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Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church

The Very Rev. Father Simeon Odabashian, Pastor

70 Jefferson Street Providence, Rhode Island 02908

TEL (401) 272-7712 J FAX (401) 272-2832

<http://www.stsahmes.org>

e-mail: office@stsahmes.org

Schedule of Sunday Services

Morning Service (*Keesharayeen & Aravodyan Jham*) 9:10 a.m.
Divine Liturgy (*Soorp Badarak*) 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 30, 2007

Sixth Sunday of Advent

Scripture Readings

Isaiah 51:15-52:3 (Pg. 728) Hebrews 13:18-25 (Pg. 205)

Luke 22:24-30 (Pg. 79)

From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

On the occasion of the New Year 2008 I extend my very wishes to you and your loved ones. May our Heavenly Father bestow His richest blessings upon our church family and inspire a new enthusiasm for the Apostolic Orthodox Holy faith.

May the Lord bless the Armenian Church universal under the wise leadership of His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians; as well as all the hierarchs, clergy and faithful of the Armenian Church.

This New Year we also offer a special prayer for peace on earth and a spirit of understanding, forgiveness and toleration among all people.

Next Saturday and Sunday we will be celebrating Christmas according to our venerable Armenian tradition. Since each year people ask the reason why we Armenians celebrate Christmas on January 6th rather than on December 25th, I share with you the following article from the Diocesan Website explaining our Christmas tradition.

Happy New Year to all!

With prayers,
Hayr Simeon

Why do Armenians Celebrate Christmas on January 6th?

“Armenian Christmas,” as it is popularly called, is a culmination of celebrations of events related to Christ’s Incarnation. Theophany or Epiphany (or *Asdvadz-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 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.

by Dn. Hratch Tchilingirian

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Response when Kissing the Cross (during the procession):

The **faithful** says:

Յիշեցիր եւ զիս առաջի անմահ գառիկն Աստուծոյ:
Hee-shes-cheer yev zeez a-rra-chee an-mah ka-rinn As-doo-dzo.
(Remember me before the immortal Lamb of God.)

The **priest** says:

Յիշեալ լիջիր առաջի անմահ գառիկն Աստուծոյ:
Hee-shyal lee-cheer a-rra-chee an-mah ka-rinn As-doo-dzo.
(You shall be remembered before the immortal Lamb of God.)

Response for the Kiss of Peace:

The **giver** says:

Քրիստոս ի մէջ մեր յայտնեցաւ:
Krees-dos ee mech mer hayd-ne-tsav.
(Christ is revealed in our midst.)

The **receiver** says:

Օրհնեալ է յայտնութիւնն Քրիստոսի:
Orh-nyal eh hayd-noo-tyoo-nun Krees-do-see.
(Blessed is the revelation of Christ.)

Response when Kissing the Gospel (after the Divine Liturgy):

The faithful says:

Յիշեցէ՛ Տէր զամենայն պատարագս քո:

Hee-shes-tseh Der za-me-nayn ba-da-ra-kus ko.

(May the Lord remember all your sacrifices.)

The priest says:

Տաղէ՛ քեզ Տէր ըստ սրտի քոմ:

Da-tseh kez Der usd sur-dee koom.

(May the Lord grant to you according to your heart.)

Participating in the Divine Liturgy: Please follow the prayers and hymns of the Divine Liturgy books provided in the pews. The front section contains the Armenian Krapar text and modern Armenian translation, while the latter part gives the English transliteration and translation. Page numbers are illuminated at the upper left and right sides of the main altar. Please sing along with any of the hymns which the choir is singing.

Confession and Holy Communion: Those who are prepared to receive Holy Communion may kneel in the center aisle or remain standing at their pew for the group recitation of the confession (p. 48-49). After the absolution please proceed via the central aisle towards the altar in an orderly manner. Two Parish Council members will be present to assist. Please return to your pew via the side aisles.

CELL PHONES: *We kindly ask that all cell phones be turned off prior to entering the church. Please show your respect to our holy sanctuary and to your fellow worshippers.*

TODAY'S REQUIEMS (Hokehankist):

Requiem Prayer

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. O Christ, Son of God, forbearing and compassionate, have compassion, in your love as our creator, upon the souls of your servants who are at rest, especially upon the souls of your servants and maidservants:

- **SOUREN ERANOSIAN** (14 Year Memorial) - requested by Edward & Irene Eranosian; Craig Eranosian; Richard & Carol Storti; Albert & Gail Marsocci; Arlene DerHagopian; Benjamin & Linda Cabrera; Lori DerHagopian; Annette Metcalfe; Robert Dutcher.

- **HELEN MOURADJIAN** (15 Year Memorial) - requested by Edward & Irene Eranosian; Craig Eranosian; Richard & Carol Storti; Albert & Gail Marsocci.

- **GEORGE JANIGIAN** (13 Year Memorial) - requested by Mrs. Theresa Janigian; Mr. & Mrs. Armen & Sonya Janigian, Ara and Sevan.

- **VERGEN KLANIAN** (27 Year Memorial) - requested by Margaret Cotoia; Mary Klanian; Lillian Maranjian; Sylvia Forti.

- **LEVON DOSTOURIAN** (42 Year Memorial); **ZEPURE PANIKIAN DOSTOURIAN** (17 Year Memorial); **VAHAN PAPAZIAN** (25 Year Memorial); **ARAXIE PANIKIAN PAPAZIAN** (22 Year Memorial) - requested by Ara Dostourian.

- **DR. VARRUJAN MAGALIAN** (4 Year Memorial) - requested by Ben & Kim Majalian; Fred & Madeline Ramos.

- **ARDIS GARABIAN** (21 Year Memorial); **HAZEL (GARABIAN) MORROW** (8 Year Memorial) - requested by George Garabian; David, Joshua, and John Morrow.

- **JACK M. HALBERIAN** (41 Year Memorial) - requested by Michele, Jackie and Katie Kazarian.

...for whom we are offering these prayers. Be mindful of them in the great day of the coming of your kingdom. Make them worthy of mercy, of expiation and forgiveness of sins. Glorify them and reckon them with the company of your saints at your right hand. For you are Lord and creator of all, judge of the living and of the dead. And to you is befitting glory, dominion and honor, now and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY

The *Junior Choir* will participate in the Badarak this morning.

The *Junior Choir* will have their *Bake Sale* today after services. Proceeds will benefit the Nazeli Dance Group and Junior Choir's upcoming concert tour to St. David Armenian Church in Boca Raton, Florida in January, 2008. Thank you for your support.

JANUARY 5, 2008

Armenian Christmas Eve, Evening Service 6:00 p.m., Divine Liturgy 6:30 p.m.

JANUARY 6, 2008

Armenian Christmas - Festal Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Water - Sunday, January 6, Morning Service 9:10 a.m., Divine Liturgy, 10:00 a.m., Blessing of Water, 11:30 a.m.,

Armenian Christmas Luncheon sponsored by *Ladies Aid* following services, 12:30 p.m. Donation \$15 adults, \$8 children 12 and under. Dinner reservations requested on or before January 1, 2007. Please call the Church Office (272-7712).

Godfather of the Cross - Feast of the Birth and Baptism of our Lord Jesus Christ. On this day we will conduct the Blessing of Water

in remembrance of our Lord's Baptism. Traditionally a young male serves as Godfather for this rite. Please contact the church office if you are interested in having this honor for your son or grandson.

A special collection will be made during the Divine Liturgy to benefit the Junior Choir.

JANUARY 8, 2008

The *Women's Guild* will have their *Christmas Dinner* on January 8 at Restaurant 242 at 6:30 p.m. \$35 Per Person. Grab Gift exchange (\$15, participation optional). Please reserve by calling the Church Office (272-7712) or Melanie Krikorian (465-1957). Deadline for reservations is January 6.

JANUARY 17, 2008

You are cordially invited to attend the Archbishop's Annual Appeal Reception at the Sheraton Commander Hotel, 16 Garden St., Cambridge, MA on Thursday, January 17, 2008 at 7 p.m. RSVP by January 10 (seats are limited). rsvp to Rosette Jacobson 978-857-0059 or e-mail rosettejacobson@comcast.net.

JANUARY 20, 2008

Guest celebrant and preacher will be the Very Reverend Father Krikor Maksoudian. Hayr Simeon will be with our Junior Choir and Nazeli Dance Group at St. David Armenian Church, Boca Raton, Florida.

FEBRUARY 2, 2007

Registration & programs begin for Arts Education Program's second semester, 10 a.m. Please see notice (next page).

MAY 12, 2008

Save the Date! May 12, 2008 - *First Annual Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Golf Tournament*. To be held at Pawtucket Country Club. More details to follow.

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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

During some recent electrical work in the sanctuary it was discovered that the ceiling is unsafe. A further expert opinion was sought from James R. Carlson, Executive Vice-President of The Robinson, Green, and Beretta Corporation.

To quote their findings: "It is RGB's opinion that the present ceiling is not structurally sound and could be subject to failure, in part, with little warning, especially at areas where sagging is visually evident within the sanctuary. We therefore must recommend that its use be suspended and the sanctuary closed". "Based on our observations, we believe that the church is at risk if you continue to use the sanctuary and we recommend that it be closed."

In light of this letter and the findings contained within, we

have no choice but to close our church sanctuary until further notice. In the meanwhile the holy Badarak will be celebrated in the Egavian Hall with the permission of His Eminence the Primate.

Thank you for your understanding.

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PARISH MEMBER DUES - Following the decision of the February 19, 2006 Parish Assembly, membership dues for the year 2007 and moving forward is \$150 for general membership and \$100 for seniors and full-time students. Those unable to pay the full dues may confidentially approach Hayr Soorp to explain their situation. Parishioners are strongly encouraged to contribute beyond the minimum dues as part of the *"Stewardship Program."* **HAVE YOU REMEMBERED TO MAKE YOUR STEWARDSHIP AND ANNUAL DUES DONATIONS? YOUR CHURCH NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT.** *Please remember that dues must be paid by December 31, 2007 to vote at the Annual Parish Assembly in 2008.*

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS - The Ararat Association under the direction of Mr. Alan Zartarian has graciously sponsored the purchase of poinsettias for our altars and sanctuary this year. Please consider making a Christmas Youghakin donation in lieu of a flower contribution. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS NOTICE - please keep in mind the following Christmas observances: *Armenian Christmas Eve*, Evening Service 6 p.m., Divine Liturgy 6:30 p.m.; *Armenian Christmas*, Festal Divine Liturgy & Blessing of Water, Sunday, January 6.

"GLORIA IN EXCELSIS" CD - *The perfect Christmas gift!* Special price for Christmas - only \$10. Your spirit will soar as you listen to the beautiful music of our young musicians. Our Junior Choir & the Narek Bell Choir of St. Mary Church, Washington, D.C. joined forces for this unforgettable recording of Armenian spiritual music. Songs on the CD are performed by the combined choir, as well as some unique features by the ringing sound of the Narek Bell Choir. This wonderful 21 track CD presents a wide collection of songs, including Divine Liturgy hymns and songs of Armenian Christmas. "Gloria In Excelsis" earned the Junior & Narek Choirs the "Gomidias Award" & "The Best Album of Spiritual Music Award of 2005" at the Annual Awards Competition in Los Angeles. You may purchase the CD during fellowship the next few Sundays or weekdays from the Church office, (272-7712). Please support our Junior Choir.

STUDENTS LEARNING BADARAK - We are pleased to announce that our Sunday School students are actively learning the principle hymns of the Divine Liturgy. Each Sunday Maestro Konstantin Petrossian is providing this instruction to our students.

ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAM BEGINS SECOND SEMESTER -

The Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church Cultural Committee offers art and cultural instruction in the following areas for a very modest fee. In which classes would your child (children) be interested? **Ages 7-16** Classes: Drawing and Sculpture, Piano, Violin, Flute, Ballroom Dancing (ages 8 - 16), Nazeli Dance Group (ages 9-16), Voice training, Clarinet, Saxophone, Guitar, Kemancha. **Ages 16 and up:** Classes: Piano, Guitar, Kemancha, Voice training, Ballroom Dancing. Registration for 2006 - 2007 Second Semester is on Saturday, February 2, 2007 from 10 am to 11 am. Programs begin on Saturday, February 2, 2007. Please send application to: Cultural Committee Arts Education Program, Saints Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, 70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI 02908. For more information or questions about the Arts Education Program please contact program Chairperson Janna Guegamian (861-3573), or see "www.stsahmes.org/Education/arts/artsIndex.html"

ARMENIA SERVICE PROGRAM - Open to young adults ages 19 to 28. Cost \$2,200.(includes round trip airfare from NYC, ground transportation in Armenia, all tours, lodging and two meals a day. Volunteer at a children's summer camp in Vanadzor, Camp Tzizternak, sponsored by the Gougark Diocese. For info. and application go to www.acyoa.org or call Nancy Basmajian (212-686-0710) (X-143) Deadline for application is February 22.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR is an ongoing project. Parishioners are encouraged to bring one or more items each Sunday or at other times of the week. This is an excellent opportunity to put our faith into action. Food donations will be forwarded to Mary House Food Pantry, the outreach ministry of St. Patrick's Church. For more info. call Gary Nahabedian (580-8123) or Joyce Avedisian (724-3978).

The **JUNIOR CHOIR** and **NAZELI DANCE GROUP** have an upcoming concert tour to St. David Armenian Church in Boca Raton, Florida in January, 2008. If you were unable to attend the Benefit Concert on October 19, please consider supporting the Junior Choir and Nazeli Dance Group by kindly mailing a donation to the church office. Please support the bake sale today after Church Services. Thank you for your support.

BLESSING OF HOLY MURON PILGRIMAGE TO ARMENIA

- His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, will bless the Holy Muron (Chrism) in September 2008. On this blessed occasion we would like to organize a pilgrimage to Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenia. Exact dates and costs will be forthcoming. Record numbers of pilgrims are anticipated, thus plans need to be made well in advance. Parishioners interested in being part of this pilgrimage, please notify the church office.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON CHARITABLE GIVING - In order to comply with the new 2007 federal income tax code, parishioners who contribute in cash and itemize their deduction **MUST HAVE RECEIPTS** to substantiate their donation. Upon request, receipts will be issued at the Parish Council desk on the Sunday a cash donation is made. Cancelled checks, bank statements, and/or credit card statements are still acceptable by the Internal Revenue Service for documentation. Parishioners may place a check instead of cash in the collection plate on Sundays. Please note that charitable contributions to the Church may now be made via VISA / MasterCard at the office during the week. For more information, kindly contact the Parish Council Treasurer, Steven Zaroogian (885-2253).

HOME BLESSINGS - One of the major goals of this year's Diocesan theme, "Church and Home: One in the Spirit" is to encourage the faithful to have their homes blessed. Please consider inviting Hayr Simeon to bless your home according to the tradition of the Armenian Church. There is no requirement to offer a meal nor present a gift to the priest. Please have a piece of bread, dish of salt and glass of water available for the blessing. Call (272-7712) to schedule a visit.

CHURCH LIBRARY - Library Hours: Sundays following church services until 1:30 p.m., and by appointment only by calling the church secretary at 272-7712, who will get you in touch with a member of the Library Committee. **SPECIAL NOTICE FOR CHRISTMAS:** In the glass display case outside the library there is a selection of books, tapes, shirts, emblems, etc. for sale that will make perfect gifts for Christmas. Stop by and take a look. The Library will gladly accept any paperback or hard cover books that parishioners would like to donate.

CHILDREN'S & JUNIOR CHOIRS - We invite your children and grandchildren to learn how to read music, religious hymns, popular Armenian Songs, participate in Divine Liturgy first Sunday of each month. Open for all ages 6 through 16, rehearsals at the Egavian Cultural Center. Please call the Church Office (272-7712) or Maestro Petrossian at 861-3573 to sign up your child.

SENIOR CITIZENS - Come join us every Monday (weather permitting, excluding Holidays). Have fun with your friends and neighbors, and enjoy with us "coffee and...."

COFFEE HOUR - Please consider sponsoring a **Coffee Fellowship** on the occasion of a Hokehankist (in memory of a loved one), a happy occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.) or to provide a wonderful service for our church. Contact Fran, the church secretary, to arrange a date (272-7712).

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

Today Junior Choir Bake Sale after Church Services

JANUARY 2008

- 1 New Year's Day, Office Closed
- 2 Choir Rehearsal 7 p.m.
- 4 Jr. Choir & Nazeli Dance Group Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.
- 5 Armenian Christmas Eve, Evening Service 6 p.m.
Divine Liturgy 6:30 p.m.
- 6 Feast of the Theophany of Our Lord
Morning Service, 9 a.m., Divine Liturgy 10 a.m.
Blessing of Water 11:30 a.m.
Ladies Aid Armenian Christmas Luncheon after Church
- 7 Senior Citizens, 10 a.m.
Diocesan Assembly Meeting 7 p.m.
- 8 Ladies Aid Board Meeting, 11 a.m.
Women's Guild Christmas Dinner at 242 Restaurant, 6:30
- 11 Jr. Choir & Nazeli Dance Group Rehearsal 6:30 p.m.
- 15 Parish Council, 7:30 p.m.
- 16 Ladies Aid Luncheon, 12:30 p.m. (Elections)
- 17 Archbishop's Annual Appeal Reception, Cambridge, 7 pm
- 20 Guest Celebrant Very Rev. Fr. Krikor Maksoudian
- 29 Parish Council, 7:30 p.m.

FEBRUARY 2008

- 3 Poon Paregentan (watch for future notices)
- 2 Registration & Programs begin for Arts Education, 10am
- 6 Ladies Aid Vospov Luncheon, 12:30 P.M.
- 12 Parish Council, 7:30 p.m.

ARMENIAN RADIO HOUR - Now heard on Sundays at 9 a.m.- 10 a.m. on WARL 1320 A.M.

ARDZAGANG (Echo)-Armenian Television Program - Statewide Cable Interconnect Channel 13 (A): is broadcast on Thursdays, 8:30-