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## **Relic of St. James of Nisibis to visit St James Armenian Church-Evanston**

**Saturday, December 14, 2013**

### **Divine Liturgy to be celebrated by His Eminence Abp Khajag Barsamian and visiting dignitaries**

EVANSTON (10/10/13)--St James Armenian Church-Evanston will celebrate the name day of the parish with the momentous visitation of a sacred relic of its namesake patron Saint James of Nisibis.

In honor of the visitation, the Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, will celebrate Divine Liturgy at 10 AM on Saturday, December 14, 2013, at St James Armenian Church, 816 Clark St in Evanston, followed by a celebratory luncheon in the church's Nishan Hall.

The 1700-year-old Relic of St. James of Nisibis, encased in a gold hand-shaped reliquary, is a holy reminder of a leading figure in the history of the Armenian Church. Armenia became the first Christian nation with the founding of the Church in 301 by St James's cousin, St Gregory the Illuminator. St. James, a Syrian monk, was a signer of the canon documents drafted at the Council of Nicea in 325 AD that articulate the foundational theological beliefs of the Armenian Apostolic Church. Most notable among them is the Nicene Creed recited during every Armenian Divine Liturgy stating the core faith of Armenian Christians. St James of Nisibis is also known for bringing a remnant of Noah's Ark from Mt Ararat to prove the Biblical story to the Armenian people.

The relic belongs to the museum of St. Kevork Armenian Church in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

**"Relics serve a very special purpose in the spiritual life of the Armenian Church,"** commented Rev Hovhan Khoja-Eynatyan, pastor of St James-Evanston. **"They are not just old remnants of the past—their presence with us is a tangible inspiration for believers today to remember the real-life struggles and great faith that sustained faith-filled people over centuries. They help us get to know who St James was as a person and man of faith, and through them we begin to realize that although circumstances were different, we're all in this together."**

A delegation from the Armenian Diocese of Bulgaria will accompany the Relic St. James of Nisibis. The Liturgy will include a memorial requiem for the souls of the founders of St. James Church, and a Service of the Veneration of the Relic. The Bulgarian delegation includes: Very Rev. Father Abgar Hovakimyan, interim primate of Bulgaria; Berj Janikyan, Council Chair; and Ruben Chaushyan, director of the Museum Of St. Kevork Church in Plovdiv.

The Divine Liturgy is open to all; reservations for the luncheon requested by FRI DEC 6. For reservations and more information, contact Rev Fr Hovhan Khoja-Eynatyan at 847-864-6263 or

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