



OUR CHURCH

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DER (REV. FR.) KRIKOR ZAKARYAN, PARISH PRIEST

MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF THE DESERT

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"But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that your fasting will not be noticed by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you."

Matthew 6:17, 18

Primate's Lenten Message "Closer to God"

The great Lenten spiritual journey guides our lives for a return to God which is conditioned through prayerful life and fasting. Throughout the Lenten period, our Church offers spiritual readings and prayers which clearly explain the role of prayer and fasting as special tools which cultivate our spiritual live with the Love of God. In deepening within our identity is the consciousness that all humanity is blessed by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew teaches us about prayer and fasting. These inseparable acts aim to lead our lives towards God.

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"(Matthew 6:19-21).

Some 25 years ago, I read a book entitled "Christian Morale" authored by the late Archbishop Sion Manougian. In it, I met passages dedicated to prayer and its vital importance. I would like to share these reflections

with the reader.

1) Prayer is the breathing of the soul. As we cannot live without breathing air, the same concept applies to our spiritual breathing. Without prayer, we are spiritually exhausted.

2) The purpose of prayer is to leave the presence of God, to converse with God and to be filled with divine strength.

3) The human being who is being guided by prayer becomes conscious. Prayer helps us to better recognize our inner self; enables us to see the essence of our spiritual life, our egoistic feelings, our fears and doubts. Prayer cultivates within us the feeling of responsible life, but above all, humility.

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Witness the Progress of Our Church



The construction of the Armenian Apostolic Church of the Desert is on schedule. During the month of February, the interior metal stud framing was completed and is ready for pre-wiring. Fire Sprinkler lines now run throughout the building and plumbing lines will be installed and connected soon. The 12' front door framing has been powder coated and installed, in preparation for the finished double arched metal doors. A final decision on the exterior stone veneer has been made and will soon be

attached to the outside surface of the building. Interior finishes are under review as we near the completion of the Church sanctuary. A Fundraising Brochure outlining the naming opportunities that are now available for portions of the Church building will be mailed out soon.



Please contact a Parish Council member to discuss the many options for making a donation towards your Church that will be recognized for years to come.

Construction Committee

Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD your God which He has given you.

Deuteronomy 16:17

Primate's Lenten Message "Closer to God"

► **from p. 1** Unlike previous years, this year we have chosen to share weekly messages rather than daily reflections which were communicated to our readers on our website armenian-churchwd.com. Each week, we will have one specific theme. Our message for the first week of the Lenten journey is "Surrendering Into the Hands of God."

To me personally, the person who commits the self to prayerful life and fasting is in a way surrendering the self into the Hands of God. Putting our trust into the Hands of God should be and is

the ultimate goal in surrendering to God. For a person who craves the epitome of spiritual life needs to take three important steps. Step one: fleeing from the ordinary life into a desert place. Step two: the attainment of solitude and silence. Step three: conversing with God. Any person who is able to follow these three steps, certainly feels the presence of God. God becomes the mirror of our spiritual life. This exercise helps us to see the depth of our true being. This is also the moment of transfiguration or spiritual transformation. Christ, our Lord, exemplified this lifestyle in paving

the way for humanity towards God.

The great Lenten period is the call for humanity to return to God. Throughout the Lenten journey, let us take courage to read the Holy Bible in a more disciplined fashion; to make the prayer of our forefathers the prayer of our heart and to exercise fasting. These steps will also help us to be the new person in Christ. St. John Chrysostom conveys to us an inspiring message in stressing the importance of change in our spiritual life, not in a sporadic fashion but in an enduring manner. "But we must see that it is not for a few days

that we are required to change but rather for a whole life."

Dear faithful in Christ, I wish you a spiritually uplifting journey. Let each day of the Lenten period be a step in bringing you closer to God. This will be the time for spiritual preparation when we mature in our faith to be able to see and grasp the ultimate destiny of the Lenten journey... the Victorious Resurrection of Christ, our Lord.

Archbishop Hovnan Derderian,
Primate

Sundays During Lent

The Sundays of Lent are guideposts in our journey to Easter. They take us through the history of God's relationship with us, from creation to today. Each Sunday has a theme and a *sharagan*, or hymn, explaining the theology of the theme. The Bible readings for each Sunday tell us what we should be doing at each stage of our Lenten life.

First Sunday - Poon Paregantan (Good Life)

We are in the Garden of Eden on this day just before Lent begins on Monday (there being no Ash Wednesday in the Armenian and other Eastern churches). In the garden we live in the joy God intended for us, knowing Him face to face. It is man's pure life, lived in the image of God.

Second Sunday - Sunday of Expulsion

On the Sunday of the Expulsion from the Garden we encounter our own great sin: pride. Mankind (Adam and Eve) had all they needed in the Garden: their lives with God were complete. God asked only that they love Him, and obey Him as all sensible creatures would obey a loving Creator, since the Creator knows His creatures and their needs better than they themselves do. By eating the forbidden fruit they did not obey God's commandment! In His love God made us free and the tree from which Adam and Eve ate represents the free choice all of us must make.

Third Sunday - Sunday of the Prodigal Son

The Sunday of the Prodigal Son (Luke

15:1-32) gives us a Biblical case history of a proud man, who sets off blithely, taking his inheritance with him. He cannot manage on his own and ends up in poverty and desolation, envying pigs for their food. When he comes to his senses and says, "I will arise and go to my father," he sounds a Lenten rallying cry for all of us. In his shame over his sin he only expects to be received as a servant, no longer a son. But the father (Our Father) receives him with the fullness of love that only the gracious, bountiful Lord can give.

Fourth Sunday - Sunday of the Unjust Steward

The Sunday of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-31), with its parable of a dishonest accountant whose master has discovered his treachery, tells how the accountant makes his master's debtors grateful to him by reducing their bills, so that they will help him later. The master praises him for looking out for himself. It is a strange story, at first glance, but it reminds us that we are all stewards of God's world. If the dishonest "children of this world" can use what it offers for their own gain, then certainly the "children of light" who put God first can learn to use the things of this world not for themselves but for His glory.

That is the kind of cleverness that is praised here, for everything can be used in good ways, if only we take care to learn how. There is one condition: either we will use this world solely for earthly gain, or we will use it for God. We cannot

have it both ways.

Fifth Sunday - Sunday of the Judge

The Sunday of the Judge gives us another parable about a "child of this world," a judge so jaded that he will not even help a poor widow (Luke 17:20-18:14.) That widow is much like us, feeling helpless and worn down in this world in which the evil people seem to have all the success. Finally the judge is so tired of her pestering that he takes action on her behalf. Now, the parable asks us, if even such a godless man as the judge can finally be moved by the pleas of the weak, can we doubt that God in His infinite love for us will help us?

He will -- but He will also decide when. Our Creator knows our needs, and we must have faith that He will answer them at the proper time. This is the question for us: Do we trust God, even in our suffering, and believe His promise of justice for the oppressed? Do we pray and continue to pray, even when His answer does not come at the moment we would like? "When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?"

Sixth Sunday - The Sunday of Advent

The Sunday of Advent (sometimes called the Sunday of the Second Coming) is the culmination of all that has happened on earth with the first coming of Christ, and also points us toward the time when He will come again as the Judge of all. We were in need of a Savior, and He has come and shown Himself as the Savior. Now He asks the Pharisees and all of us, "What is your opinion

about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" (Matthew 22:34-23:39).

The other readings (Isaiah 66:1-24, Colossians 2:8-3:17) describe the coming of God's Kingdom, the New Jerusalem. Urgency and intensity fill these descriptions of what will happen to the believers and the unbelievers. We must decide now, and make our lives reflect our decision. "What is your opinion about the Christ? Whose Son is He?"

End of Lent

Lent ends on a Friday and is followed by Lazarus Saturday and Palm Sunday. Then begins Holy Week, the period during which we make with Christ His journey through Jerusalem to the Cross. The agony of Good Friday is overcome at the most triumphant and wonderful day for Christians, the Feast



Church Calendar and Events MARCH 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 "Rest Hour" Service and Homily 7:00 pm	5	6 Choir Practice 11:00 am
7 "Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy 11:30 am ACYO Meeting 2 pm	8	9	10 LADIES SOCIETY MONTHLY MEETING 6:30 PM KIRKJAN HALL	11 "Rest Hour" Service and Homily 7:00 pm	12	13 Choir Practice 11:00 am
14 "Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy 11:30 am	15	16	17	18 "Rest Hour" Service and Homily 7:00 pm	19	20 Choir Practice 11:00 am
21 "Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy 11:30 am LS Luncheon ACYO Round Table 2 pm	22	23	24 LADIES SOCIETY EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING 6:30 PM KIRKJAN HALL	25 "Rest Hour" Service and Homily 7:00 pm	26	27 Choir Practice 11:00 am
28 PALM SUNDAY "Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy 11:30 am	29	30 H O L Y	31	March 1 W E E K	March 2	March 3

Lenten and Easter Services (schedule)

March 4, Thursday	"Rest Hour" Service and Homily 7:00 pm
March 7 (Sunday of the Stewart)	"Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy
March 11, Thursday	"Rest Hour" Service and Homily 7:00 pm
March 14 (Sunday of the Judge)	"Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy
March 18, Thursday	"Rest our" Service and Homily 7:00 pm
March 21 (Sunday of Advent)	"Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy
March 25, Thursday	"Rest Hour" Service and Homily 7:00 pm
March 28 (Palm Sunday)	"Sunrise" Service 11 am and Divine Liturgy, Opening of the Doors and Blessing of Palm Branches Service
April 1 (Maundy Thursday)	Divine Liturgy (Memorial of the Last Supper) 10 am, "Washing of Feet" Service 5:30 pm, Service of Betrayal and Passion of our Lord 6:30pm
April 2 (Good Friday)	Service of the Burial of Our Lord 7 pm
April 3 (Easter Eve), Saturday	"Service of the Light" and Divine Liturgy 6 pm
April 4 (Easter)	"Morning Hour" Service 11 am, Divine Liturgy 11:30 am and "Blessing of the Fields" Service (Antasdan)
April 11, Sunday	Divine Liturgy 11:30 am and "Remembrance of the Dead" Service (Merelotz)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*If you would like to request a
Hokehankisd Prayer Service / Requiem Service
for the souls of your deceased beloved ones,
please contact the Church office Tue. — Sat,
prior the Divine Liturgy Service on Sundays
Church office phone 1 (760) 773-2155*

* **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE** *
* **ALTAR FLOWERS** *
* **PLEASE CONTACT THE CHURCH OFFICE** *
* **AT 1 (760) 773-2155** *

If you would like Der (Rev. Fr.) Krikor to visit for a home blessing or any other reason, contact the Church office at 1 (760) 773-2155

AACOD@LIVE.COM
OUR CHURCH'S E-MAIL IS ALWAYS OPEN FOR YOUR
QUESTIONS, IDEAS, CONCERNS,
REQUESTS, GOOD/BAD NEWS, ETC.

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PLEASE, MAKE SURE YOU FILL OUT
 CORRECTLY SECTION 8 AND 9 IN YOUR CENSUS 2010
 FORM

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?
 No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
Yes, Mexican, Mexican-Am., Chicano
 Yes, Puerto Rican
 Yes, Cuban
 Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — Print origin, for example, Argentine, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on. *չ*

9. What is Person 1's race? Mark one or more boxes.
 White
 Black, African Am., or Negro
 American Indian or Alaska Native — Print name of enrolled or principal tribe. *չ*
 Asian Indian Japanese Native Hawaiian
 Chinese Korean Guamanian or Chamorro
 Filipino Vietnamese Samoan
 Other Asian — Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on. *չ* Other Pacific Islander — Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on. *չ*

Some other race — Print race. *չ*
ARMENIAN

THIS COPY GOES TO:

[Empty dashed box for address]

Աղօթք հիւանդի համար

Տէր Աստուած, կ'աղօթեմ ... համար, որ յոյսով կանչեց Քո անունը եւ խնդրեց Քո բուժիչ ուժը իր հոգիի եւ մարմնի համար: Շնորհէ՛ կեանք իրեն եւ թող ինքը բուժուի աղօթքով եւ Քո Աստուածային ուժով. ԱՄԷՆ

Aghotk heevantee hamar

Dehr Asdvadz, gaghotehm ... hamar, vor hooysov gantchets Ko anoonut yev khuntrets Ko poojeetch oojv eer hoke-eeh yev marmeeneeh hamar. Schnorheh gyank irehn yev togh eenku poojvee aghotkov yev Ko Asdvadzaeen oojov. AMEN

Prayer for a sick

Lord God, I pray for ..., who has found the hope to call on Your name and to summon Your power to hold up and to heal his/her soul and body. May s/he live and have life, and be restored by prayer and by Your divine power. AMEN

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