries to build on mutual trust,” it added in a statement.

Michel said after the Brussels talks that Aliyev and Pashinyan pledged to de-escalate tensions on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and restore rail links between the two South Caucasus states. Aliyev described the talks as “productive.”

A total of three dozen Armenian soldiers were taken prisoner during the November 16 fighting on the border which left at least 13 troops from both sides dead. Azerbaijan freed ten POWs on December 4.

A few days later, Armenian courts allowed the Investigative Committee to arrest four of them on charges of violating “rules for performing military service.” They will face between three and seven years in prison if convicted.

Armenian opposition figures and human rights lawyers criticized the arrests, saying that Baku could exploit them to further delay the release of dozens of other Armenian servicemen remaining in Azerbaijani captivity. Pashinyan's political allies dismissed these warnings.

Armenia's human rights ombudsman, Arman Tatoyan, criticized a law-enforcement agency on Thursday for arresting four Armenian soldiers who were freed and repatriated by Azerbaijan earlier this month.

They were among three dozen soldiers taken prisoner during the November 16 fighting on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border which left at least 13 troops from both sides dead. The Armenian military said it also lost two border posts in what Yerevan condemned as an Azerbaijani incursion into Armenian territory.

Baku freed ten POWs on December 4. A few days later, Armenian courts allowed the Investigative Committee to arrest four of them on charges of violating “rules for performing

military service.” They will face between three and seven years in prison if convicted.

Tatoyan said his office has interviewed the detained soldiers, looked into the circumstances of their capture and arrived at the conclusion that explanations given for their pretrial arrests are “not convincing.”

In a statement, the human rights defender linked the arrests with controversial statements about Armenian POWs made by senior government officials and pro-government lawmakers.

In particular, parliament speaker Alen Simonyan was caught on camera saying during a recent trip to Paris that many of them “laid down their weapons and ran away” during fighting with Azerbaijani forces. In a secretly filmed video published on December 7, Simonian branded them deserters, sparking angry street protests by relatives of POWs.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and members of his political team did not publicly criticize or disavow the disparaging comments condemned by the Armenian opposition. Pashinyan said on December 8 that law-enforcement authorities must investigate the circumstances in which Armenian soldiers were captured by Azerbaijani troops.

Armenian opposition figures and human rights lawyers have also deplored the ensuing arrests, saying that Azerbaijan could exploit them to further delay the release of dozens of other Armenian servicemen remaining in Azerbaijani captivity. Pashinyan's political allies have dismissed these warnings.

In a newspaper interview published earlier this week, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev pointed to the arrests of repatriated POWs and alleged their mistreatment by Armenian investigators. “If we repatriate more people, they too will be arrested,” he said.

The four soldiers are prosecuted for allegedly trying to negotiate with, rather than engage, Azerbaijani troops that attacked and seized their border post on November 16.

Aleksan Tumasyan, a lawyer representing one of the arrested men, dismissed the charges when he spoke with RFE / RL's Armenian Service on Tuesday. He said they repeatedly warned their senior commanders about an Azerbaijani military buildup in the border area but were ordered not to open fire.

Armenian opposition politicians have for months accused the government of not allowing army units to shoot at Azerbaijani forces attacking them at various sections of the border. Pashinyan insisted on November 17 that neither he nor any other official had ever issued no-shoot orders. Deputy Defense Minister Arman Sargsyan also denied the claim

Shooting near Verin Shorzha Village, Azerbaijanis Lose Military Equipment

YEREVAN — On December 17 at about 17:00 Yerevan time, another incident took place at the line of contact between Armenian and Azerbaijani troops, which ended in an intense shootout. There were no casualties among the Armenians.

According to our local sources, Azerbaijani military equipment neutralized by Armenian forces was in the area of Verin (Upper) Shorzha Village of Armenia's Gegharkunik Province from November 16, while in the Jermuk sector of Vayots Dzor damaged equipment belonging to the Armenian army was located which had been struck by Azerbaijani bands on that same day. Approximately one month later, through the mediation of the command of Russian troops, an agreement had been reached to exchange military equipment located in neutral zones..



**PLEASE REMEMBER THE CHURCH IN YOUR WILL?
SPEAK TO FR. SHNORK – 401-272-7712**

NEW - MAY THEIR MEMORY BE ETERNAL

Establish Membership in the Perpetual Memory Endowment – PME

There are many parishioners who we have lost over the years and their memory has been forgotten in the continuing life and spiritual memory of this parish and sadly there is no one to continually pray for them and for their souls to be remembered. While some are fortunate enough to have family members remember them, even yearly, there may come a time that that too will be forgotten.

There is now a wonderful and pious way to ensure that the names of loved ones will be remembered annually in the prayers of Requiem at Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church. Membership in the PME.

Have your name and the names of loved ones forever embedded into the annual prayers of memorial as a member of the new PME at Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church. [Perpetual Memory Endowment Application Form](#)

SERVICES AND SACRAMENTS

SAINTS SAHAG AND MESROB PRAYER CARD MINISTRY

WHY SEND A HALLMARK CARD?

Offer instead the Card that Shares and Cares at Prayer! The church will happily send a card on your behalf, to your friend, acquaintance, colleagues, coworker or anyone else, for almost any occasion in order to show that you have requested prayers for them during our church services. What a great way to show them that you hold them in prayer! (Weddings, deaths, graduations, births, illness, well wishes etc.)

Information about the Prayer Card Ministry of Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church is available through the church office. If you would like to request a Healing Prayer Card, Memorial Prayer Card for a loved one, or some other special occasion Prayer Card, please call the office (272-7712).

The name of your loved one and the one requesting the card will be included in this bulletin on the Sunday of your request and the person will be remembered in prayer by the pastor during the Liturgy.

Requested by: _____
 Date of Request: _____
 Requested for: _____
 Occasion: _____
 Donation: _____

(Suggested Minimum \$10)



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BAPTISMS

1. Autumn Rose Eghian (10-14-21)
2. Sienna Ava Faryan (10-24-21)
3. Katherine Hardiman-Long (1-2-22)

May these children be raised in the love and care of the Lord.



MARRIAGES

1. Joseph Del Buono & Nicole Ayvazyan (10-24-21)

Best wishes and prayers are extended to the couple for a long and happy life together.



FUNERALS

1. Hagop "Al" Altounian (9-21-21)
2. Margaret DeFelice (9-27-21)
3. Sonia (Shapshapian) Arslanian (11-22-21)
4. Aida Azaryan (12-18-21)
5. Moses Kassabian (1-3-22)
6. Pogos Gyuleserrian (1-4-22)

Expressions of sympathy and prayers are extended to the families that their loved ones may be at peace in the care of the Lord and their memory be eternal.

Marriages: Arrangements for weddings are to be made at least eight months in advance. Marriage preparation and counseling often called Pre-Cana, is required before the celebration of the sacrament. The Best Man (Khachyeghpayr) must be a confirmed communicant of the Armenian Orthodox Church. The parish office will make all necessary arrangements for the deacon, organist and soloist. Marriages are not celebrated during Great Lent.

Baptism and Chrismation (GNUNK): All baptisms must be scheduled at least two months in advance. Pre-baptismal preparation for the parents and godparents is strongly encouraged. At least one of the godparents must be a member of the Armenian Orthodox Faith.

Regulations for Sacramental Services:

In accordance with Diocesan discipline mandated by the Primate, all sacraments, e.g. weddings, baptisms and rites of Christian burial, can only be administered in the church sanctuary which has been consecrated for the celebrations of these sacred rites.

Membership / Stewardship

Let's Start Building Our Future! Become a member and/or a steward of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church of Providence, RI.

It only takes a few minutes to complete the Membership form and \$175.⁰⁰ (\$100.⁰⁰ for students and \$125.⁰⁰ senior citizens) to become a dues paying member of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church of Providence.

While many churches of other faiths use the method of tithing, Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church simply asks a minimum fixed amount to be a dues paying member of the church, and that amount is \$175.00. That's only \$3.37 a week! Membership for senior citizens and students is even less: \$125.00 a year or \$2.40 per week.

GO ON-LINE or Please print and fill out the form and mail it, along with a check (unless you choose to use your credit card), to the church office:

ON-LINE OPTION IS BEST, SAFE, SECURE AND EASY
 You can now pay Dues/Stewardship on-line at:
 Click or go to: <http://stsahmes.org/dues>

The logo depicting a stylized Armenian Cross with the threefold elements of stewardship was created by Father Shnork Souin, showing that all 3 elements are required of the life in Christ.
 (DSS Der Shnork Souin)



Membership and Stewardship of Time and Talent and Treasure, are the building blocks of your commitment to the church. By your membership you are an architect in the life and building of the church and community

Your dues are not only essential, but facilitate the realization of the day to day operations of the mission of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church. In conjunction with your dues, your annual stewardship pledge is a way to express support of, involvement in and concern for the welfare and growth of our church with her many ministries offered.

We kindly ask that you that you fulfill your dues and stewardship pledges now.



Advertise in "Paros"

Full Page	\$500/4 Issues	Half Page	\$300/4 Issues
Quarter Page	\$150/4 Issues	Business Card	\$75/4 Issues

1100+ newsletters mailed 4 times a year
 Predominantly Rhode Island addresses
 Predominantly Armenian Subscribers
For information, please call the Church Office 401-272-7712
office@stsahmes.org
 Subject to USPS rules

Please Remit 2021 Membership

If you have not paid your dues for 2021, please complete the form below and send your donation to the church office.

You can pay your membership and/or stewardship with your MasterCard or Visa or use Paypal through our website at www.stsahmes.org.

2021 Membership Application Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church of Providence, RI

I/WE would like to be year 2021 dues-paying member(s) of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church of Providence.

\$175.⁰⁰ Adults;
\$125.⁰⁰ Senior Citizens;
\$100.⁰⁰ Students)

Members #1 Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms:

Members #2 Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms:

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Zipcode: _____

Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Check enclosed
 Charge my MasterCard/Visa/Discover/AE

Credit Card Number:

Expiration Date: ____/____

(Membership and/or Stewardship donations are tax deductible.)

For Office Use Only:

Account No(s): _____
Date Received: _____ **Amount Received:** _____
Check # _____ **Amount:** _____

START THE NEW YEAR OFF RIGHT!
 LOOK FOR AUTOMITIC PAY BY THE MONTH OPTIONS
 IN 2021 ON OUR WEBSITE

The Newsletter Committee

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The Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church Newsletter is a publication of Saints Sahag and Mesrob Church of 70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI 02908. Submission of news articles, photos, essays, poetry, book reviews, and letters are welcomed and should be sent to the church office (office@stsahmes.org). All text must be submitted in electronic format, preferably in Microsoft Word, as a text file or as e-mail. Please note that the editorial board reserves the right to modify and/or reject articles, photos, etc. All materials must be received no later than the published submission deadlines per issue as published in the church bulletins.

Church Office Hours

The Church Office is open from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. (Social Distance Policy in Place)

If you would like to contact Father Shnork, call 201-306-4304 dershnork@gmail.com. To submit items for the Sunday Lighthouse Bulletin, please contact the office at 401-272-7712 or office@stsahmes.org. If you call after hours, please leave your requests, and the administrative assistant will be happy to process them promptly. For Emergencies, please contact the Pastor at 201-306-4304

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Please read your weekly emails
for the Calendar of events



Mark your calendar:

**SUMMER FESTIVAL
SUNDAY JUNE 26, 2022**

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