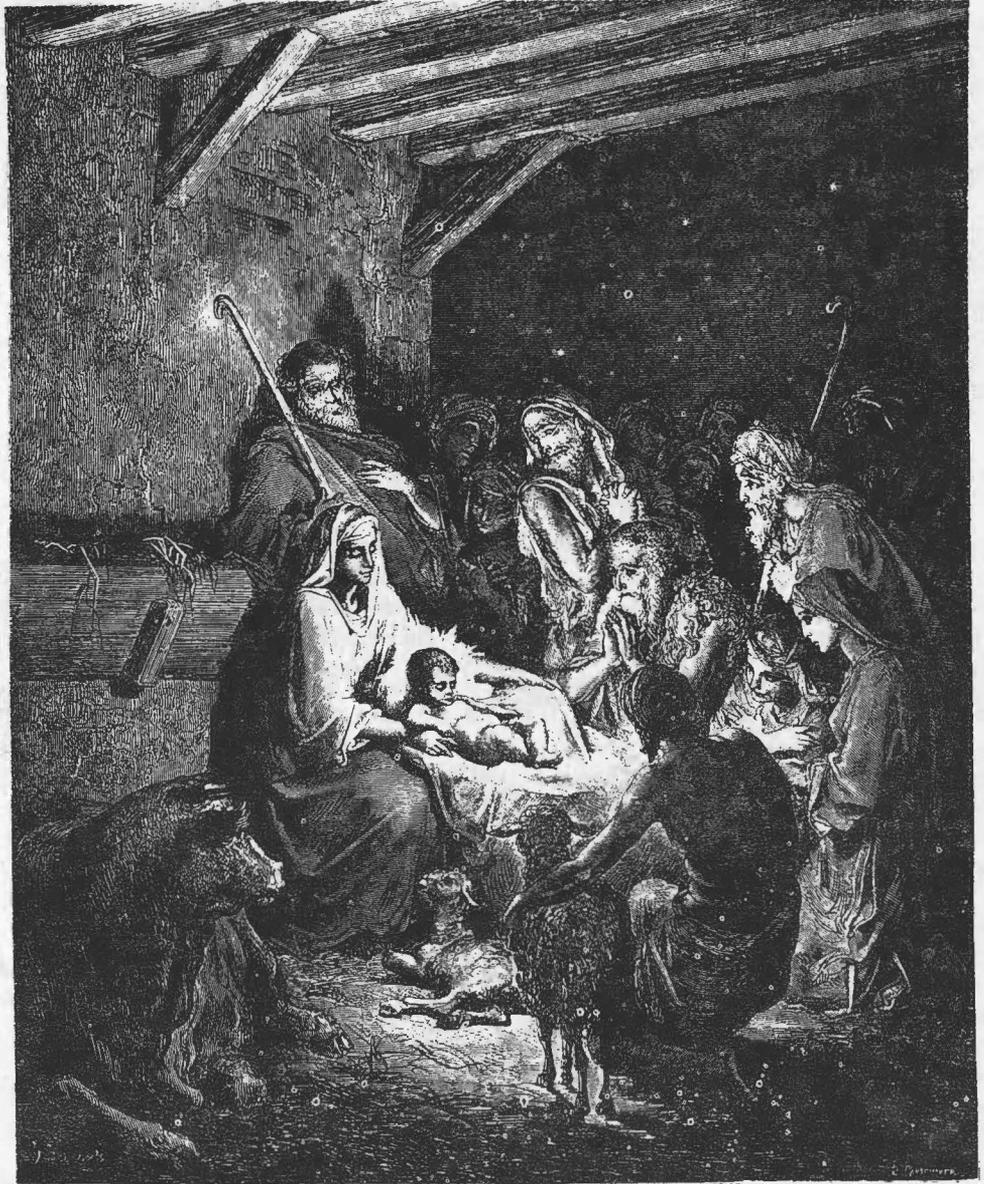




executive update



THE NATIVITY

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger . . . (Luke 2: 16)

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest upon his shoulders;
And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty
God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

There will be no end to the increase of his government
or of peace.

On the Throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish
it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness,
From then on and forevermore.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

(Isaiah 9:6-7)

*May
the many Joys
of Christmas
be Yours.*

Number 24
January 1986

Armenian Church Youth Organization of America
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America
630 Second Ave., N.Y.C., N.Y. 10016 [212-686-0710]

BRIEFS

A RETREAT FOR YOUNG ADULTS

"STRESS"

- + Understanding the pressures of life
- + Preventing and dealing with 'burn-out'
- + Developing sources of strength

Dates: January 10-12, 1986

Place: Barlin Acres Retreat House

Boylston, Mass (Near Worcester)

Age: 18 and up

Cost: \$45.00 per person

The Retreat will begin at 7:30pm on Jan.10 (Fri.) and end at 2pm Jan.12 (Sun.)

For more info call: Fr. Yeprem - 203-247-1378

ACYOA AWARD TO RON GODOSHIAN

The ACYOA Sam Nersesian Award was awarded to Ron Godoshian of Keego Harbor, Michigan. The presentation was made during the Annual Awards Banquet of the ACYOA National Sports Weekend, held in Worcester, Mass over the Labor Day Holiday Weekend.

Nominations for the Award are made by Chapter Executive Committees with a recommendation from the Pastor. The Central Council reviews the nominations and makes the final selection.

Ron has been a very active member of the Detroit ACYOA of St. John Armenian Church. He has taught in the Church School, as well as having been elected to various offices in the Chapter, including chairman and delegate. Ron is an elected member of the Parish Council and has served as Sports Director for the Parish. For many years, Ron was the coach of the Detroit ACYOA men's basketball team, with a respectable number of ACYOA National Championships.

1986 National Sports Weekend HOST COMMITTEE SET

The Wynnewood ACYOA Chapter is gearing up for the biggest ACYOA event of the year - the National Sports Weekend. 1986 marks the 40th Anniversary of the ACYOA and the Weekend will include many extras to mark the occasion. Serving on the Host Committee: General Chairmen: Melcom Avrigian and Lisa Manookian; Secretary: Karen Eskandarian; Treasurer: Nancy Kazanjian; Asst.Treasurer: Laraine Kazanjian-Ballard; Yearbook & Publicity: Andrea Minassian and Christine Tatarian; Fund Raising: Lisa Manookian and Mary Odabashian; Sports: Sam Arthin and Bruce

Ballard. Other Committee members include: Frank Keytanjian, Ronald Khachadourian, Greg Arslanian, Christine Arslanian, Alice Zarzatian, Denise Avrigian, Lillian Bidoyan, and Laurie Alyanakian.

Judging from the amount and depth of work already accomplished, Wynnewood is well on their way to breaking all records in 1986.

ACYOA NATIONAL MAILING LIST TO BE REVISED

Currently consisting of approximately 2500 names, the National Mailing list will be sent to all parishes and chapters for revision of their local areas. The List is maintained on computer and can be printed in zip code and alphabetical form.

COOPERATION AND IMMEDIATE RESPONSE IS NECESSARY FOR A COMPLETE REVISION.

MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR CHAPTERS

It is suggested that all ACYOA Chapters organize and sponsor "Lenten Dialogues" during the period of Great Lent. Materials are available to assist. Formats can vary from once a week for an hour, to one full day of exchange and dialogue. This is a most meaningful way to pass the Lenten period and reflect on ourselves, our faith, and our future. For additional information, contact the Executive Secretary.



CALENDAR

MARK THESE DATES NOW !!

National Programs for Everybody.....

April 11-12-13, 1986 - Bayside, New York

Archbishop's Basketball Tournament
All parishes invited. Men's & women's teams to compete. Trophies. Awards Banquet. Gala Dance. Parties.

May 3, 1986 - Racine, Wisconsin

ACYOA Leadership Seminar
Focus on organizational skills, methods and problem solving approaches. Weekend will include social events, in conjunction with Diocesan Assembly.

June 20*- July 20*, 1986 - Yerevan, Armenia

ACYOA Armenian Studies Program:
"Educational Tour to Armenia"
Structured Month-long trip to Armenia. Includes everything for a once-in-a-lifetime visit. Famous sites. Tours. Includes 3 nights in Moscow and 1 night in Paris. See Pastor for additional information and application forms.
"Journey to Armenia" - July 2-22.* Unstructured. Great.

*tentative dates

August 27-29, 1986 - Philadelphia, PA

ACYOA General Assembly
Adam's Mark Hotel. Chapter delegates to convene. Evening socials complement day-long meetings & conferences.

Aug. 29 - Sept. 1, 1986 - Philadelphia, PA

ACYOA National Sports Weekend
Adam's Mark Hotel. Immediately follows General Assembly. 35 athletic events - fabulous banquets - great dances - good parties - something for everyone - don't miss it.

EXECUTIVE UPDATE

Distributed bi-monthly to all Armenian parishes and ACYOA Chapters, and to all names on the ACYOA National List - 2500. Prepared by the ACYOA Executive Secretary. Distributed by the ACYOA Central Council. Please send changed or new addresses to: 99 Long Pond Road, Tyngsborough, MA 01879.

Nov. Council Meeting

The ACYOA Central Council met at the Diocesan Center in N.Y.C. Nov.1-2. Discussion on the lengthy agenda included the following:

+ To continue development of an "ACYOA Calendar" which would be sent to all parishes to be put up in a conspicuous place. ACYOA Activities, their dates and places from throughout the Diocese would be prepared and periodically sent to be put on the poster-size Calendar.

+ Mailing List Revision. Noting many corrections and additions/deletions needed on the ACYOA National Mailing list, a major revision will take place. Each Council Region Representative will handle the parishes in their respective regions. The list will be separated according to parish zip code area - sent to the parish for updating - and returned. Presently, the Listing is maintained on computer by the Council for use by the ACYOA and Diocese. Any parish or chapter wishing to use the listing may request a copy from the Central Council.

+ Membership Incentives. It was decided to continue to develop 'membership incentives' as begun by prior Councils. This will take the form of discounts at all ACYOA National and regional events and programs. For example: Archbishop's Tournament will have a \$10.00 discount for members off the package plan; the ASP will have a \$25.00 discount; Sports Weekend will have a \$10.00 discount; Regional balls, retreats, tournaments will have a minimum of \$3.00 off, etc.

+ 40th Anniversary Observances. The ACYOA Juniors Director and Senior's Executive Secretary suggested a joint effort for 1986 - 40th Anniversary of ACYOA. Some of the ideas are: Special Poster to be prepared and sent to all parishes; emphasis on Palm Sunday-ACYOA Day of 40 Anniv.; Anniv. theme worked into Diocesan Assembly event; Memorial Day Juniors Sports Wknd. to have Anniv. theme; Seniors Assembly/Spts.Wknd. to have Anniv. theme; Oct/Nov/Dec. to have Regional Anniv. Balls with all alumni, seniors and juniors invited; reproduction of "ACYOA Storybook"; Republication of Sacraments and Prayers of the Armenian Church, a former ACYOA funded book; special Banquet at Diocese in honor of Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan, former Primate and founder of ACYOA.

+ The "Resource Booklet" will continue to be developed. This is a reference for chapters to use of people and materials available for programming.



A Special Christmas Message

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 worshipped Him. (Matthew 2:10-11)

A great miracle came to pass on that "Silent Night, Holy Night" many years ago. God became man that all people might know Him and see Him with new eyes. Nor was this extraordinary event, the presence of "Emmanuel" - of God among us, the only miracle of that blessed night. There were many others recounted in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, read during the Christmas Services of the Armenian Church.

Zechariah, the aged father of John the Baptist, was visited by an angel and told that he would indeed be a father. His wife Elizabeth conceived at an advanced age. As a sign of this miracle, Zechariah was struck dumb until the child was born. Only when he was asked to write down the name of his son did he at last burst forth with "His name shall be John!"

The Virgin Mary was visited by an angel and given the good news of the Incarnation. The customary evening conversation of the shepherds was interrupted by a vision of angelic choirs. The Wise Men saw a brilliant star that guided them to the Child.

What an extraordinary series of events surrounding the birth of our Lord and Saviour! They remind us that our own lives are themselves miracles filled with the grace of God, if we but have the wisdom and spirit to listen to His voice, as Mary did.

The Lord had spoken by the prophet: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel" (which means "God with us").

God with us! Three simple words which express the joy, the triumph, the revelation, the birth of Christ! God is with us, born in Jesus Christ, on that long ago night in a humble manger, born of a humble woman, in times as troubled and chaotic as ours today.

Notice that those three words, the meaning of Emmanuel, do not bear a tense. They do not proclaim "God was with us", meaning that He came, once, within our midst. They proclaim "God with us", a tenseless, continuing transference of Jesus in each of us, the Lord's presence in each successive generation of believers, and His revelation constantly in each of our lives.

That constancy, that continuum, is the key to our Christian faith.

And it is when people do not listen, it is when they do not open their hearts to the light of the Creator's love, that sadness and tragedy break upon us.

The Armenian people, like so many others, have been tormented by the depredations of those who stopped their ears and closed their hearts to His injunctions.

Christ is the Redeemer, and it is in Him that we will find redemption. If our people have suffered indescribable sorrow, we must be consoled by the suffering He endured for us; and rejoice in the rebirth we have experienced, much as we rejoice in His birth on Christmas Day. What else has our survival been but still another miracle to show us that His ways are our ways.

This is indeed a glorious season, but the glory is in the consciousness of what Christ means for us, the goodness and fulness of our earthly existence which will lead to eternal life. Christ has given us everything. If remains for us to realize the greatness of the gift and say, with our brothers and sisters everywhere, in wonder and humility:

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

Prayerfully,

Arp. Torkom Manoogian
Archbishop Torkom Manoogian
Primate - Armenian Diocese

Prayers of a Child

For the longest time, Hagop wanted a toy train for Christmas. He knew that his mother and father were struggling financially, and he didn't want to ask them for anything else. He already asked for a model race car - "that was enough," he said to himself.

On Christmas Eve, Hagop looked at the beautiful Christmas Tree in the living room, and wondered how many presents would be under the tree in the morning. He day-dreamed about toys, and especially about how great a toy train would be going 'round and 'round the tree puffing away.

Just before going to bed, Hagop said his prayers aloud as usual. He prayed for a new toy train. "Please God, if you can, bring me a new toy train for Christmas." His mother, standing near his door overheard his quiet voice praying to God for a train. "If only I knew he really wanted one, I could have gotten a train for him," she said. "Now it's too late for this year."

In the morning, Hagop of course got up early and went downstairs to the Christmas Tree. There were presents for everyone. The stockings were filled, and Hagop couldn't wait to open his gifts. Soon the family was all down and the gifts were given out.

Hagop got his racing car, and he was happy. His mother said to him, "Hagopig, I heard your prayers last night, and how you asked God for a new toy train. You must be disappointed that God didn't answer your prayer."

"He did answer my prayer, Mama," replied Hagop, "He just said 'no' this time."

Where in the World is the Armenian Church

By REV. FR. VARTAN KASPARIAN

What Church do you belong to?

Have you ever been asked the question, "To what church do you belong?" When you were asked the question, what was your answer? If you said, "I belong to the Armenian Church," you were right. But, what did you say if the person then asked, "The Armenian Church? What is that? Where in the world do you find the Armenian Church?" Were you able to answer then? Can you answer that question now?

Let's look around

If we look around, we can find many "churches". We can find an Armenian Church, a Roman Catholic Church, a Greek Orthodox Church, Baptist churches, Methodist churches, Presbyterian churches, Congregational churches, and so forth. Where did they all come from and how did they come to be.

Of course, the Founder of the Christian Church was none other than our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Himself. He established His Church when He told His Apostles that His Church would be established on the foundation of Himself as "the Christ, the son of the living God." (Matt. 16:16). Our Lord said, "You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church." (Matt. 16:18). Naturally, the rock is Christ Himself.

Looking around at Christianity today, we find that there are two major groups. One of these is known by the term *EASTERN CHRISTIANITY* and the other by the term *WESTERN CHRISTIANITY*.

Western Christianity

The major representative of Western Christianity is the Roman Catholic Church. For almost 1500 years, from the times of the Apostles until 1520, it was the representative of Christ's Church in the West. However, in 1520, as a result of the activities of Martin Luther, the movement known as Protestantism began. Here in the United States there are over 200 different kinds of Protestants.

Eastern Christianity

Within Eastern Christianity we find two major families of Churches. While there are basic differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant churches and among the various Protestant churches themselves, the Eastern Christian Churches are in agreement on all essentials.

One of these families of Eastern Christian Churches is called the *GREATER ORTHODOX CHURCHES*. The term *GREATER* really means *LARGER*. It is in this family that we have the Greek Orthodox Church, the Russian Orthodox Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, and so forth.

The other family of Eastern Christian Churches is called *LESSER ORTHODOX CHURCHES*. In this case, *LESSER* means *SMALLER*. These Churches are also sometimes called the *ORIENTAL ORTHODOX CHURCHES*. It is in this family of Eastern Christian Churches that we find the Armenian Church.

The Lesser Orthodox Churches

The following are the Lesser Orthodox Churches: 1.) the Armenian Church; 2.) the Ethiopian Church; 3.) the Coptic (Egyptian) Church; 4.) The Indian Church of Malabar; and 5.) the Syrian (Assyrian) Church.

We can see that the Greater Orthodox Churches are very close to the Armenian Church. The Greater Orthodox Churches and the Lesser Orthodox Churches are all *ORTHODOX* Churches. Then comes the Roman Catholic Church. And finally come the Protestant churches. Since there are over 200 different kinds of Protestant churches in the United States, we would have to look at each one individually to see the ones with which we have things in common.

A Common Ground

The Armenian Church, along with all the Lesser Orthodox Churches, the Greater Orthodox Churches, and the Roman Catholic Church have a very important point in common. That common point is *APOSTOLIC ORIGIN*.



The Cathedral of Holy Etchmiadzin

Apostolic Origin

The term *APOSTOLIC* means that these Churches were established by direct efforts of those who were chosen and authorized by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself! They were established by Jesus Christ's own chosen *APOSTLES*.

In the case of the Armenian Church, it was established as a result of the evangelization efforts of the Apostles St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew, from the years 43 to 68 A.D.

Which Church do you belong to?

The next time someone asks you what church you belong to, you can tell him:

- 1.) I belong to the Armenian Church
- 2.) The Armenian Church is a part of the family of Lesser Eastern Orthodox Churches.
- 3.) My Church was established through the evangelization efforts of two of Jesus Christ's Apostles, St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew.
- 4.) My Church has been in continual existence as a living witness to the truth and saving ministry of Jesus Christ for almost 2000 years.

(reprinted from: *The Mother Church*.
A publication of the Western Diocese)

The Birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is observed and celebrated in the Armenian Church on January 6th. This is according to the original date before it was changed in the West by the Romans to December 25th. All Orthodox Churches follow the January 6th tradition.

From the 4th century, Christians celebrated the Holy Birth on January 6th with religious services and festivals. The Romans changed the date to December 25th to remove a pagan festival of the "unconquered sun", which at the Winter Solstice begins again to show an increase of light (the daylight hours begin to be longer).

In the Armenian Church, the Holy Birth (Nativity) is celebrated together with the Baptism of Christ (Blessing of Waters). The **Nativity marking the Theophany** (God's appearance) and the **Baptism marking the initiation of Christ's ministry**, are important observances for the Church.

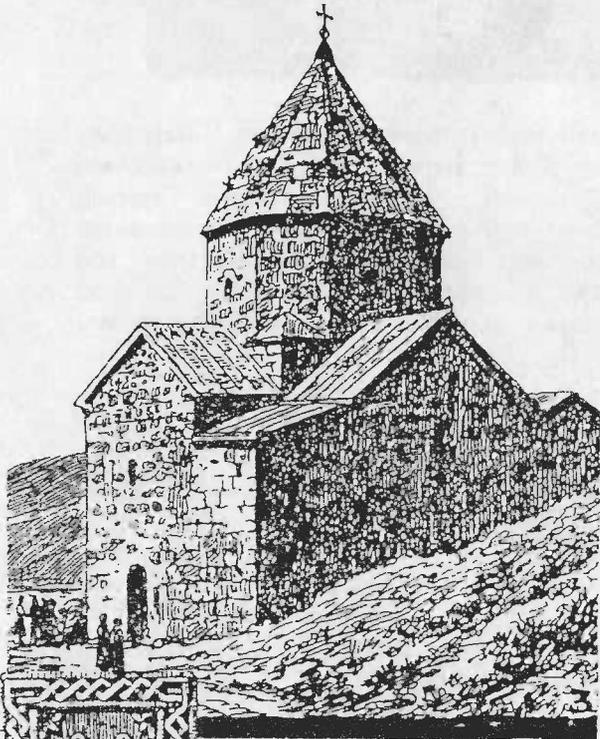
("Find out more about it." Set up a discussion with your Pastor.)

ACYOA Executive Secretary
 180 Old Westford Road
 Chelmsford, MA 01824

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HAPPY NEW YEAR



A.C.Y.O.A. ARMENIAN STUDIES PROGRAMS

An ACYOA program of
 the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

Tentative Dates: Program #1 - June 20 - July 20, 1986
 Program #2 - July 2 - 22, 1986

Costs: (tentative) Program #1 - \$1,795.00
 Program #2 - \$1,995.00

To Apply: Obtain application form from any Armenian Church Office, or from the ACYOA: 99 Long Pond Rd., Tyngsborough, MA 01879 (617-256-7234 / 617-649-6875)

Deadlines: Prgm.#1 - April 1st / Prgm.#2 - June 1st

NOTE: If you do not have a current, valid, U.S. Passport, apply now at your local Post Office. Your Passport must accompany your application form. Those with foreign Passports may experience problems with securing proper Soviet Visas.

SPACE IS LIMITED. APPLY EARLY. LATE FEES MAY APPLY.

Place Armenia
 On Your
 Summer
 Schedule
 Now !

Program (1)

Educational Tour to Armenia (For A.C.Y.O.A. members)

Four Weeks in duration.

Visit Armenia as guests of His Holiness, Vazken I, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians.

See the many points of interest such as: Ancient churches and monasteries, monuments, historic sites, archaeological diggings, museums, galleries, the beautiful countryside and the magnificent metropolis of Yerevan, the capital city.

Experience many cultural, athletic and social activities, such as: The opera, symphony, ballet, and soccer games, as well as the Olympic training center and night-life in Yerevan.

See Armenia's industry: The motion picture studios, the cognac factory, the automobile factory, the winery, art and crafts workshops and the restoration of ancient cathedrals and sites.

Visit Armenia's schools and universities, including the University of Yerevan, the Conservatory of Music, the Children's Summer Camps and student outing centers.

Participate in dance, language and music instruction.

Meet with professionals in your field of interest on an informal basis and exchange ideas and new concepts

Experience Divine Liturgy at the Mother Cathedral of Holy Etchmiadzin, and an audience with His Holiness, the Catholicos.

Program (2)

"Journey" to Armenia

Three weeks in duration.

A series of excursions to sites of ancient Cathedrals and Monasteries, historic points and places of interest.

Tours to the Art Galleries, Museums, Opera House, Manuscripts Library and more.

See the Monastery of Kevhard, the churches of Sts. Hripsime', Gayane' and Shoghagat. Visit Kor Virap, Sardarabad, and Erebuni - the 2750 year old archaeological discovery of the first settlement of the city of Yerevan.

Meet the people, in the market-places, downtown, at work and play, in the parks, the towns, resorts and their homes.

Shopping sprees and night-life in the exciting metropolis of Yerevan, Armenia's growing capital city.

Special tour to Holy Etchmiadzin, the Holy See of the Armenian Church.