

DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH (EASTERN)

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DEPARTMENT OF MISSION PARISHES

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The Sunday Bulletin of our Mission Parishes

Diocesan Mission Statement

The mission of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church is to preach the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to proclaim its message of salvation. This mission is realized through worship, education, witness, service, and fellowship in Christ as expressed in the distinctive faith-experience of the Armenian people.

All the faithful of the Armenian Church are called to participate fully in this mission.

SECOND SUNDAY OF TRANSFIGURATION - August 3, 2014

How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame? How long will you love vain words and seeks after lies? But know that the Lord has set apart the faithful for himself; the Lord hears when I call to him. (Psalm 4:2-3).

This verse is a wake-up call. But as with most wake-up calls, very few are eager to receive this message. Slumbering quietly in an unchanging religiosity is more comfortable. Some prefer to keep things the same, making of the gospel a nest in which to we can go back to sleep. But that was not how Christ presented his message.

The alarm that Jesus rings is the demand from God not to make faith an excuse to turn over in our beds and resist change. Jesus rattled the cages of those with a vested interest in keeping things as they had always been. While not every change is desirable or a good one, change is inevitable. We may be able to shape it, but we cannot avoid it. Neither is our understanding of what God asks of us to remain static.

We as the faithful of the Armenian Church need wake up to the changes that are taking place in the world around us, the daily challenges to our children and elderly, and the stagnation of Christian life that some see exists in our Armenian Church.

Life is change and the gospel was intended to grow in a complex world, not remain stagnant, shackled to the past. We must be alert and we must change if we are to grow, if we are to be attentive to and engage with the Lord of change. To do that requires preparedness through study and hard work; none of which is achieved while lying comfortably on our back in our nests.

Are you prepared to do so?

Der Tateos



Yesterday, the Armenian Church commemorated the Feast of St. Thaddeus (Tateos) and St. Santookht the Virgin.



Daughter of King Sanadrook, the Princess Santookht was converted to Christianity by the Apostle Thaddeus (Tateos). When the King heard of her conversion, he tried every means possible that she might forego Christianity and return to paganism. Exhausting all possible means of persuasion, the King finally offered his daughter a choice between the crown and a sword; between martyrdom for Christ and the regal coronet. Remaining steadfast in her faith, she chose the sword, thereby becoming the first Saint of the Armenian Church. She is also remembered as the first witness for Christianity in Armenia as well as an apostle in that she,

while learning from the Apostle Thaddeus, was instrumental in the conversion of many others.

The Apostle Thaddeus who was martyred by decapitation at the hand of the same King a few days later, had secretly buried her remains. Both the Apostle's and the first Saint's relics were discovered by means of a divine vision near the field of Shavarshan by a monk name Giragos, at some time in the 4th or early 5th century.



The Bible Readings Prescribed for this Sunday

WISDOM 1:1-7:

This passage is taken from the readings appointed for Saturday, the Feast of Soorp Tateos our Apostle, and Saint Santookht, the Virgin. St. Santookht, the daughter of the Armenian King,

was converted to Christianity by St. Tateos (Thaddeus) in the first decades after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Because of her converting to the Christian faith she was martyred by her father. The book of Wisdom is a part of the Old Testament Writings accepted by the Armenian Church. In this passage, wisdom is described as a gift of the Spirit of Lord. This divine wisdom cannot enter into a person with perverse thoughts that separate man from God.



I CORINTHIANS 1:25-31:

God saves through weakness and in spite of folly, revealing in Christ nailed to the cross His true power and wisdom. To St. Paul, the pretensions of the people of Corinth, snobbishly following great teachers as though they alone have fathomed all mysteries, and parading their own sophistry in the grandiose rhetoric of Greek orators of the age, appear foolish indeed in comparison with that wisdom manifested in God's love of men in the cross of Christ, a wisdom powerful to save.

MATTHEW 18:10-14:

The parable of the Lost Sheep illustrates the concern for the lost, the forgotten of society. Church leaders and members are to actively seek out and bring into the fold the weak, the outcasts and the sinners. Jesus critics objected to His pervasive interest in these people and found it impossible to accept them. Has anything really changed since then?



NAME DAYS we celebrate today- Isaiah, Yesaya, Santookht, Cyprian, Gibrianos, Justina, Christina.

The Armenian people have the custom of honoring a person on their particular Feast Day or Name Day rather than on their birthday. Each week those names that are being celebrated will be listed and remembered. Celebration of one's Name Day is considered to be spiritually important, for the individual develops special spiritual ties with his Patron Saint and, consequently, with God. We honor the person by presenting them with a light candle and saying "anoonovut dzeranas" "may you grow old with your name" which in turns means wishing the person a long life.



As a Christian community, we are called to offer our prayers for others as well as offer our own personal prayers before God. Each week in the Sunday Bulletin, special prayers are requested asking YOU to pause and to offer prayers for those who are in need.

Whether there is a celebration of Badarak in your community this week or not, you are asked to pray for and not to forget:

- The Hierarchical leaders of the Armenian Church, His Holiness, Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians; His Holiness; Aram I Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia; His Beatitude, Archbishop Nourhan Manoogian, Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem; His Beatitude, Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan, Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople; that the presence of God be with them always and that they be true to their positions of trust and sacredness;
- Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Diocesan Primate and the members of the Diocesan Council that they administer to the affairs of our Diocese with wisdom, prudence, and above all love of God;
- The people of the Middle East and the Holy Land – Christians, Arabs and Jews – that are suffering death and destruction at the hands of unscrupulous and ungodly people;
- the faithful of our Mission Parish communities, that the Holy Spirit received through our Baptism and Confirmation infect them with the love of God and the genuine desire to do His work in His Church;
- Archbishop Avak Assadourian, Primate, of Iraq, Archbishop Armash Nalbandian of Syria and our Armenian brothers and sisters there, that they be kept safe from the harm and violence which surrounds them each day;
- the recovery of good health, the healing of infirmities and the presence of God in the lives of those who are ill in the hospital or at home, especially for His Beatitude, Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan, Armenian Patriarch of Turkey that he receive comfort and healing;
- the men and women who are serving in the armed forces of the United States, that they be kept safe and able to return to their families unharmed;
- for peace and prosperity in the homeland of Armenia, in Artsakh, in Javakh and throughout the world and among all people of all nations;
- those who are experiencing personal, marital and emotional conflicts in their lives;
- those who generously offer their time, talents and financial resources in the building up of our Church.

Let us pray, DER, VOGHORMIA; LORD, HAVE MERCY.



Prayers for Your Life

With each issue of our Sunday Bulletin, we present to our faithful various prayers from Scripture, our Sacred Tradition, and the Church Fathers to use, offer, learn, and to receive the comfort and benefit prayer brings. Today, we refer to the great book of prayer, the Book of Psalms.

Psalm 67

1 May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, (Selah) 2 that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations. 3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. 4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. (Selah) 5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. 6 The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. 7 May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere him.



From The Office of the Primate

To: Reverend Clergy, Parish Council Chairs, and Diocesan Delegates

Re: A Summons to Convene a Special Diocesan Assembly: September 13, 2014.

This letter is a follow-up to the action taken by the 112th Diocesan Assembly in May 2014, regarding the Global Guidelines of the Armenian Church.

Having previously been asked by the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin to inform them of the action taken by the 112th Diocesan Assembly, regarding the amendment of certain Eastern Diocese Bylaws in accordance with certain provisions of the Global Guidelines, the Eastern Diocese sent a letter to the Holy See confirming that the Assembly delegates had voted in favor of an amendment to the Eastern Diocese's Bylaws requiring an annual louma to the Mother See, but against an amendment to the Eastern Diocese's Bylaws regarding the process for selecting a slate of candidates for election of the Primate in line with Article 8.2 of the Global Guidelines.

In May 2014 the Diocesan Assembly declined to amend our Bylaws to incorporate certain language from Article 8.2 of the Global Guidelines. Due to the requirement of the Diocesan Bylaws that any amendment be passed by two consecutive assemblies, the vote last May meant that this provision of the Global Guidelines had not been adopted by the Eastern Diocese.

His Holiness Karekin II, the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, replied to the above letter, expressing his dismay at the vote taken by the 2014 Diocesan Assembly. His Holiness wrote, "It was unexpected and extraordinary for the Diocesan Assembly of your Diocese to have adopted a position that rejects the requisites of the Guidelines for Diocesan Bylaws, accepted by the Ecclesiastical Representative Assembly and approved by the Catholicos of All Armenians."

His Holiness further stated that this action “*de facto* disregards the fundamental principle of preeminence in our Church Hierarchy that is specified in a number of articles in your Diocesan Bylaws, particularly in articles 1 and 87.” (NB: The above quotes are English-language translations of the Armenian-language original.)

His Holiness further requested that our Diocese convene a Special Session of the Diocesan Assembly, codified in Article 58 of our Diocesan Bylaws, to address this matter. At its meeting of July 24, 2014, the Diocesan Council decided to convene a Special Session of the Diocesan Assembly at His Holiness’s request.

This letter is to inform you that the Special Session of the Diocesan Assembly requested by His Holiness will convene on Saturday, September 13, 2014, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral and Diocesan Center in New York, NY. At this Special Session of the Diocesan Assembly, we will discuss and vote on the above matter, and also discuss other matters of importance to our Diocese, including the centennial anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

We request that the Diocesan delegates make the necessary arrangements to take part in this important meeting. We appreciate our delegates committing the necessary time and resources for this special session.

Enclosed under this cover are two attachments which will be helpful in your considerations (please click on the links below to download the attachments). You will receive additional materials, including an agenda, as well as the Diocesan Council’s recommendations and rationale, within the next 10 days.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. May the Lord guide our steps with wisdom and clarity.

With prayers,

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian

Primate



Back to Basics

As mentioned many times on these pages and on those of our eTsayn sister publication, the basic teachings of our Armenian Church have somehow become a lost memory for our faithful. While new methodologies in teaching should be explored, the core of what is to be taught and learned does not always necessarily need to change. Here we will ask 5 questions taken from the ARMENIAN CHURCH HYE-Q question and answer game in the hope that they will provide an

opportunity to strengthen your understanding of our faith teachings. The answers will appear at the end of the Sunday Bulletin. Keep Score. See how well you do.

ARMENIAN CHURCH HYE-Q

1. In the Gospel of John, who was the first person to see the empty tomb?
2. In confession, we confess our sins before God, before the Holy Mother of God, all the saints and especially to whom?
3. Which saint do you associate with the Feast of Assumption
4. What is the word that expresses the divinely inspired impulse to enter the priesthood or other church ministries?
5. In his epistle, James compares this organ of the body to a speark that can start a forest fire.

Let's Play the "What If" Game.

What If you are invited for dinner at the home of a friend, who asked you to come at 7:30pm, what time would you arrive?

What If you invited your friends to dinner at your home and told them to come at 7:30pm, what time should you expect them to arrive?

What If Badarak begins at 10:30am at your church, what time should you be expected to arrive?



The basic discipline and teaching of the Church that you should remember is:

In order for to be able to participate fully in the Holy Sacrament of the Badarak and to prepare to receive Holy Communion, YOU need be present at the beginning of services to hear the Word of God, to offer YOUR prayers before God, and to confess YOUR sins before Him and the Celebrant Priest.

Must I fast before taking Holy Communion?

The answer to this question is **YES**. St. Paul has the following to say about this matter in 1 Corinthians 11:27 and 29:

27. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. 29. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself.

The pious Christian must approach the Holy Altar with a clean mind, body and heart. Confession, penance and fasting are the tools for cleansing one's insides. In his WINTER SERMONS St. Gregory of Tatev (14th century) urges all Christians to confess or admit the sins they have committed every Sunday, while they still remember what they have done or said during the week. Not confessing or admitting one's sins leaves one in his/her sinful state. Receiving Holy Communion in such a state indicates that the person treats the Holy Sacrament as a formality. According to the fathers of our Church, such irresponsibility and lack of reverence turns the Communion that the person receives from being the life-giving body of Christ to a "judgment upon" oneself. This point is emphasized in their writings. In fact, verse 27 from 1 Corinthians is quoted in a homily attributed to the fifth century Armenian theologian Catholicos Hovhannes Mandakuni, HOMILIES, Venice, 1860, p. 170.

Very Rev. Fr. Krikor Maksoudian

Should I sing with the choir during the Badarak?

If the Psalmist writes, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord"; what are you hesitant about? You are invited by God to raise your voices in glory and praise to Him. So sing the songs and hymns of our Badarak along with our choir members. Use the Divine Liturgy pew books which contain the Armenian as well as the English transliteration and translation. If you wish to borrow a copy, please speak to either the Parish Council. These also may be purchased through the Diocesan bookstore as well. And, please join with the choir in the singing of the songs of the Badarak. The choir is here to lead us in the singing of the Badarak, not to sing for us. **Just do it!**

Have you said PAREE YEGAK - Welcome - yet to the new people in your community?

How about turning to that person whom you do not know that well and offer him/her a warm welcome to your community. Be happy that someone whom you do not know has come to worship with you. Do all that you can in order for that person to have a prayerful and uplifting experience. Invite them to join your family in fellowship. Ask for their mailing and email addresses so that they may be put on your on parish lists. After all, wouldn't you want to be treated that way in a new and unfamiliar community?

The Eastern Diocese home on the Internet: <www.armenianchurch-ed.net>.

Visit there often to find the latest in event schedules, events, daily prayer resources, as well as photo on Diocesan events. Drop then an email at info@armenianchurch.net to offer comments or suggestions.

**As the gifts of the Eucharist are brought to the Altar Table, the deacon proclaims,
"Greet one another with a holy kiss."**

The person giving the greetings says,

Kristos ee mech mer Haydnestav - Christ is revealed amongst us.

The recipient would respond,

Orhnia eh Haydnootiunun Kristosee - Blessed is the revelation of Christ.

This greeting is to be given, received, and offered with joy and with love and with the conviction of Jesus' presence.

Home Blessings



It is always a privilege for a Pastor to come, visit and perform the Rite of Home Blessing for the faithful of his community. For those in our Mission Parishes who desire to have this traditional Rite of Home Blessing offered, you are asked to contact your Parish Council members who in turn will inform the visiting Priest of your request. **These requests should be made early enough in order for the clergyman to bring with him all the necessary vestments, books and liturgical items. All that you need to prepare is a tray with bread, water and a dish of salt.**

Vacation Time

We all wait for our vacations in order to relax and to get away from the daily problems and routines of our lives. We all look forward to that "time off". However, we must always remember that we are not to take a "time off" from God.

If away in another area, or even another country, try to find an Armenian Church to visit. The congregation will be as pleased to greet you as you are to visitors who come to your community. You may even run into some old friends and the entire experience will become a memorable part of your vacation. Look on the back pages of our Diocesan calendar of the locations of the Armenian Churches around the world or go to the website <www.armenianchurch.net> If an Armenian Church is not available, any Orthodox or mainline Christian Church will do. If that is not a possibility, the offering of a prayer before the day's activities, before a meal as a family, should be the least one can do.

Summer and vacation time also offers a wonderful, peaceful opportunity to read some worthwhile materials rather than the latest mystery or scandal-laden tell-all story. Take the time to visit the Diocesan website and click on the bookstore site to purchase some quality books. Your mind will thank-you as you grow older.



Answers to this week's ARMENIAN CHURCH HYE-Q

1. Mary Magdalene
2. The Priest
3. Mary, the Mother of God
4. A Calling
5. The tongue.



received in der hayr's email box

Life is too short to start your day
with broken pieces of yesterday,
it will definitely destroy your
wonderful today and ruin
your great tomorrow!

photo by Gdt
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Have A Great Day!