



## **Guidelines for Families in the Administration of the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Christmation**

### **The Service Itself**

Prior to any other arrangements being made, the date for the ceremony is to be set in consultation with the Pastor and normally takes place within 40 days of the birth. This is to insure his and the Church's availability. Also, any other clergy to be invited is to be first approved by the Pastor with the invitation extended only through his office.

The baptismal sponsor of the neophyte who responds to the questions posed by the priest performing the baptism must be a communicant member - baptized and confirmed - of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church. Traditionally this has been the privilege of men only who served as godfather of the child. Recently, the Church has granted this privilege to women to serve as baptismal sponsors or, godmothers. If parents wish for the godfather or godmother be a person of another Christian denomination, then the other godparent must be a member of the Armenian Church and must be present at the ceremony.

### **When Selecting Godparents.**

When selecting a Baptismal Sponsor(s) for your child, the individual(s) is to be a member in good standing of the Armenian Church for, according to the teachings and canons of our Church; it is he (or she) who is to see to the nurturing of the child's faith as an Armenian Orthodox Christian. Parents are to take care in choosing devoted, faithful, practicing members of the Armenian Church for this responsibility and privilege. Baptismal godparents, conversely, cannot be indifferent about their awesome responsibilities and should also give prayerful consideration before accepting.

During the ceremony, the Priest shall ask the Child's Sponsor:

*"What does this child request"?*

The Sponsor shall answer:

*"Faith, hope, love and baptism"* (Havadk, Hooys, Ser, yev Mgurdoutiun.) To be baptized and justified, to be cleansed of sins, to be freed from demons and to serve God.

*(cont.)*

The Priest shall say:

*"Be it unto thee according to thy faith."*

It is the right of any child to be baptized, regardless of the parent's marital status, providing the child is presented to the Armenian Church by the parents with the specific intention and desire of the child's

The Sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation are to take place in the church proper. In cases of a medical emergency where the child is born premature or is seriously ill, the baptism may be performed in the hospital or at home.

An adult who wishes to receive Chrismation or, not having been baptized, both Baptism and Chrismation, is first required to receive proper instruction as to the teachings of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox church prior to the administration of the sacraments.

On the day of the ceremony, the family will need to bring to Church for the child:

A large white towel to wrap about the child;

A new white outfit to be worn after the ceremony.

When the child is to be bathed for the first time at home, the water of the washing should be poured into the soil directly rather and not down the drain into a water waste system. The reason being that any trace of the Holy Miuron should not be mixed with unclean water.

The Parish Council of St. James has created a schedule of suggested donations to the church for the baptismal service and will be provided to families.