



A Message from Bishop Mesrop Parsamyan

Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

This letter is intended for employers and school administrators to verify that **January 6** is a day of deep religious observance for the faithful of the Armenian Church. On that day, Armenian families around the world will celebrate the **Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ** – commonly known as “Armenian Christmas.” The day marks not only the birth of Jesus Christ, but also His baptism.

By way of background: Historically, traditions among the ancient Christian churches in different parts of the world were not always uniform. By the end of the third century A.D., Christmas in Rome was held on December 25, which coincided with a major pagan feast, while in the Eastern churches it was observed on January 6. The Armenian Church remained outside the sway of the Roman Empire, and has therefore maintained that ancient tradition to this day, whereas the Greek-speaking Christian world switched to the Latin tradition at the end of the fourth century.

I have urged all faithful Armenians to dedicate the entire day to celebrating the gift God gave us in His only begotten Son by attending services in their local parishes and joining their families in celebrating this joyous and holy day. I sincerely hope that you will respect the religious nature of the occasion and excuse from work or school any employees or students who are members of the Armenian Church. It is especially important that parents and children be able to share this day of worship together.

Thank you for your kind consideration. If you have any other questions, please visit our website, www.armenianchurch.us. May God bless you.

With heartfelt prayers,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mesrop Parsamyan'.

Bishop Mesrop Parsamyan
Primate

Headquartered in New York City, the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) administers more than 60 Armenian churches and parish communities in localities across the eastern U.S.