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WELCOME TO
**ST. GREGORY
THE ENLIGHTENER**
ARMENIAN CHURCH

FR. MESROB HOVSEPYAN, PASTOR

MORNING SERVICE: 9:45 A.M.

DIVINE LITURGY: 10:15 A.M.

DECEMBER 31, 2023

SIXTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

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Շնորհաւոր Նոր Տարի եւ Սուրբ Օնուկ
Happy New Year & Merry Christmas!

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS:

Hebrews 13:18-25.

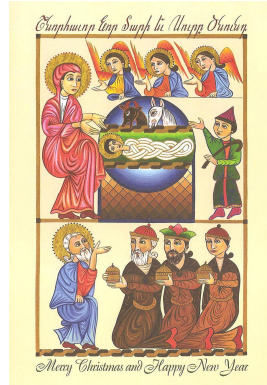
Luke 22:24-30

PC MEMBERS ON DUTY:

Joanne Chitjian

Sylvia Kruiuzenga

Ron Sanossian



REQUIEM SERVICE WILL BE OFFERED FOR:

Oscar Konlian—40th Day

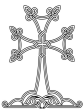
Requested by: *The Konlian Family*

May God rest his soul in His eternal peace and presence and grant his loved ones the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Our address: 1131 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605, www.stgregorywp.com

Office hours: Tuesday-Friday 9a.m.-3p.m., Mondays closed.

Contact us: Office: (914) 428-2595, saintgregorychurchwp@gmail.com
Fr. Mesrob: (804) 405-9399, fr.mesrob@yahoo.com



THE BLESSING OF POMEGRANATES

The pomegranate is considered by many faith traditions to be the fruit of the tree of knowledge and a symbol of abundance and life. In 2015 His Holiness Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, blessed pomegranates in the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin for the first time and established it as an annual tradition on New Year's Eve (or day).

The custom of blessing fruits was known among the Israelites. The Jews offered to the Temple the first harvest, which included wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and honey.

In nations of the Eastern, the pomegranate is considered to be the king of all fruits, not only because of its pleasing taste and medicinal properties, but also because the top of the pomegranate resembles a crown. Some believe that the design of ancient royal crowns was based on the pomegranate "crown".

The pomegranate has been known in the East from the 12th to the 7th centuries BC. Because Cartagena was known for its pomegranates, the ancient Romans called the pomegranate *malum punicum* 'Cartagena (Phoenician) apple' and *malum granatum* 'granular apple'.

As a national symbol, the pomegranate has been widely used in Armenian architecture, carpet weaving, arts and crafts and manuscripts illuminated by Gregory Khlatetsi, Toros Taronatsi, Toros Roslin, and in the Haghpat and other Gospels.

In Christianity the pomegranate symbolizes the diversity of God's grace, the Church. Just as the seeds of the pomegranate are separated by thin membranes yet held tightly together, in the same way the Christian Church holds all Christians around the world together in Christ's love; though they are separate, they are not divided. Thus the pomegranate shows unity in diversity.

The pomegranate's crown represents Jesus' crown and His sovereignty over the entire world. The red color symbolizes His salvific Blood that was shed for all. The popular belief is that each one contains 365 seeds corresponding to the number of days in a year, symbolizing new life in Christ and the New Year.

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE READINGS

The first reading is from the Second Letter of Paul to Hebrews (13:18-25)

Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way. I particularly urge you to pray so that I may be restored to you soon.

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Brothers and sisters, I urge you to bear with my word of exhortation, for in fact I have written to you quite briefly.

I want you to know that our brother Timothy has been released. If he arrives soon, I will come with him to see you.

Greet all your leaders and all the Lord's people. Those from Italy send you their greetings. Grace be with you all.

The second reading is from the Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Luke (22:24-30)

A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves. You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

BLESSING OF POMEGRANATES

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31, 2023

immediately following the Divine Liturgy



Donations are welcomed to defray the cost of the pomegranates

St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church
1131 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The Nominating Committee is seeking candidates to run for **Parish Council** for the upcoming two year term.

If you are interested or would like more information please feel free to contact any of the committee members. We look forward to hearing from you and hope that you would consider serving your parish in these important roles.

Ann Daw 914-334-200 adaw2383@gmail.com

Lauren Kayaian 917-887-4027 teaticket67@netscape.net

Ellie Krolian 914-588-7047 ebkrolian@gmail.com

Pastoral Care, Home and Hospital Visits

Der Mesrob is always available and would like to visit homebound and hospitalized parishioners. If you or someone you know is ill, Hospitalized or homebound and would like to be visited, please call Der Mesrob directly at (804)-405-9399 to schedule the visit.

Please note: when asked about your religion at a hospital, patients should list themselves as “Armenian Orthodox” or “Armenian” not “other”.

PRE SUPER BOWL WEEKEND

Fun & Fellowship Night hosted by



St. Gregory Men's Club

Saturday, February 3rd, 2024 6:30pm

1131 North Street – White Plains, NY

Mezze & Tailgate refreshments

Soft drinks, Coffee/Tea, Desserts

\$30. per person (Adults 18+ please)

BYOB wine/beer/liquor



Poker Tables! Tavloo! Chess!

Super Bowl Fundraiser POOL \$25./box



Prepaid reservations appreciated before January 28th

Checks payable to: St. Gregory Men's Club

Reservation Name: _____

Number Attending: _____ @ \$30.pp \$ _____

Questions? Contact Chris Bonfiglio (914)707-2152 Email: JChrisBonfiglio@gmail.com



Fellowship Coffee Hour

We appreciate the Parish Council members on duty and the Konlian family for providing refreshments for fellowship hour today.

If you would like to sign-up for a future date to host and sponsor refreshments for the fellowship coffee hour on Sunday, kindly contact coordinator: Adriane Keleshian Bonfiglio (914) 649-1072.



FEAST OF THE NATIVITY AND THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

JANUARY 5, 2024

Reading of Holy Scriptures (bilingual) | 6:00-6:30pm

*Divine Liturgy of Light - J'rakalootzee Soorp Badarak
6:30-7:45pm*

JANUARY 6, 2024

Matins | 9:45-10:15am

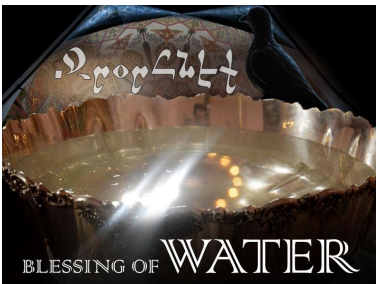
Christmas Badarak & Blessing of Water Service

10:15-12:15pm

Christmas Potluck Lunch "Agape Meal" to follow

CHRISTMAS POTLUCK LUNCH

*We ask all attendants to kindly
contribute a dish to share for
8 -10 people.*



GODFATHER OF THE CROSS

For the Blessing of the Water Service commemorating the Baptism of our Lord today the very special privilege of serving as "Godfather of the Cross" has been extended to **Robert Kayaian**. In this capacity, **Robert** will have the responsibility of bearing the Holy Cross

after it has been submerged into the blessed Holy Water, and welcoming the faithful to kiss the cross as they receive their portion of blessed water at the end of the service.

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ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

JANUARY 7

12:30 PM

ARMENIAN
Christmas
BRUNCH

*hosted and sponsored by
Women's Guild
Immediately following the
Divine Liturgy*

**Guest Speaker: Sarah Stites
Development Officer at Ayo!
(Fund for Armenian Relief)**

*Free Will Donations to benefit
Fuller Center for Housing Armenia*

St. Gregory the Enlightener Armenian Church
1131 North Street, White Plains, NY 10605

Women's Guild will be accepting free will donations towards the St. Gregory Fuller Center House #12, as well hosting Sarah Stites, who will be speaking about the history of the Artsakt conflict and the current unfolding humanitarian crisis.

Sarah works as part of the Fund for Armenian Relief's crowd funding initiative, "AYO!" She has lived in Armenia for the past six years and will offer first hand accounts of individuals displaced from their ancestral homeland.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

TODAY **Fr. Mesrob Hovsepyan celebrates Morning Service & Divine Liturgy.**
New Year's Eve. Blessing of Pomegranates Service to follow after the Liturgy.

JANUARY 5,
FRIDAY

EVE OF THE NATIVITY AND THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST - J'RAKA-LOOYTZ. Details inside.

JANUARY 6,
SATURDAY

FEAST OF THE NATIVITY AND THEOPHANY OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Details inside.

JANUARY 7,
SUNDAY

First Sunday After the Feast of Nativity
Divine Liturgy & Requiem Service
Christmas Brunch - Hosted by Women's Guild

JANUARY 13,
SATURDAY

Armenian Breakfast to benefit Artsakh Refugees
Hosted by the Armenian School—9:30 AM

JANUARY 15,
MONDAY

Parish-Wide National Day of Service on MLK Day
10:30 am—Noon

JANUARY 28,
SUNDAY

Annual Parish Assembly following the Liturgy

FEBRUARY 3
SATURDAY

Pre Super Bowl Weekend—Fun & Fellowship sponsored by the St Gregory's Men's Club
6:30 PM \$30pp details on the flyer

FEBRUARY 10,
SATURDAY

Poon Paregetan Family Fun Night
Hosted by the Armenian School
7 PM