



# The Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

*on the occasion of the 125th Anniversary of the establishment of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America*

Led by: Very Rev. Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan, Primate  
Assisted by: Rev. Fr. Mardiros Chevian

## January 15-26, 2024

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Deadline for registration is  
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# ARMENIAN CHRISTMAS PILGRIMAGE

## Monday, January 15 – USA to Israel

Your pilgrimage begins as you depart for your flight to the Holy Land.

## Tuesday, January 16 – Arrive in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem

After arrival in Tel Aviv, transfer to your hotel in Jerusalem. Check into your hotel where you will have an orientation session and dinner before retiring for the evening.

## Wednesday, January 17 – Jericho, Qumran

Travel to Jericho, the oldest known city in the Western world. From the top of the ancient "tel", you'll have an excellent view of the Mount of Temptation. Drive along the shores of the Dead Sea to reach the archeological excavations of Qumran, where a wandering shepherd found the Dead Sea scrolls. Stop at the shores of the Dead Sea for a dip in the salt and mineral-laden waters. Return to Jerusalem for overnight.

## Thursday-Friday, January 18 and 19 – Christmas in the Holy Land

In accordance with the old calendar used in Jerusalem, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are celebrated on January 18-19 by the Armenian Church. Spend time at Christ's birthplace – Bethlehem! Travel to Bethlehem for the Christmas celebrations. Visit the Church of the Nativity, the oldest church in the Holy Land. After lunch, participate in the *Jrakalouyts* service. Visit Shepherds' Field. Participate in the Christmas procession. Attend the midnight Divine Liturgy celebrated at the site of the birth of Jesus Christ! Enjoy free time after the conclusion of the services on Friday.

## Saturday, January 20 – Jerusalem

This morning, drive to the top of the Mount of Olives for a spectacular view of Jerusalem. Visit the Church of Pater Noster (commemorating the Lord's Prayer, "Our Father"), the Chapel of Ascension (commemorating the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven), and the Russian Ascension

Church, where you will see Armenian Mosaics from the Byzantine period. Proceed to the Chapel of Dominus Flevit, where Jesus wept over Jerusalem and foretold its complete destruction. Visit the Garden of Gethsemane and the Church of All Nations, which commemorates the agony in the garden.

## Sunday, January 21 – Old City of Jerusalem

Attend early morning Divine Liturgy at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Visit the church of the Holy Sepulchre which is the most venerated shrine in Christendom and the center of Christian worship in Jerusalem. See the stone of Unction, Golgotha, the Armenian Gallery (Vernadoon), the domed twelfth-century Armenian Chapel of Helena, which is one of the most attractive places in the church. Its rock walls are covered with crosses scratched by medieval pilgrims. From here, thirteen narrow steps lead down into the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross itself. Finally, pay special homage to Calvary and the Tomb of Our Lord Jesus. Visit the Western Wall before traveling to the Jordan Valley in the early afternoon. Visit the Baptismal Site at Qasr el Yahud, the traditional site of the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist. Participate in the traditional Blessing of Water Service led by the members of the Brotherhood of St. James.

## Monday, January 22 – Galilee

Today will be spent visiting the sights around the Sea of Galilee. We will begin the day by visiting the Church of the Beatitudes, the traditional site of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. Enjoy time for meditation and prayer in the tranquil site with its breathtaking view of the Sea of Galilee. Walk down the hill to Tabgha, the traditional place of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes. Visit Capernaum, the center of Jesus' ministry in Galilee for three years. Visit the excavations and the remains of the ancient synagogue, where Jesus preached and see the House of Peter's mother-in-law. Take a most memorable boat

ride across the Sea of Galilee. This afternoon, drive to Cana of Galilee and Nazareth. Then, drive to the Summit of Mount Tabor to view the site of the Transfiguration of Jesus. Return to Jerusalem.

## Tuesday, January 23 – Armenian Patriarchate

Spend the day at the Armenian Patriarchate and meet the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem. Tour of the Patriarchate Complex. Visit the tombs of Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan and Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, former primates of the Dioceses of the Armenian Church of America. Conduct requiem service at the site. Attend evening service in St. James Cathedral.

## Wednesday, January 24 – Jerusalem

Visit the Church of the Virgin Mary and the Tomb of the Mother-of-God Mary, where the Virgin Mary is believed to have laid before her Assumption. View the Pool of Bethesda, where Jesus cured the paralytic who had been ill for thirty-eight years and visit the Church of St. Anne. On Mount Zion, visit the Upper Room, revered as the site of the Last Supper.

## Thursday, January 25 – Jaffa

Enjoy free time this morning before you prepare for departure. In the early afternoon, visit the historic city of Jaffa and the Armenian Monastery of St. Nicholas. Depart from Jaffa for the airport for our return trip to the USA for an early morning arrival on Friday.

## Friday, January 26 – Arrive in the USA

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