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Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church
The Lighthouse

The Rev. Fr. Shnork Souin, Pastor

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Parish Council Members on Duty Today:

Joyce Avedisian - Len Arzoomanian

Schedule of Sunday Services

Morning Service (<i>Keesherajeen & Aravodyan Jham</i>)	9:00 a.m.
Divine Liturgy (<i>Soorp Badarak</i>)	10:00 a.m.

January 8, 2017

Scripture Readings
Hebrews 1:1-12 (Pg. 196)
Matthew 2:13-23 (Pg. 2)
Creed: English

The Legacy of our Martyrs 1915 - 2015

Don't just attend the Badarak. See it, feel it, sing it, pray it, hear it, smell it, touch it, and taste it and see how sweet is the Lord!

Ծաշակեցէք եւ տեսէք զի քաղցր է Տէր:

"Taste ye, and see, for the Lord is sweet." (Adapted from Psalm 34:8)

Der Shnork

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Living the Legacy of the Holy Martyrs

The Fruits of the Spirit

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, **patience**, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.

Galatians 5:22-23

Today's theme: ~ **PATIENCE** ~

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Pastor's Points of Light

The Ancient Date of the Celebration of the Theophany - January 6th
by 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 at first 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 actually besides 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 2 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 which is actually 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 12 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 finally the Epiphany or 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.

Have a Happy New Year in 2017 and God's blessings to all.

Prayerfully, Fr. Shnork Souin



The Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Matthew (2:13-23)

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there till I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him."

And he rose and took the child and his mother by night, and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfil what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt have I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, was in a furious rage, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the wise men.

Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children, she refused to be consoled because they were no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead."

And he rose and took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream he withdrew to the district of Galilee. And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Glory to You, O Lord our God!



Response when Kissing the Cross (during the procession):

The faithful says:

Յիշեալի 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:

Յիշեալէ 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 քում:
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 in the 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 preparing 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.

CHRIST OUR GOD

You crown your saints with triumph and you do the will of all who fear you, looking after your creatures with love and kindness. Hear us from your holy and heavenly realm by the intercession of the Holy Mother of God and by the prayers of all your saints, especially the holy martyrs who gave their lives during the Armenian Genocide for faith and for the homeland, whom we commemorate today. Hear us Lord, and show us your mercy. Forgive, redeem and pardon our sins. Make us worthy thankfully to glorify you with the Father and with the Holy Spirit. Now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

TODAY'S REQUIEMS (*Hokehankist*): Please see insert.



Welcome and Sunday Fellowship

Welcome Visitors! Please join us for our after services coffee fellowship in the Egavian Hall. Your presence is greatly valued. Please become a regular worshipper. **Note:** Please call the office if you would like to include the name of your family member or friend who is presently in the military in our prayers.

Please keep our Christian brothers and sisters in Artsakh, Syria, Egypt and Iraq in your prayers that God Almighty will watch over them and protect them in these uncertain and dangerous times

PRAYER FOR HEALING - Armenian Book Of Hours (Sixth Hour)

Remove the pains and heal the wounds of your people, O Lord our God, and grant perfect health to us all through your all-conquering cross, through which you eliminated the weakness of the human race and condemned the enemy of our life and salvation.

You are our life and redemption, beneficent and all-merciful God, and you alone can forgive our sins, remove diseases and sicknesses from us. You know our needs, O giver of gifts; grant your abundant mercy to all your creatures, each one according to his needs. And through your gifts may we always praise the all-holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and ever. Amen

Prayers of Healing have been requested for:

His Beatitude Abp. Mesrob Mutafyan, Patriarch of Constantinople
Daniel Ayriyan, Jr.

Prayer Card Ministry

Information about the *Prayer Card Ministry* of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church is available through the church office. If you would like to request a Healing Prayer Card or a Memorial Prayer Card for a loved one, please call the office (272-7712). Details for this are available on line at <http://www.stsahmes.org/prayercard.shtml>

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TODAY

The *Altar Flowers* are given today in loving memory of *William V. (Billy) Aznavourian* by his family.

Morning Service, 9 a.m., Divine Liturgy 10 a.m., Traditional Armenian Home Blessing, 11:30 a.m.

Annual Armenian Christmas Dinner hosted by the Women's Guild today following the Divine Liturgy. Those with reservations may proceed to the Egavian Hall. Limited seating may be available.

JANUARY 9

Senior Citizens - Come join us on Mondays (at 10 a.m. weather permitting, **excluding holidays**). Have fun with your friends & neighbors & enjoy with us "coffee and," cards, tavloo, pinochle, etc.

JANUARY 10 & 14

Armenian School classes are being held on Tuesdays at 6 p.m. and on Saturdays at 10 a.m. Subjects to include language, history, music, religion (culture). Ages 4+ including adults. Tuition for children \$100 for 1st child, \$90 for each additional child. Adults, \$100 for parents with children registered, \$200 for adults without children registered. Contact Mariam Saribekyan (phone 401-714-6327).

JANUARY 15

Armenian School Hantess Sunday, January 15 at 12:15 p.m., New Year's Party with entertainment at 1:15 p.m. following the Hantess. Enjoy great appetizers, deserts, raffles, music & dance. Admission \$15 adults, Children 12 and under free. For reservations please call Mariam Saribekyan at 401-714-6327 or Fran at the church office, 401-272-7712 to help assist with meal preparation. Sponsored by the Armenian School Staff and Parents, and Maria's Pizza & Wings.

JANUARY 17

Women's Guild Annual Christmas Dinner at the Basta Italian Restaurant, 2195 Broad St., Cranston, RI - Tuesday, January 17 at 6:30 p.m. Members \$35, Non-members \$40. Yankee Swap optional - There will be a choice of 3 entrees announced soon. Please e-mail Lillibeth at emkooloian@aol.com or call 401-649-2646.

FEBRUARY 19

Mardi Gras Family Celebration, sponsored by the Sunday School/CEAB - Lenten Drive Fund Raiser - Balloon Man, Face Painting. Sunday, February 19 following the Divine Liturgy. More information to be announced.

NOTICES

Scholarship Opportunity - The Paul O and Mary Boghossian Memorial Trust Scholarship is being made available again this year to RI students for study at institutions of higher education beyond the secondary level who demonstrate financial need, academic capability, and potential to contribute to the US and its form of government. Application form is available through the church office (401-272-7712) or available by e-mail. The due date for application is March 15.

The Armenian Historical Association of Rhode Island (AHARI) has moved to new headquarters at 245 Waterman Street, Suite 204, Providence, RI 02906. Telephone 401-544-5511. Share your Family's past historical and cultural artifacts thru AHARI and help perpetuate Armenia's glorious past. AHARI is a 501c non-profit organization.

PARISH MEMBER DUES - Membership dues are \$175 (\$125 for seniors). Based on a new Diocesan by-law, dues for members age 18-24 are only \$100. Those unable to give full dues may confidentially approach the Pastor to explain their situation. Parishioners are kindly asked to contribute beyond dues as part of the "*Stewardship Program.*" **Existing**

members' dues must be received by Dec. 31, 2017; (new members must be received by June 30 to vote at Parish Assembly in February 2018.) Take advantage of the many payment options which can be made on line, by check, credit card, in full, or in part weekly, monthly or quarterly.

PRAYER BOX - There is now a new *prayer box* which replaces the "Gold Box" in the chancel. The new box is located on the table at the entrance of the Sanctuary on the elevator side. The prayer box is donated by Michele Kazarian in loving memory of her father, Michael Halberian.

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR REMINDER- Remember your non-perishable food donations for Mary House food pantry. Items that move very quickly and are needed the most - **tuna, peanut butter, jelly, soups and rice.** They also need personal care toiletries such as tooth paste, tooth brushes, shampoo & conditioner, deodorant etc. As always thanks so much for supporting Mary House. For info., contact Joyce Avedisian (724-3978) or Bertha Mugurdichian (351-9276). Future Meal Kitchen dates: 4/10/17, and 6/26/17. Your participation is always welcome.

SUNDAY SCHOOL Announcement: Sunday School students are participating in an outreach project collecting hygiene products. The packages will be given to Mary House as well as to St. Sahag and St. Mesrob Church to distribute as needed. During the month of January, we are requesting hand sanitizers and deodorants. They may be placed in the bin in the Sunday School area. Thank you for your support in our children's outreach efforts.

VETERANS LIST: We are continuing to update our Veteran's list and will do so on a ongoing basis. Please send an email to Gary Nahabedian at GaryNahabedian@hotmail.com. If email is unavailable please call him at 401-871-8331. Please make sure to leave the veteran's name, branch of service and living, deceased or killed in action. (Rank is optional).

Der Hayr's Prayer List: Please inform the office if you have friends or family who are suffering any physical or spiritual distress and are in need of prayer, and Der Hayr will add them to his prayer list where they will be remembered before the Holy and Immortal Lamb of God during the Eucharist. *You may also use the prayer request cards and place them in the Gold Box.*

POOR BOX – Did you know we have poor boxes for donations to the needy at entrances to the Sanctuary? Contributions appreciated.

ARMENIAN RADIO HOUR - Sundays 9-10 a.m. WARL 1320 AM

ARDZAGANG - Armenian Television Program-Statewide Cable Interconnect Channel 13 (A):broadcast Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

- Today* Annual Armenian Christmas Dinner following Badarak
- 9 Senior Citizens, 10 a.m.
- 10 Armenian School, 6 p.m.
Parish Council, 7 p.m.
- 14 Armenian School, 10 a.m.
- 15 Armenian School Hantess & Lunch following Divine Liturgy
- 16 Senior Citizens
- 17 Armenian School 6 p.m.
Women's Guild Christmas Dinner at Basta, 6:30 p.m.
- 21 Armenian School 10 a.m.
- 23 Senior Citizens, 10 a.m.
- 24 Armenian School, 6 p.m.
- 28 Armenian School, 10 a.m.
- 29 Instructional Divine Liturgy
- 30 Senior Citizens, 10 a.m.
- 31 Armenian School, 6 p.m.

FEBRUARY

- 3 Junior Choir, 6 p.m., Nazeli Dance Group 6:30 p.m.
begins 2nd semester
- 4 Arts Education, 10 a.m. begins 2nd semester
- 7 Parish Council 7 p.m.
- 19 Mardi Gras Luncheon Sponsored by the Sunday School
- 27 First Day of Lent
- 28 Parish Council 7 p.m.