



Armenian Holidays

In the Armenian tradition of combining religious holidays with holidays of national character, we celebrate the transfiguration of our Lord and **Vartavar** 14 weeks after Easter. This year it falls on the 15th of July.

It is rare to see strictly religious holidays with no national aspect on the Armenian calendar, even though some of the national celebrations date back to our pagan history, before 301 AD.

VOL. 1 NO. 5 | JULY 2007

SOURP HAGOP ARMENIAN CHURCH'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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Transfiguration Of Our Lord **Aylagerbutyun**

The Bible tells the story as follows:

Jesus went up on a high mountain with three of his disciples. There, while praying and in the presence of his disciples, he was transfigured. His face shone like the sun and his clothes became as white as the light, also two prophets appeared beside Him. Suddenly a bright cloud covered the group and a voice from the cloud said: "this is my Son, my beloved, listen to Him".

When they heard this, the disciples were overcome with fear, but Jesus reassured them and prepared them for the terrible struggle, of which they were to be witnesses, leading to his crucifixion, and the following heavenly glory.

These words, "this is my son my beloved" were heard once before; at Christ's Baptism.

The Transfiguration of our Lord is the culminating point of his public life, as his Baptism is its starting point, and his Ascension its end.

The prophets appearing beside Jesus were Moses and Elias, two figures from the Old Testament. The first represents the law and the second the prophets. It is written about Jesus in the laws as in the prophetic books.

But what were they discussing with Jesus? Luke the evangelist says that they were talking about Jesus' death (Lk 9:31). These luminous

prophets' discussion was the revelation of Jesus' resurrectional transfiguration. By resurrection Jesus had victory over death.

In the Armenian church the origin of this feast is ascribed to St. Gregory the Illuminator, who

substituted it for a pagan feast called **Vartavar**.

In the month of July, when Armenia's fields and woods were fully blossomed, **Vartavar** festivities were held in honor of Asdghig: the King, princes and the people gathered on flourished plains at the banks of rivers and held joyful celebrations; young men crowned the statue of Asdghig with roses and launched pigeons in

Names associated with **Vartavar** and **Aylagerbutyun**

Vartavar or Vartivar, Vartanush, Vartuhy, Nevart, Baydzar, Vartkes, Vart

"When a rose is still in the bud it hides the beauty of its scent and colour, but once it grows out, it reveals to all its fragrance and colour; likewise our Lord packed in his body the rose of His divinity, and on mount Tabor revealed it to his disciples..."

John of Taron

the sky, they had a lot of fun sprinkling water on each other.

The Armenians at present keep the transfiguration of our Lord as one of the five great feasts of the year.

Summer is here, time for family fun!

We would like to wish you a wonderful summer. Take the time to have fun, get out into nature and learn something new!

EDITORIAL

Dear reader,

In the pre-Christian era, Armenia's pagan gods were principally good. It was not a coincidence that Armenia became the first nation accepting Christendom. In preparation to welcome the God of grace, the Armenian people mutually influenced and were influenced by the goodness of their gods.

Although Christ poured His light over Armenia, in the meantime we had the ability to recognize the Source of that light. Respecting human free will and spiritual disposition, God does not forcefully enter where He is not invited. The Armenian people have invited the light into their midst and showed they had the spiritual gusto for communion with it, for a holy relationship with it, and for transfiguration in the image of its Source: Christ... And the cross followed... which was an invitation to live practically the Christian faith.

Dear reader, come, let us have faith... Let us, as Christ did, keep our spiritual doors open to transfiguration... then to the cross... and finally... to resurrection.

Towards The 50th Anniversary Of The Sourp Hagop Community

On the 24th of July 1958, during a meeting held at the residence of Mr. Hagop Pasdermajian, Mr. Levon Der Assadourian, Mr. Kerop Bayman & Mr. Kerop Bedouguian report about a vacant church building to be sold on St. Zotique (250 St. Zotique street West, Montreal). Mr. Bayman suggests that the Executive Council seriously consider the idea of buying this property. Mr. Der Assadourian seconds the proposal. After an exchange of opinions between the members, the council decides on buying the property which would become the earliest building of Sourp Hagop Church.



HYMNE DE LA TRANSFIGURATION DE NOTRE SEIGNEUR

Par votre transfiguration sur la montagne
Vous avez révélé votre puissance divine;
Nous vous glorifions, ô lumière noétique!

Vous avez manifesté le rayonnement de
votre gloire
Par un éclat comparable à celui du soleil
Illuminant vos créatures;
Nous vous glorifions, ô lumière noétique!

Par votre transformation formidable
Vous avez fait trembler vos disciples
Et vous avez remplacé leur
émerveillement
Par l'amour de votre gloire divine;
Nous vous glorifions, ô lumière noétique!

HYMN OF THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD

By your transfiguration on the mountain
you revealed your divine power;
we glorify you, o noetic Light!

You manifested the radiance of your
glory
as a sunlike shine
enlightening your creatures;
we glorify you, o noetic Light!

With your awe inspiring transformation
you made your disciples tremble,
and you turned their wonder
into the love of your divine glory;
we glorify you, o noetic Light!

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Լերան վրայ այլակերպուելով՝
աստուածային զօրութիւնդ յայտնեցիր-
կը փառաւորենք քեզ,
ո՛վ իմանալի լոյս:

Քու փառքիդ ճառագայթումը
ցոյց տուիր՝
արեգակնակերպ փայլմամբ
արարածները լուսաւորելով-
կը փառաւորենք քեզ,
ո՛վ իմանալի լոյս:

Ահագին կերպարանումով
զարհուրեցուցիր աշակերտներդ,
եւ հրաշքէն ապշումը ծառայեցուցիր՝
աստուածային փառքդ սիրել տալու
անոնց.
կը փառաւորենք քեզ,
ո՛վ իմանալի լոյս:

ՎԱՐԴ ՄԸ ԲԵՐ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻ Կիրակի 15 Յուլիս 2007

Վարդավառի Տօնին Առիթով՝
Կիրակի 15 Յուլիս 2007-ին,

ՎԱՐԴ ՄԸ ԲԵՐ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻ ԵՒ ՄԱՄՆԱԿՑԻՐ Ս. ՊԱՏԱՐԱԳԻՆ:

Կը Պատարագէ եւ կը քարոզէ
Գերշ. Տ. Սուրէն Ս. Արք.
Գաթարոյեան

Սկիզբ Սուրբ Պատարագի
ժամը 11.00



On Vartavar
Sunday, July 15, 2007

BRING A ROSE TO CHURCH AND PARTICIPATE IN THE HOLY MASS

Celebrated by
His Eminence Arch.
Souren Kataroyan

Beginning at 11:00 a.m.

ՅՈՒԼԻՍԵԱՆ ԽՈՐ

Անապատի մէջ կանչող մը կայ, որ ամէն շաբաթ Կիրակնօրեայ Ս. Գրային ընթերցումները կը պատրաստէ: Եւ վերստին կը կարդար արդէն գրաշարեալ հատուածը Զաքարիա մարգարէի (3.7-4.9): Երբ զիս տեսաւ, ըսաւ. «Տե՛ն մարգարէն ի՞նչ կ'ըսէ», եւ կարդաց. «Տէրը այս պատգամը կու տայ Զօրաբաբէլի.- Մեծ զօրքով կամ զէնքի ոյժով չէ, որ պիտի յաջողիս,- կ'ըսէ Ամենակալ Տէրը,- այլ իմ Հոգիովս: Ո՛չ մէկ դժուարութիւն պիտի կանգնի դիմացդ, եւ նույնիսկ եթէ լերան մը պէս ըլլան՝ պիտի հարթուին դաշտի նման»:

Շշմարիտ, ճշմարիտ է մարգարէն: Անոր ձայնը թէ՛ ինծի համար է, թէ՛ քեզի, թէ՛ անոր, եւ թէ...մեր բոլորին: Ականջ ունեցողը կը լսէ:

Գ.Բ