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ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF AMERICA

CHRIST—OUR LIFE AND RESURRECTION

“Why do you look for the living among the dead?”
(Luke 24:5)

For the One who lives forever, on the morning of the Resurrection of our Savior and God Jesus Christ, it was His own messenger who testifies and confirms that the One believed to be dead is alive—eternally alive—and should not be sought amongst the dead. On that miraculous morning He who lives forever opened the road to eternity for humanity, especially for all those who with true faith, self-denial, and good deeds become servants of Christ—the One who is always the same—yesterday, and today, and forever. (Hebrews 13:8)

The anchor of our Christian faith is Christ’s Resurrection. Christ’s entire mission for the salvation of humanity beginning with His Incarnation to His crucifixion and death, receives meaning and becomes a message with His Resurrection. Without this, the foundation of our Christian belief collapses. In the words of Paul the Apostle, “Our preaching is in vain.” (1 Cor. 15:14)

We, the Armenian people, were among the first to recognize and accept Christ’s preaching and salvific sacrifice, and to replicate ourselves and our lives akin to Christ. By the example of Christ’s resurrected life, we modeled our lives and our nation’s immortality on the example of Christ’s resurrected life. For us “living is Christ” (Phil. 1:21), and sacrifice, death, and martyrdom for Him is gaining that life. The hope of survival mixed with the immovable Christian faith inspired us to seek ways that along with our individual salvation, would secure our nation’s survival and immortality. We gained that life by sacrifice, death, and martyrdom for Him. With Christian values we gave meaning to our struggle knowing very well that Christ’s Resurrection was to be our life’s eternal shining light that cannot be buried. The cemetery plainly became a pause before we continued our journey toward a resurrected life. Otherwise how can we explain and understand martyrdom? A person’s total dedication to Christ’s faith and truth is much more than the sum total of days and years that transcends the wisdom of humanity. For those who doubt the faith of eternity, perhaps even consider it to be absurd, think that Christ’s cross and resurrection are foolishness (1 Cor. 2:20-25). But for those of us who are believers, this is God’s

power and wisdom that tramples death, and with a nation's martyrdom we celebrate eternal life. Christ's cross did not come down our shoulders. We were crucified... crucified...crucified many times, but like Christ we were resurrected, because our wisdom was not temporal wisdom, but rather the wisdom of our Christian faith that does not allow seeking the living amongst the dead.

The best testimony of this in the life of our nation is two dates: 1915 and 1918. The first was crucifixion; the second was resurrection. The catastrophe of the Genocide was so harsh and menacing that together with the loss of our ancestral land and historic Armenia, many believed that this was the end of our physical existence. However, after crucifixion the faith and hope of resurrection was forged on our will "to be" when on a bright May morning of a "rose-colored dawn" we were the witnesses of the resurrection of our nation for the pages of Armenian history. The Armenian people resolutely proclaimed, Why do you look for the living among the dead?

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the resurrection and victory of May, when we contemplate our resurrection from the ashes, and the establishment of new life on our will, without doubt we see that the progress, strengthening, and safety of our Fatherland must become the concern of every Armenian. Any kind of passivity is unforgivable. The Fatherland is sacred soil and history. Building independence entails struggle and martyrdom. Maintaining independence entails total sacrifice, not just as an emotion, but with perfect dedication and participation.

"We lived not to die, but rather we knew death in order to live," as His Holiness Catholicos Khoren I, of blessed memory, would often repeat with deep conviction.

On the occasion of the Resurrection of our Savior, let us again vivify our faith, keep our Christian image pure, and inspired and girded by independent Armenia together continue our struggle to fulfill our uncompleted vision.

A blessed Holy Resurrection. Christ is risen from the dead.

Congratulations on the 100th anniversary of the first Republic of Armenia.

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