

# AICAA SPECIAL NEWSLETTER

ARMENIAN INDEPENDENT CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF ATLANTA

Զնորհավոր Նոր Տարի և Սուրբ Ծնունդ :



AICAA wellcomes y'all to  
our annual New Year's Eve party  
On December 31, at 7:30

At St.Luke Lutheran Church  
Community Hall  
3246 Northside Parkway,  
Atlanta, GA.



*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !*

THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY IS INVITED TO OUR NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER DANCE ON DECEMBER 31ST. THERE WILL BE LIVE MUSIC, SINGING, DANCING, AND OPEN BAR FOR EVERYONE'S ENJOYMENT. BE SURE TO COME WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND HOW YOU MAY BE ABLE TO HELP CONTACT ARAM OR MARY SARHADIAN AT 770-971-8368 .

**DAY/DATE :** SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1995  
**PLACE :** ST. LUKE LUTHERAN CHURCH COMMUNITY HALL  
**ADDRESS:** 3264 NORTHSIDE PARKWAY N.W. ATLANTA, GA.  
**TIME:** 7: 30 P.M.

**DONATION :** ADULTS \$ 15.00 ( \$5.00 CHILDREN UNDER 10)

DINNER WILL BE SERVED BETWEEN 9:00 AND 10:00 P.M.

**DIRECTIONS:**

**HEADING SOUTH** on I - 75

Take exit 107 and make a left on West Paces Ferry Rd.

Make a right on Northside Parkway (US 41). The church will be on your right.

**HEADING NORTH** on I - 75

Take exit 107.

Make a right on Northside Parkway (US 41). The church will be on your right.



*For those of you, who likes Armenian poetry we would like to introduce this wonderfull little New Year poem, written by Berch Manuelian (Kissak).*

### ՆՈՐ ՏԱՐԻ

Թէ մէր հոգւոյն բաղձանք այսօր  
 Բերէր մեզ ճոխ պարգէւներ ,  
 Վիշտ չէր մնալ ու Նոր Տարին  
 Նոր աշխարհ մը կ'ողջունէր :

Յաջորդ դարուն գիրք կ'նքուած ,  
 Սուրբ հրեշտակներ մեզ կը բերեն ,  
 Ո՞վ գիտէ ինչ գրուած կայ հոն ,  
 Ծածկուած է մեր աչքերէն :

Պիտի բացուին էջեր , աւաղ ,  
 Որք արցունքով են թրջուած .  
 Այլ մէր վախին ի պարասխան  
 Անակնկալ ունի Աստուած :

Քեզ Նոր Տարուն պարգամ – Յուսա՛  
 Ինչ որ ըլլան կեանքի դասեր ,  
 Թէ որն է լաւ քեզի համար  
 Կ'ընտրէ ձեռքն Անոր որ է Սէր :

ԳԻՍԱԿ  
 (1922-1943)



## THE UNCHANGEABLE "ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS"

Since the Armenian population has been dispersed into many countries, the Armenian secular celebration of Christmas has been adapted to the country in which they live. The one relative constant in describing an Armenian Christmas is the ritual of the Armenian Apostolic Church in playing homage to Christ on His Nativity and Baptism.

Until some time in the 4th century, all Christians celebrated His Birth and Baptism on the same date, January 6. This dual celebration was called Nativity and Epiphany. (Epiphany means "the revelation of a divine being"). For several inconclusive reasons the Catholic church moved the date for commemorating the Nativity to December 25. The date for celebrating His Baptism ( Epiphany) remained as January 6. Over a period of time, in the western churches, it evolved into a festival to celebrate the visit of the Magi to the Baby Jesus.

The Armenian Apostolic Church has been the only church to retain the original January 6 as the date to commemorate the Birth and baptism of Christ. As Bishop S. Kaloustian wrote in *"Saints and Sacraments of the Armenian Church"*: "It is the celebration of the two most important events in the life of Christ, namely, His Nativity and His Baptism in the river Jordan."

As well as the date, the Armenian Apostolic church has retained the original name of the feast, Սուրբ Ծնունդ և Աստվածահայրնություն. (*Soorp Tznoont yev Astouadzahaytnoutiun* - Blessed Birth and Appearance of God).

Therefore, the formal greeting and response on January 6 is:

Greeting: Քրիստոս ծնավ և հայրնեցավ  
(*Christos tznav yev haidnetsav*  
Christ was born and revealed)

Response: Օրհնյալ է հայրնությունը Քրիստոսի  
(*Orhnyal eh haidnootyun Christosi*  
Blessed is the revelation of Christ)

The church has a special symbolic rite called Ջուր Օրհնեք (*Djur-orhnek* - Blessing of Water) to commemorate the Baptism of Jesus.

Der Hair Nerses Manoogian of Philadelphia wrote me, "The ceremony starts by dipping the cross in water. The cross stands for Christ who entered the river Jordan to be baptized. Then with special prayers and Holy Oil, the water is blessed and distributed to the believers for their consumption. It is customary, during the ceremony, to have a Godfather of

the Cross, usually a young boy who, after Blessing of Water, hold the cross which has been dipped in the water, as symbolically holding the Baby Jesus on behalf of the congregation."

Hripsime Dido described their ritual in Lebanon as follows, "The priest blessed the waters on the eve of His Nativity date Church service. After the nativity Mass, the priest dipped the cross in the blessed water and gave it to a boy who had been named as the Godfather of the Cross. The blessed water was then poured in small paper cups and distributed to the people."

The season of Nativity and Epiphany lasts eight days and on each of the other days as a lesser event in the life of Christ is commemorated.

Of course, as mentioned in the beginning, the non-religious gala spirit of the season is enjoyed with shouts of "Merry Christmas and Happy New Year". There are exchanges of gifts and parties with a Ho! Ho!

As a side note, when I started to write this article, I got confused when I looked up the word "Christmas" in my small, inadequate Armenian-English dictionary, and found Կաղանդ - *Kaghant* given as the word for it. With the help of Bedros Dido and Ara Dosturian, I learned that *Kaghant* is not related to The Nativity or Epiphany, but to New Year.

Ann Poteet.



#### ARMENIAN LANGUAGE AND DANCE LESSONS:

If you are interested in Armenian language or Armenian dance lessons for yourself or for your children, please contact Avik Topchyan, Cultural Director at 770-640-6783 (from 6 to 10:30 p.m. ) or call any of the AICAA directors . We would like to know, how many of you would like to take part in this project . Lessons will start soon .

#### PONTIFICAL VISIT

His Holiness, Karekin I, newly elected Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, will be in the United States in January 1996. His Holiness will visit New York, NY; Washington, DC; Providence, RI; Boston, MA; Detroit, MI; Chicago, IL; and Boca Raton, FL. His Holiness will also visit various communities on the West Coast and Canada.