



YETTEM ԵՊԵՄ

Հրատարակութիւն Եղեմի Ս. Աստուածածին Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ
A Publication of St. Mary Armenian Church Yettem, California
Rev. Fr. Mashdots Keshishian, Parish Priest

January 2023

PRIMATE'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.” Luke 1:30-31

As we celebrate the Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, our hearts are filled with holiness and humility, especially when we read the biblical passage about Angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary.

How inspiring is the dialogue between the angel and Mary! This is the moment when God, the Father, chooses the meekest of all to carry in her womb the Savior of the World – Baby Jesus, the Son of God.

Today, the world rejoices as we celebrate Christmas, for we have this blessed gift of once again experiencing the mystery of Christ's incarnation for the salvation of human kind. This is a unique opportunity to reflect upon our relationship with God and appreciate the gifts of virtues abundantly bestowed upon us.

The Holy Virgin Mary, with utmost humility, accepted the virtue of becoming the Mother of God and carrying in her womb the Redeemer. Hence, through the Feast of the Nativity and Theophany, we must experience a spiritual renaissance, opening our hearts wide to house Jesus, and receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Like the Holy Virgin Mary, we must humble ourselves and accept God's call with humility and obedience.

Christmas is an invitation extended to each and every one of us for a renewed life, which is possible to achieve only through Jesus and with Jesus. When we journey with Christ, we become a ray of light in the darkness of this world, reflecting God's love, grace, and mercy.

Indeed, the world needs a hard reset. People yearn for spiritual renewal. Nevertheless, instead of utilizing God's given gifts, we are wasting our resources doing useless things and waging wars against each other. Had we chosen to channel our virtues in the right direction, we could have worked unspeakable miracles.

(Continued on the back page)

Parish Notes

CONDOLENCES

On behalf of our St. Mary Parish family, we wish to extend our deepest sympathy to Kathy Perch, Dedi and Bryan Somavia, Tiffany and Daniel Wainwright, BJ and Megan Perch, his sister Melene Ouzounian and husband Jack of Fresno, sister-in-law Barbara Daniels (Ellis) and their extended families on the recent passing of Basil Perch on Monday, December 12th. Funeral Services will be held on **Friday, January 6th at 1:00 PM** here at St. Mary Yette. A memorial reception will be held beginning at 2:30 at the **Bello Vito Venue at 4211 W. Goshen Ave., Visalia, CA 93291**. Private burial services will take place on Monday at the Visalia Cemetery. Our thoughts and prayers are extended to his family.

FUNERAL

Funeral services for *Glady's Zerounian* were held at **St. Mary Yette** on **Tuesday, December 13th**.

ALTAR FLOWERS DONATIONS

December 11th

Mike and Judy Skaff and family

in memory of Alice Dudukian,
nineteen years after her passing

December 18th

Mark, Linda, and Ben Wall

Alan, Marceen, Nick, and Shant Farsakian

in memory of Betty Farsakian,
nine years after her passing

HOKEHANKIST REQUESTS

December 11th

Alice Dudukian

nineteen years after her passing, requested by
Mike and Judy Skaff and family

December 18th

Betty Farsakian

nine years after her passing, requested by
Mark, Linda, and Ben Wall
Alan, Marceen, Nick, and Shant Farsakian

HOKEHANKIST DONATIONS

(November 21, 2022 – December 18, 2022)

December 11th

For Repose of Alice Dudukian's Soul

Mike and Judy Skaff

December 18th

For Repose of Betty Farsakian's Soul

Mark and Linda Wall

FEAST OF THEOPHANY/ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS TO BE CELEBRATED

In the Armenian Church, "Armenian Christmas," as it is popularly called is officially celebrated on January 6th and it is a Major Feast Day. Historically, all Christian churches celebrated Christ's birth on January 6th until the fourth century.

Because January 6th falls on a weekday this year, in Yette we will be celebrating on Sunday, January 8th. Armenian Christmas is a culmination of celebrations of events related to Christ's Incarnation. Theophany or Epiphany (or Astvadz-a-haytnootyoon in Armenian) means "revelation of God," which is the central theme of the Christmas Season in the Armenian Church.

Friday - January 6, 2023

Morning Services at 9:30 a.m.

Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ

Divine Liturgy at 10:15 a.m.

Sunday - January 8, 2023

Morning Services at 9:30 a.m.

Divine Liturgy at 10:15 a.m.

Blessing of Water/Baptism of the Cross will take place at the conclusion of the Divine Liturgy

Godfather of the Cross – Gregory Davidian

Celebrant & Preacher – Rev. Father Mashdots Keshishian

Hokehankist (Requiem Service) – Hokehankist will not be conducted during these days because January 8th (The Birth and Revelation of Jesus Christ) is one of the five major celebrations of the Armenian Apostolic Church.

Yughakin – During the Christmas season, it is customary in the Armenian Church for parishioners to make a special offering called Yughakin. Originally, this was to purchase oil to keep the lamps of the church burning brightly. This is now used for the general expenses of the church, again to enable it to continue to provide the light of Jesus Christ.

Flowers/Candles – Anyone wishing to make donations of flowers, poinsettias or candles for the Holy Altar for the Christmas observance may make arrangements through the church office at (559) 528-6892.

Home Blessings – During the Christmas season it is traditional for the parish priest to visit parishioners and conduct a home blessing. If you would like to schedule a home blessing, please call the church office.

PARISH COUNCIL CORNER



This week, we received the sad news of the passing of His Eminence Archbishop Vatche Hovsepien.

In March 1971, His Eminence was elected as the Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America. During his tenure in the Western Diocese, he established thirteen new parishes and ordained eight priests. In addition, he elevated and inducted hundreds of youth within the Diocese into the Ecclesiastical ranks of Acolyte, sub-Deacon and Deacon.

In 2003, after 32 years of devout, tireless, and reverential service, Archbishop Vatche retired as Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America.

I'm sure there are many parishes that feel that Vatche Surpazan Hayr had a very special bond with them. But much like parents don't have favorites among their children, Surpazan Hayr shared his love equally among the parishes.

However, when he was with us here in Yettem, he seemed so at home. Who could forget his regular visits at Asdvadzadzin where he would hold up "the little bunches of grapes" and share the significance of the blessing of the grapes? On his way to and from camp every summer we could count on him being in Yettem at least for a short visit if nothing else. He knew us by name and always asked about our children when they moved from the area. At camp he cherished the time he had with the young people and made bonds fishing with them one day and celebrating Badarak together the next. He always knew he had a place to stay near Yettem and never went back down to Southern California without a trunk filled with fruit.

His last visit to Yettem on July 18, 2021, was for the 110th Anniversary of St. Mary Yettem's founding. He went to significant means on that day to secure a driver who drove him here in an old truck many thought would not make it back over the Grapevine. He was determined to be with us for that special event regardless of what others believed to be best for him. As he departed that day, he shared how it was difficult for him to be here because so many of his cherished friends had departed this world and he felt sad without them here.

I also imagine he most likely knew this could be his last visit to *this* Garden of Eden.

Blessed is the memory of the righteous.

Myron Sheklian
Parish Council Chair

LADIES SOCIETY NEWS

BAZAAR December 4

THANK YOU YETTEM FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Oh, what fun! Christmas was in the air. Everybody was happy. Lunch was delicious. The live auction was a success. Even children were engaged in energetic bidding. Tally is not final yet, but we can say auction plus store plus kufta grossed over \$10,000!!! Thank you to Tracy Valencia and Linda Farsakian-Wall, who chaired the committee, and to all who contributed, set up, prepared, cooked, baked, donated, decorated. Thank you to auctioneer John Kalfayan and to a new auctioneer this year, none other than our own Marlene Majarian! Well done! Our bazaar has a long history. Let's remember auctioneers past: Armen Menendian, Chuck Simonian, Sammy Farsakian, Harry Ekizian, Harry Kaloustian, Sark Davidian. Chuck was 25 years old at this bazaar, November 5, 1978.



The Executive Board met December 12. We decided 2023 officers. Mari Louise Menendian and Margie Lynn Davidian, Chair and Vice-Chair respectively. Janel Zerounian, Secretary. Julie Poochigian, Treasurer. Advisors, Janice McWilliams, Renee Ananian, and Michele Ananian. We scheduled dates for the 2023 monthly meetings. We looked at a full year of dates for recurring events as well as new and we hope surprising and stimulating events. The Parish can anticipate an exciting 2023.

Happy Birthday to our lovely ladies celebrating their birthdays in January: Janet Gomes, Adrienne Poochigian, Donna Torosian, Julie Bair, Hasmik Gregory, and Peggy Fernandes.

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Mari Louise Menendian
Ladies Society Chair

DECEMBER 25th

Services **WILL NOT** be held on Sunday, December 25th in YetteM this year so that all parishioners can be with their families. Those wishing to celebrate Holy Badarak on that morning are encouraged to view services streamed from the [St. Leon Ghevondiants Cathedral](#) in Burbank.

JURAKALOUYTS BADARACK

Please remember to call the [St. Paul Armenian Church office](#) by **December 29th** if you plan on attending the **Jurakalouyts Badarak** that will be held on **Thursday, January 5th** in **Fresno**. Father Mashdots and Father Yessai will be conducting the services. See the flier below for more information. (See flier)

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study will be held **via Zoom** on **January 4, 2023, at 7 PM**. Bible Study is held on the first **Wednesday** of each month. Call the office if you would like the link.

ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS

Armenian Christmas will be celebrated here at St. Mary YetteM on **Sunday, January 8, 2023**. (See flier)

WAYS AND MEANS

The Ways and Means Committee **next meeting** will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 7 PM**.

PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council's next meeting will be held via Zoom on **Thursday, January 19, 2023, at 6:00 PM**.

POON PAREGENTAN

Save the Date: Poon Paregentan will be held on **Sunday, February 19, 2023**, after church services in the Majarian Hall. (See flier)

PAYPAL

You may access PayPal through the St. Mary YetteM website (www.stmaryyettem.org) and click on the "Donation" button on the bottom of the Home Page. You may donate for general donations, yughakins, hokehankists, pledges, membership dues, in lieu of flowers, or pay for altar flowers you have ordered on behalf of the church.



To learn more, contact Linda Farsakian-Wall at 559-786-1419.

ST. MARY MEMORIAL WALL

The St. Mary Memorial Wall was started in 2001 and has been a huge success. Currently there is **space for 28 additional names** at a **donation of \$200/name**. Contact Jim Soxman: ph. 559-936-2227 or email: jimbeasoxman@sbcglobal.net.

SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

Sunday School meets on the **second and fourth Sundays** of each month at **11:00 AM** September-June.

BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP

If you would like to sponsor either the weekly bulletin for a minimum donation of \$25 or the monthly bulletin for a minimum donation of \$200, please call the church office at (559) 528-6892.

2023 RAFFLE

Tina Peters has sent out information and tickets for our **2023 raffle**. If you don't receive tickets by mail in the coming days and would like some, contact Tina at (559) 967-2593 by phone or text. (See flier)

RAFFLE

Our twelfth church raffle of 2022 was held on Sunday, December 4th.

Congratulations to...

(\$150) Olivia Penny

(\$100) Dolores Omartian

(\$50) Sandra Vartanian

Our **first drawing of 2023** will be held on **Sunday, January 8th**. The drawing will also be streamed on Facebook. Thank you to our Ways and Means Committee for this great fundraiser for our church.

ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH

JANUARY 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5 Jurakalouyts Badarak and a Traditional Dinner at St. Paul Armenian Church, Fresno starting at 4:30 PM	6 Morning Service at 9:30 AM Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord Jesus	7
8 Celebration of Theophany/ Armenian Christmas at 9:30 Sunday School Raffle drawing	9	10	11	12	13 Feast of the Naming of our Lord Jesus Christ Ways and Means meeting via Zoom at 7PM	14 Birth of St. John the Forerunner
15	16 M L King Day	17	18	19 Parish Council meeting via Zoom at 6 PM	20	21
22 Sunday School	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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Sunday Schedule:
Morning Service (Matins) 9:30 AM
Divine Liturgy 10:15 AM

Office Hours
Tuesday – Friday
9:30 AM to 2:30 PM

Father Mashdots can be reached at:
559-528-6892 – Office
559-528-6897 – FAX
818-293-9098 - Cell

Yettem Social Hyes

Hello Yettem Family,

We would like to introduce Yettem's newest group the "Yettem Social Hyes". This group consists of the young adults within the Yettem Visalia area who have come together with the leadership and guidance of Der Hayr Mashdots and Yeretsgin Maral. Der Hayr saw a need to bring members of this age group together in hopes to unite us in community and fellowship. He brought this idea up to several couples. We loved the idea and were on board to bring it to life. He is assisted by Alysse Hovannisian and Brooke Lopez who have volunteered to be chairs, as well as Lynn Skaff and the guidance of Lisa Krause as the Parish Council Liaison.

We came up with the name "Yettem Social Hyes" to represent our church, our heritage, and an emphasis on socializing as a group. Our mission is *"To bring young adults together in fellowship, fun, and faith under the umbrella of the Yettem Armenian Apostolic Church."* The target age group of our members is 21- 45 years of age. This group is committed to coming together in fellowship and participating in fundraising opportunities to represent the Yettem community. Many of our members have been married within the last three years and live within the Visalia area. We are thrilled to bring these members together and to strengthen the future of this community.

We had our first gathering on December 1, 2022 in Visalia. For our first event, we had roughly 16 people attend. It was a great success and we had a wonderful time coming together and sharing a meal.

This is just the beginning of the many exciting plans we have for the "Yettem Social Hyes." We are proud to make this announcement to our extended Yettem Family and, we would love to have new members! If you are interested in joining and/or getting on our mailing list, you may contact Der Hayr or message us on Instagram @yettensocialhyes.

Thank you and we look forward to sharing more in the upcoming New Year!

Co-Chairs Alysse Hovannisian and Brooke Lopez

Merry Christmas



St. Paul Armenian Church
Jurakalouyts Badarak
Blessing of Water
& Dinner Buffet

Thursday, January 5, 2023



Reading of Holy Scriptures: 4:30 p.m.
Divine Liturgy (Jurakalouyts Badarak): 5:00 p.m.
Blessing of Water (Չրօքհնէք): 6:00 p.m.
Dinner: 6:30 p.m.

St. Mary Yettem Parishioners are invited to join the Jurakalouyts Badarak and Traditional Dinner.

Officiating services will be Fr. Mashdots Keshishian (Badarak celebrant), parish priest of St. Mary Yettem and Fr. Yessai Bedros, parish priest of St. Paul Armenian Church, Fresno.

\$20 per person
\$10 children under 12

Please RSVP by December 29

Reservations can be made every Sunday during Fellowship or by calling the church office 559.226.6343
Or by mail

Make checks payable to: St. Paul Armenian Church

Name: _____

Number of Guests: ___ Amount enclosed: ___ Phone: _____

I wish to be seated with: _____

Please select one entrée for each guest attending

Fish (per guest) _____

Chicken (per guest) _____

**St. Mary Armenian
Church of Yettem**



Armenian Christmas Luncheon

Sunday, January 8th, 2023

Immediately following the day's worship

Menu

Chicken & Beef Combo Kebab, Bulgar Pilaf,
Salad, Bread, Dessert, and drinks

Adults--\$20.00

Children twelve (12) and under--\$15.00

Please help us plan by calling the church office
at (559) 528-6892, or
emailing lunches@stmaryyettem.org



Sponsored by St. Mary Yettem Ways and Means Committee



POON PAREGENTAN

Sunday, February 19, 2023

After Church Services



All-You-Can Eat Lunch

- Spaghetti and Meatballs
- Salad
- Garlic Bread
- Dessert Table



\$15 per person

Please RSVP by Wednesday, February 15
 To the Church Office—(559) 528-6892
 -or- Email—lunch@stmaryyettem.org

Let's Play Bingo!

Lots of great Prizes to WIN



50/50 RAFFLE



Games for the Kids!

St. Mary YetteM - Ways and Means 3rd Annual Monthly Raffle

Name _____ Address _____ Phone _____	No. 0001	St. Mary Armenian Church of YetteM MONTHLY RAFFLE TICKET 1st Prize - \$150.00 2nd Prize - \$100.00 3rd Prize - \$50.00 Winner need NOT be present to win This ticket is Valid from January 2023 to December 2023 Ticket Donation: \$20.00
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Monthly Raffle Drawing Starts in January 2023

~You have a chance to
WIN 36 times next year~

If you would like tickets, Call or Text
Tina Peters—(559) 967-2593 –Or-
E-mail: hyetinapeters@lightspeed.net

2023 Raffle Drawing Schedule—Dates Subject to Change

January 8 • February 19 • March 5 • April 2
May 14 • June 18 • July 9 • August 13
September 10 • October 8 • November 12 • December 3



Ladies Society Annual Bazaar 2022

(Continued from the front page)

The Feast of the Nativity and Theophany reminds us of God's divine intervention in our lives, so that we may reflect upon it and humble ourselves to receive God's grace as did Mary, the Mother of God. With the birth of Jesus Christ, the mystery of salvation is revealed to us, which is the greatest gift to humanity.

Christmas requires spiritual preparation, which includes prayer, devotional reading, charity, caring for the bereaved and the sick, and helping the needy. This must be done with humility, in quiet, without trumpeting, not from our surplus or leftovers but from our own share. Mother Theresa says, "*Love means to be willing to give until it hurts.*"

Christmas is a family holiday. Hence, the family should come together with prayers, singing of hymns and Christmas carols, reading from the Gospels, and most importantly, with love and good-will towards each other. By taking simple steps, we can teach our children how to make the sign of the cross, recite daily prayers, read biblical stories, and highlight the importance of attending church.

Through these basic steps, we adorn our lives with the love and wisdom of Christ, transforming our homes into sacred abodes. Otherwise, the world will suffocate us with materialism and corrupted values of this life. We must always remember the picture of Angel Gabriel and Mary and how she accepted to house Jesus in the temple of her blessed body. On this Christmas, let us be aware and more mindful of our virtuous gifts so that we can live a renewed life. We must not be spiritually frail. Rather, we must synchronize our words and deeds and through them reflect God's immense love for human kind.

The celebration of the Feast of the Nativity and Theophany is complete when we emulate the humble character of the Virgin Mary and welcome the birth of Christ in our hearts with spiritual jubilation.

**CHRIST IS BORN AND REVEALED!
BLESSED IS THE REVELATION OF CHRIST!**

Prayerfully,

Abp. Hovnan Derderian, Primate

Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America and Mexico

St. Mary Armenian Church
P.O. Box 367
Yettem, California 93670
Return Service Required

Non-Profit Organization
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