

DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH (EASTERN)

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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.

PENTECOST - THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT - June 8, 2014

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts 1.1-4)



And as God sent his Holy Spirit among them - and us - we are all forever changed!

God, our God, is a God of power and fire and wind, as well as a small, still voice. Pentecost reminds us to worship with awe and holy fear. Pentecost also reminds us that the Holy Spirit is blowing fiercely today and is there to enflame our passion for God. We need stay alert to see what he is doing among all of mankind everywhere.

On Pentecost there is no denominationalism, no parochialism. We are to be reminded of that. While it is of the utmost importance for me to stand firm in the revealed truth of God, I am to also always acknowledge God's fierce and awesome power to move where he will, do what he will. God sweeps away our divisions without compromising his truth. It is mankind that gets in the way.

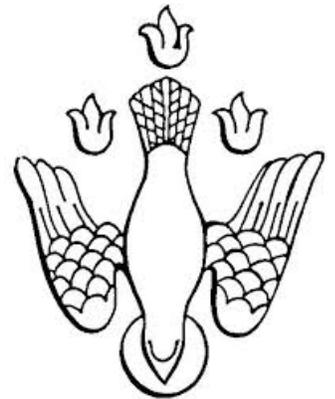
What did the Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew know of the people of Armenia? Yet they came to our ancestral lands filled with the Holy Spirit to deliver the Good News of the resurrection of Christ.

Let us pray that our Lord helps us be as open to his will for his people as the Apostles were.

Der Tatoss



The Feast of Pentecost (*Hokekaloost*) celebrates the presence of the Spirit in our lives. The Spirit came to the frightened apostles as they gathered behind locked doors after the resurrection. When they received the Spirit, they boldly and joyfully went forth to preach the Good News of Jesus. (Acts 2). The Spirit is given to us at our baptism and confirmation. We are to fearlessly go into the world to preach the Good News, for God is with us.



As we celebrate and commemorate today's feast, we should always be aware of the gift and ability to celebrate in joy our coming together as the Church, in Jesus' name, to worship Him and to receive Him through our Holy Badarak. Today is the appointed time. Let us celebrate it now.

The Day of Pentecost celebrates the sharing of **power** and the sharing of **purpose**. It is God's desire that this sharing be not an event that we remember, but a gift that we receive and allow to reshape our lives.

Remember how it happened: Jesus gathered around him men and women who learned from him. They saw his mighty works, they felt his touch, and they tasted the elusive gift of peace. When he died, they panicked, but God did another mighty work in raising Jesus from the dead.

Now they began to remember how Jesus had been transferring his power to them from the start, sending them out to do ministry, to heal, to preach, to call. They began to understand that Jesus had been the first of many. It was now their turn to serve, to sacrifice and, God willing, to prevail over darkness. But how? Their steps had faltered when Jesus was with them. Now he was gone.

On the Day of Pentecost, God gave them the power to live into the purpose. It felt like fire, and it energized them. God gives that power now to us. As faltering as we may feel, God desires to work his purpose out through us all.

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Introit (Jamamood) for Pentecost

“We confess thee God, O Holy Spirit, and we bow down to thee who art the cause of the life of us creatures and the giver of peace to the world.

Thou didst fill with manifold knowledge the ignorance of the disciples, and being divided in the form of cloven tongues like as of fire, thou didst manifest thyself to them through unspeakable signs.

We therefore cry unto thee, spare and save us, O Lord.”

Mid Day (Jashou) Hymn for the Feast of Pentecost

The Holy Spirit, who proceeded from the Father as from a living source, and who is Lord together with the Son, was this day mightily poured from heaven upon the company of the apostles and filled them all. Let us bless and worship him.

The Holy Spirit, who is from the inoriginate eternal Being, and is inseparably consubstantial and jointly creator with the Son, this day divided tongues with fire unto the preachers, and brought the nations of men to the light, by dividing manifold gifts unto them. Let us bless and worship him.

The Holy Spirit, who brooding over the waters brought the creatures into being and who is ruler jointly with the Father and Son, this day did regenerate all the nations, making living waters flow in Jerusalem. Let us bless and worship him.





The Bible Readings Prescribed for this Sunday:

ACTS 2:1-21:

The coming of the Holy Spirit is the event commemorated on Pentecost. One basic result of the presence of the Holy Spirit is that persons were able to communicate with one another. The Holy Spirit creates community, a gathering together of people who can, in the spirit understand and relate to one another. The tragedy of our time is that there is so much isolation and separation among men that there is very little real communication. Over-specialization, compartmentalization, ego, ethnic, racial, social and political barriers isolate people in our society, as well as within parish communities. Pentecost reminds us that the Church, filled with the Spirit, is called to break down barriers, reconciling mankind to each other and to God. Each one of us is asked to help break those barriers.



JOHN 14:25-31:

The Comforter, Counselor, Helper promised by Jesus is the Holy Spirit. The first gift bestowed upon the Disciples after the resurrection was that Jesus breathed upon them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). The deepest danger we face as Christians is a disobedience of spirit that makes us un-teachable. Christ is crucified because men are not open to His indwelling. He gives, but we must receive. He comes, but we must welcome Him to live with us and to teach us.



As part of the larger Christian community, we are called to offer our prayers for others as well as offer our own personal prayers. 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 and not to forget and to pray for:

- the faithful of our Mission Parish communities, that the Holy Spirit received through our Baptism and Confirmation infect us with the love of God and the genuine desire to do His work in His 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 Elect of Jerusalem; His Beatitude, Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan, Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople; that the presence of God be with them always;
- the clergy of the Armenian Church and the lay administrative leaders of our parishes and Mission Parishes, that they be true to their calling to serve Jesus Christ;

- Archbishop Khajag Barsamian the Primate of our Diocese, that God grant to him continual good health, wisdom and dedication as he shepherds the flock of the Church;
- Archbishop Avak Assadourian, Primate of Iraq, Bishop Armash Nalbandian, Primate of Syria, and Bishop Ashod Mnatzaganian, Primate of Egypt, our Armenian brothers and sisters and all the people of the Middle East, that they be kept safe from the harm which surrounds them each day;
- the Brotherhood of Clergy of the Armenian Church and the lay administrative leaders of our Diocese, our Parishes and Mission Parishes, that they be true to their calling to serve Christ and His Church;
- those who suffer from the effects of violence in our neighborhoods, especially the families of those innocent children who have become victims of such violence;
- for those who are experiencing great difficulties due to the economic crisis in our country, that they not be forgotten by us;
- each member of your parish community in need of your prayers;
- 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;
- the men and women who are serving in the armed forces of the United States, that they kept safe and able to return to their families;
- the families and of our servicemen and women serving in theaters of combat and the families of those killed or wounded, that the Spirit of God bring them comfort in their time of sorrow and pain;
- peace and prosperity in the homeland of Armenia, in Artsakh, in Javakh and throughout the world and among all people of all nations, especially in the Holy City of Jerusalem, in the Middle East and wherever the ravages of war rages;
- 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 our Sunday Bulletin, we present to our faithful various prayers from our Sacred Tradition and Church Fathers to use, offer, learn, and to receive the comfort and benefit prayer brings. On this occasion of the Feast of Pentecost, the words of the Hymn to the Holy Spirit, - Hoki Asdoudzo - taken from our Divine Liturgy.

Spirit of God, who descending from heaven, accomplishes through us the mystery of him who is glorified with you, by the shedding of his blood, we beseech you, grant rest to the souls of those of ours who have fallen asleep.



NAME DAYS celebrated today - Kaloust, Aghavni.

Armenians 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.



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 present some of the basic teachings and practices of our Armenian Church in the hope that they will provide an opportunity to strengthen one's practices and expressions of faith.

Today, the sixth and concluding installment of instructional on the

The Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church

Following Holy Communion, we give heartfelt thanks for the great mercy and goodness of God in allowing us to receive his very life and power.

Having received the food of eternal life, we now prepare to leave with the Last Blessing and Dismissal. The last Scripture reading, taken from St. John's Gospel, was inserted in the liturgy during the end of the 17th century, being taken from the practice of the Latin Church. It reminds us that "*in the beginning was God and through him, light and life.*"

After the last blessing by the celebrant, the faithful are to come forward to kiss the Gospel book and receive his personal blessing. Approach and say, "*May the Lord remember all of your sacrifices.*" The Priest will respond "*May the Lord grant to you according to your heart.*"

As you leave the sanctuary you are asked do so reverently and quietly, refraining from loud conversations. Properly, you should approach the celebrant to receive his blessings, kiss the gospel, depart and then greet neighbors and friends outside of the sanctuary. We must never lose reverence for our Church sanctuary as the house of God simply because services have ended.

Unleavened bread called *mahs*, which means "portion", is distributed at the end of the liturgy and is considered to be a "portion" of the Holy Sacrifice. This may be eaten by those who were unable to receive Holy Communion or may be taken home to loved ones.

This unleavened bread, or *mahs*, should not be understood as replacing, or even equivalent to Holy Communion. It simply signifies that this Christian community is sharing in God's life and work, and that we are all members of this community. With the final blessing, we are sent out into the world to live and work and to reflect the love and goodness of God in our lives.



A Few Words of Wisdom for this week

Good memories offer good guidance. We all have had the experience that in times of distress, failure, and depression it is the good memories which give us new confidence and hope. When the night is dark and everything seems black and fearful, we can hope for a new day because we have seen a bright day before. Our hope is built on our memories. Without memories there are no expectations. We do not always realize that among the best things we can give each other are good memories: kind words, signs of affection, gestures of sympathy, peaceful silences, and joyful celebrations. At times they may all have seemed obvious, simple, and without many consequences, but as memories they can save us in the midst of confusion, fear, and darkness.

THE LIVING REMINDER

Henri J. Nouwen



and finally . . .

The past should be left in
the past or it can steal your
future. *Live life* for what
tomorrow can bring and not
what yesterday has taken
away. *Every day is a gift.*

