



ԵՂԵՍ

Հրատարակութիւն

Եղեմի Ս. Աստուծածին

Հայաստանեայց Եկեղեցւոյ

YETTEM

A publication of St. Mary

Armenian Church

Yetterem, California

JANUARY 2017



WESTERN DIOCESE OF
THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA
Հայաստանեայց Առաքելական Եկեղեցւոյ Արեւմտեան Վերնախնային Վերնաբարձր Թեմ
HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP HOVNAN DERDERIAN, PRIMATE

HOMILY ON THE NATIVITY AND THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD

“Today, the Sun of righteousness was revealed before mankind”

ST. NERSESS THE GRACEFUL

Cuddled in the heavenly azure, the star of Bethlehem shone like a celestial lantern cherishing the spark of hope and expectation. Every now and then, the gloomy clouds seemed to devour the star in a sinister attempt to diminish its brightness. Despite their relentless efforts, the fearless star emerged through the darkness. Heaven and earth were both in agony of labor, for the star was giving birth to a sun and the Son of God would be born to a Virgin. At dusk, when the darkness disappeared and the stars lost their glimmer, the sun rose in the horizon and the Savior was born.

Indeed, the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the radiating sun in the life of humanity. In the words of St. Nersess the Graceful, “Today, the Sun of righteousness was revealed before mankind.” And what is the sun of righteousness for a Christian, if not the compass, the touchstone, and the standard of all moral and spiritual values?

It’s not a coincidence that from ancient times, long before Christ, people worshipped the sun because it was the source of life as well as the guide in determining the time, weather, and orientation. Remember, people did not have smartphones or navigation systems back in the day.

When we delve into the mystery of the Incarnation, especially reflecting on the promise of salvation and the establishment of peace in the world, the metaphor of the sun of righteousness becomes clearer and more comprehensible.

People perceive what they wish to perceive. However, the objective reality is that we live in turbulent times. The world is plagued by geopolitical, economic, religious, and social turmoil which jeopardizes peace and stability in the world. Of the aforementioned, however, the most tragic is the troubled soul and the distorted thought of men, which lead to a state of disorientation, uncertainty, and restlessness. As described in the Psalms, “They

wander in the wilderness in a desolate way; they cannot find a city to dwell in.” (Psalms 107:4) People seem to be lost, for the value system has been distorted. Vice and virtue, truth and lie, black and white have been confusingly intertwined. For instance, we witness the brute force of countries, who ignite wars and command the intimidating display of their military might. Ironically and quite hypocritically, the leaders of those countries do not miss an opportunity to lecture on world peace from lofty podiums. This example alone concurs the classic double standard of morals of today’s society. “Democracy,” “liberalism,” “progressiveness,” and many other “isms” have captured us in a web of ambiguous meanings and arbitrary definitions. Subconsciously, we have become the captives of our thought as we fear to touch on those sensitive terms thus, avoiding to call things by their proper names. Political correctness and oversensitivity have turned us into indecisive, spineless, and wishy-washy beings. This unfortunate reality is due to the loss of our sense of direction and the abandonment of Christian ethics and values.

Today, as we celebrate the Nativity and Theophany of the Son of God, the sun of righteousness shines in the horizon. Christ the Babe is born. God, the Father has favored us with another opportunity to repent and reclaim the truthful meaning of life having Him as the ultimate standard and the guide. The miraculous birth of Christ makes us shine again in the blistering cold and warm the hearts of those who surround us. The Sun of righteousness illuminates our lives, brightens our minds, alters our perspective, and clears our vision. Most importantly, the Sun of righteousness, the Son of God, through His miraculous birth liberates us from the captivity of fear so that we can express ourselves straightforwardly and earnestly without succumbing to hypocrisy, and fake values. God makes the sun of righteousness rise upon us so that we may see and follow the truth without giving way to sin, praising mediocracy, or promoting weakness.

On the threshold of the New Year, when we celebrate the Nativity of Christ, these reflections allow us to reevaluate our spiritual lives. Then we commit to surrender our lives into the hands of God so that He may mold and shape our spirituality and increase in us the faith, hope, and love. In this sense, the birth of Christ is a divine message addressed to us to love one another, the Church, and the Motherland. Moreover, the birth of the Only Begotten exhorts us to strive to become perfect, exemplary, just, loyal, peace-loving, humble, humanist, truthful, fearless, creative and visionary servants.

Our moral and spiritual obligations are not confined to the aforementioned qualities. Furthermore, as true Christians we are obliged to also pray for those who do not know the Savior. We pray for the peace in the world and for the souls of those who perished as a result of bloody wars, natural disasters without seeing the dawn of Christmas. We pray for the world and hope that the year 2017 may be prosperous for all.

Today, the Sun of righteousness was revealed before mankind.

Christ is Born and Revealed. Blessed is the Revelation of Christ.

ARCHBISHOP HOVNAN DERDERIAN

Primate

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Hovnan Derderian", with a horizontal line underneath.

Feast of the Nativity and Theophany 2017

Burbank



WESTERN DIOCESE OF
THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA
Հայաստանեայց Առաքելական Եկեղեցւոյ Զիսուսական Վերջնական Քրեւմբան Թեմ
HIS EMINENCE ARCHBISHOP HOVNAN DERDERIAN, PRIMATE

ՔԱՐՈՉ ՄԲ. ԾՆՆԴԵԱՆ
«ԱՐԵՂԱԿՆ ԱՐԴԱՐՈՒԹԵԱՆ
ԱՅՍՕՐ ՅԱՅՏՆԵՑԱԲ ԱԶԳԻ ՄԱՐԴԿԱՆ»:
ՆԵՐՍԵՍ ՇՆՈՐՀԱԼԻ

Երկնային կանթեղի մը պես կը ցոլար Բեթղեհեմի աստղը՝ թանձր ու կապոյտ ծածկոցին տակ անթեղելով հրաշալի սպասումի ու յուսոյ կայծը: Տուրտ ու խաւար երկինքը մերթ ընդ մերթ կը կլաներ աստղը՝ անոր փայլը նսեմացնելու նենգամիտ միտումով, բայց անգոր գտնուելով շիջանիլ, տեղի կու տար երկնային լոյսին: Երկինք ու երկիր երկունքի մէջ էին, որովհետեւ աստղէն արեւ պիտի ծներ եւ Կոյսէն՝ Աստուածորդի: Առաւօտուն, երբ խաւարը ցրուեցաւ եւ աստղերը մարեցին, երկնային քողի ետեւէն ճառագեց պայծառ արեգակը՝ Յիսուս Փրկիչը ծնաւ:

Յիրաւի, Աստուածորդու՝ մեր Տիրոջ եւ Փրկչի Յիսուս Զրիստոսի Ծնունդը աշխարհի մարդկութեան կեանքին մէջ ճառագայթող արդարութեան արեգակն է: Ինչպէս Շնորհալի Զայրապետը կ'ըսէ. «Արեգակն արդարութեան այսօր յայտնեցաւ ազգի մարդկան»: Եւ ի՞նչ է արդարութեան արեգակը, եթէ ոչ քրիստոնեայի կեանքին ուղեցոյցը, բարոյական եւ հոգեւոր արժեքներու փորձաքարը, ճշդի ու ճշմարտացիի չափորոշիչը, մեր խղճի ու խղճմտանքի գորովայորդ աղբիւրը:

Վաղնջական ժամանակներէն, Զրիստոսէն իսկ առաջ, մարդ արարածը միշտ ապակինած է երկնային լուսատուին ոչ միայն անոր համար, որ արեւը կեանքի աղբիւրն է, այլ՝ որովհետեւ անոր միջոցաւ որոշած է ժամանակն ու եղանակը, տարածութեան մակերէնոյթին վրայ՝ բեւեռային դիրքն ու ուղղութիւնը: Բնաւ ալ պատահական չէ, որ արարիչը չճանչցողներ պաշտած եւ աստուածացուցած են արեւի երկնային գօրութիւնը:

Սուրբ Ծնունդ է այսօր, տարեմուտ: Արդարութեան արեգակը կը փայլի երկնակամարին վրայ: Մանուկ Յիսուսը ծնաւ: Զայր Աստուած հաճեցաւ մարդկութեանն ընծայել եւս մէկ առիթ՝ ապաշաւութեան, նորոգութեան եւ վերագտնումի: Յիսուսի ծնունդն այսօր, Յունուարեան այս պաղ օրերուն մեզ առիթ կու տայ նորէն արեւելու, որպէսզի իրմով լուսաւորուինք, ջերմանանք ու ջերմացնենք, իրմով առաջնորդուինք, իրմով չափենք աշխարհի չարն ու բարին, լաւն ու թերին: Արդարութեան աստուածային արեգակը մեր մէջ ծագելով՝ կը պայծառակերպէ մեր կեանքը, կը փոխէ մեր աշխարհահայեացքը, կը պարզէ մեր միտքը, կը յստակեցնէ մեր շուար հայեացքները: Նորածին Յիսուս իր սուրբ ծնունդով կ'ազատագրէ մեզի վախի կապանքներէն, որպէսզի ազատօրէն արտայայտենք մեր գաղափարները յանուն արդարութեան եւ ճշմարտութեան՝ առանց տուրք տալու երեսպաշտութեան, շինծու եւ ժամանակավրէպ արժեքներու:

Նոր Տարուոյ սեմին, երբ Զրիստոսի Ծնունդը կը տօնախմբենք, այս մտածումները առիթ կու տան մեզի հաշուեյարդարի մը ենթարկելու մեր կեանքն ու մեր հոգեւոր ճանապարհորդութեան ողջ ընթացքը: Երբ կ'անդրադառնանք մեր անցեալի խաւարային ընթացքին ու անկեղծ գոջում մը կ'ունենանք, կը լուսաւորուի մեր կեանքը Սուրբ Ծննդեան արշալոյսով: Կը խոստանանք մեր նոր կեանքը դնել Աստուծոյ ձեռքերուն մէջ, որպէսզի Ինք խմորէ մեր հոգեւոր կեանքը եւ մեր մէջ առատացնէ հաւատքը, յոյսն ու սէրը եւ փափաքը բոլոր տեսակի առաքինութեանց հանդէպ: Այս իմաստով, Յիսուսի ծնունդը կենարար պատգամ է ուղղուած բոլորիս, որպէսզի սիրենք իրարու, սիրենք մեր Եկեղեցին, ազգն ու Զայրենիքը: Յիսուսի Ծնունդը կոչ կ'ունդէ մեզի ըլլալու կատարեալ, օրինակելի, արդարամիտ, սկզբունքային, խաղաղասէր, խոնարհ, մարդասէր, ճշմարտասօս, քաջ, ստեղծարար, տեսիլքով ու հաւատքով առաջնորդուող սպասաւոր:

Եւ տակաւին, մեր բարոյական եւ հոգեւոր պարտականութիւնն այսքանով չի սահմանափակուիր: Որպէս ճշմարիտ քրիստոնեայ, պարտինք աղօթել նաեւ անոնց համար, որոնք չեն ճանչնար Աշխարհի Փրկիչը: Կ'աղօթենք աշխարհի խաղաղութեան համար, պատերազմներու, բնական արհաւիրքներու պատճառաւ մեզմէ անժամանակ հեռացածներուն համար, որոնք գոցեցին աչքերնին Սուրբ Ծննդեան արշալոյսը չվայելած: Կ'աղօթենք եւ կը յուսանք, որ 2017 թուականը բարեբեր տարի մը ըլլայ բոլորիս համար:

«Արեգակն արդարութեան այսօր յայտնեցաւ ազգի մարդկան»:

Զրիստոս Ծնաւ եւ Յայտնեցաւ. Օրինեալ է յայտնութիւնը Զրիստոսի:

ՅՈՎԱՆԱՆ ԱՐԲԵՊԻՍԿՈՊՈՍ

Առաջնորդ

Սբ. Ծնունդ - 2017

Պրոպէնք

Parish Notes

BULLETIN SPONSORSHIP

**THIS JANUARY 2017 BULLETIN IS
SPONSORED BY VARSANIG
JIGGERIAN IN MEMORY OF HER
GOOD FRIEND ELIZABETH TELLIAN**

ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE REMINDER

Friday – January 6, 2017

Morning Services at 9:45 a.m.

**Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of our
Lord Jesus Christ**

Divine Liturgy at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, January 8, 2017

Morning Services at 9:45 a.m.

Divine Liturgy at 10:30 a.m.

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

**Godfather of the Cross – Edwin Gregory
Celebrant & Preacher – Rev. Fr. Zaven
Markosyan**

Home Blessing at the Church Hall

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

**Annual Parish Assembly Meeting will be
held on Sunday, February 12, 2017.**

**More information will be sent out at a later
date.**

ALTAR FLOWER DONATIONS

● **November 27– Betty and Denny Klaseus
in memory of Betty's mother Zimit
Djerrahian.**

● **December 11 – The Kalfayan Family in
memory of Anna Kalfayan – forty days
after her passing.**

● **December 11 – The Farsakian and Wall
Families in memory of Betty Farsakian –
three years after her passing.**

● **December 18 – The Skaff Family in
memory of Alice Dudukian – thirteen years
after her passing.**

● **December 25 – Jerry and Julie
Poochigian**

HOKEHANKIST

● **December 4 – The Skaff family in
memory of Alice Dudukian – thirteen years
after her passing.**

● **December 11 – The Kalfayan Family in
memory of Anna Kalfayan – forty days
after her passing.**

● **December 11 – The Farsakian and Wall
Families in memory of Betty Farsakian –
three years after her passing.**

**Our condolences to the family of Zimit
Djerrahian who entered her eternal rest on
November 17th in Visalia. Services were
held on Saturday, November 26th in our
church.**

**Ladies Society evening meeting will be held
on Wednesday, January 11, 2016 at Ryan's
in Visalia at 6:00 p.m. board, 6:30 p.m.
meeting.**

**Fellowship will be held on Sunday,
January 15, 2017.**

**ACYO meeting will be held on Sunday,
January 15, 2017 in the Majarian Hall.**

**The regular monthly Parish Council
meeting will be held on Thursday,
January 19, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the hall.**

**Celebrant Fr. Kevork Arakelian will be
here on Sunday, January 22, 2017.**

**SAVE THE DATE: Saturday, February
25, 2017 for Poon Paregentan Dinner and
Celebration sponsored by the Ways and
Means Committee.**

**Armenian Religious and Language classes
will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of
each month after the Divine Liturgy. If you
are interested, please contact the Church
Office at (559) 528-6892 or Fr. Zaven at
(818) 644-9398.**

St. Mary Spiritual Conversation meetings are usually held on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month at 2:00 p.m. Please come and join us. For locations, or if you have any questions, please call the Church Office at (559) 528-6892 or Fr. Zaven at (818) 644-9398.

Sunday School meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 11:00 a.m. during the school year.

Ladies Society has kufta for sale at \$30 a dozen and one pound packages of manti for \$10. You may purchase these on Sundays from Ladies Society board members or by calling the church office to make arrangements for purchase.

EASY MONEY: ESCRIP

We began the eScrip program in April. As of July 20 St. Mary Church has earned \$189.40. This is done by 3% rewards earned on purchases at Save Mart, Lucky, and Food Maxx stores. We have 27 registered members in the eScrip program and 18 of these have used the program. To do so, all you have to do is give your phone number as you check out of these stores. If you have not registered in the eScrip program, sign up at Shares...powered by eScrip (<http://www.escrip.com/shares>) and designate St. Mary Armenian Church as your charity of choice. If you have difficulty signing up please call me (Jim Soxman, 733-8741) and I will do it for you.

DVD SET FOR SALE: St. Mary Armenian Church, 100th Anniversary, July 2, 2011. DVD set is \$25.00 and can be purchased by calling the Church office at (559) 528-6892. A \$6.00 charge for shipping and handling will be added to the price if you would like one mailed to you. (Sponsored by the Ways and Means Committee)

The "Armenian Genocide Survivors and Heroes" book can be purchased for \$40 at St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church in Yetteem or contact the Church Office at (559) 528-6892. If you wish a book or books mailed to you, the cost of mailing one, two, or three books will be an additional \$5.00. The cost of mailing four or five books will be an additional \$6.00.

PAYPAL

Our Parish has opened a "PayPal" account to make it convenient for you to make donations. You may access PayPal through the St. Mary Yetteem web-site (www.stmaryyetteem.org) and click on the "Donation" button on the bottom of the Home Page. You may donate for General Donations, Yughakins, Pledges, Membership Dues, In Lieu of Flowers, or pay for Altar Flowers you have ordered on behalf of the Church.

The Parish Council has approved to have our weekly bulletin and the monthly newsletter available for sponsorships. We are not selling ads. This was done to help offset costs. If you would like to sponsor an edition of either publication please contact the office, or there is a form at the front desk in the church. The sponsorships for the weekly bulletin are \$25.00 per issue, and to sponsor the monthly newsletter is \$100.00 per issue.

To St. Mary Parishioners: If you know of anyone ill or in the hospital, please call Rev. Fr. Zaven Markosyan at the Church Office (559) 528-6892 or his cell (818) 644-9398.

St. Mary Armenian Apostolic Church Office hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, from 9:30 -2:30.

LADIES!

Save the Date: Saturday, February 18, 2017.

Faith of Zion is hosting a Ladies Wine Night. Keep your eye out for more information, which will be coming soon!

To St. Mary Parishioners: The Parish Council would like to invite any parishioner who may have concerns or questions with anything dealing with Church affairs. The Parish Council meetings are held the third Thursday of each month. To be placed on the agenda of the meeting, please contact Der Zaven at (818) 644-9398 or Bea Soxman Parish Council Chairperson at (559) 623-2390.

The St. Mary Armenian Church webpage at www.stmaryyettem.org includes archived copies of church bulletins, pictures from events, a current church calendar, and an improved LIVE Camera System. With the new camera system, it is possible to watch services on any desktop, laptop, or tablet system. If you haven't visited the website lately, try it out and see all the information that can be found online.



*Our ACYO recently elected their new officers for the coming year. Elected for the 2017 year were:
Chairman-Dustin Vartanian
Vice Chairman- David Safrazian
Secretary-Pete Safrazian
Treasurer-Melina Peters*

If you wish to place any information in the monthly Bulletin, please notify the Church Office by the 20th of month.

Armenian Martyrs' Monument Project



The fathers and mothers of our parish commemorated our Armenian Martyrs' in the first genocide of the twentieth century by locating a Martyrs' Monument on our church grounds. The monument is now in need of repair. The cost of repair is \$12,600 which is beyond our budgeted expenditures. Please donate towards this repair project so we can proudly carry on the wishes of our church fathers and mothers. Checks in any amount can be sent to the church office. Please indicate "Monument Project" on the memo line.

St. Mary Armenian Church, Yettem

2017

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6 Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ Divine Liturgy 10:30AM	7 Remembrance of the Dead
8 Ways and Means Armenian Christmas Luncheon following day's worship Sunday School	9	10	11 Ladies Society Meeting at Ryan's in Visalia at 6:00 PM board, 6:30 PM meeting	12	13	14
15 Fellowship Armenian Religious & Language Class ACYO Meeting at Church	16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	17	18	19 Parish Council Meeting at 7 PM	20	21
22 Celebrant – Fr. Kevork Arakelian Sunday School	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

Sunday Schedule:

Morning Service (Matins) – 9:45 A.M.

Divine Liturgy – 10:30 A.M.

Sunday School – 2nd & 4th Sundays @ 11 A.M.

Father Zaven can be reached at:

559-528-6892 - Office

559-528-6897 - FAX



ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH , YETTEM
WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE

*Armenian Christmas Luncheon
Sunday, January 8, 2017*

immediately following the day's worship

Menu

*Lulu Kebab
Pilaf
Salad
Cheese Beorag
Dessert
Drinks*

Adults--\$15.00

Children ten (10) and under--\$10.00

*Special Christmas Program
Presented by the Sunday School Students*

*Plan to attend with the entire family and
enjoy the delicious luncheon and program.*



SAVE THE DATE:

Saturday, February 25, 2017

POON PAREGENTAN

*ST. MARY ARMENIAN CHURCH, YETTEM
MAJARIAN HALL*

*Look for more information in the
coming weeks...*

**Sponsored by the Ways and Means
Committee**





Ladies Society Christmas Bazaar December 4, 2016





**Sunday School Trip to Hillcrest Farms
December 11, 2016**



Feast of the Holy Nativity and Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, 'Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East, and have come to worship him.' And lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh." (Matthew 2:1-11, RSV) The Armenian Church celebrates the holy birth (*Sourp Dznount*) of Jesus Christ on January 6. In Armenian tradition, this feast day commemorates not only the birth of Christ, but also His baptism by John the Baptist. The latter is remembered through the "Blessing of Water" ceremony, which follows the Divine Liturgy on January 6. On the eve of the Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the *Jrakalouyts* Divine Liturgy (the lighting of the lamps service) is celebrated in honor of the manifestation of Jesus as the Son of God (theophany). It is custom for the faithful to hold lit candles during this special service. On the following day, the mystery of our Lord's baptism in the River Jordan is remembered in the ceremony of the *Jurorhnek*, or the "Blessing of Water." In ancient times, this ceremony was celebrated by the riverside or sea shore, but, for various reasons, it was later confined to the interior of the churches. During the ceremony, the cross is dipped in water, recalling Christ's immersion in the Jordan River. Blessed oil, or Holy Chrism (Muron), is poured into the water from a dove-shaped container, symbolizing the appearance at the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove and the voice of the Father proclaiming to all that Jesus is His Son. The Holy Chrism is prepared in Holy Etchmiadzin and is blessed by the Catholicos assisted by the bishops. Muron contains olive oil, balsam and the essence of forty different flowers and herbs. At the end of the ceremony, members of the congregation are given the blessed water to drink, thereby sharing in the life giving act of Christ. As water is essential to the life of the body, drinking the blessed water is a reminder that participation in the acts of Christ is essential for eternal life.



St. Mary Armenian Church

Non-Profit Organization

P.O. Box 367

U.S. Postal Paid

Yettem, California

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