

# *St. John Armenian Church*

OF GREATER DETROIT

Very Rev. Fr. Aren Jebejian, *Pastor*

Rev. Fr. Armash Bagdasarian, *Assistant Pastor*



## **Funeral Guidelines**

In the tradition of the Armenian Church, the *Ritual of Burial* is divided into three (3) sections. They are as follows:

1. "Home" also known as the "Dan Gark" (Wake)
  - a. This service is performed the night preceding the funeral
  - b. Church Sanctuary or funeral home (of the family's choosing) is used for this service
2. Church
  - a. This service is only performed in the Sanctuary
3. Cemetery/Internment
  - a. This service is conducted at the family's cemetery of choice

## **Arrangements**

- The family should make proper arrangements with a funeral director of their choice. In turn, the Director will immediately contact the Pastor through the Church Office (248)569-3405. Arrangements are subject to the Pastor's approval prior to finalizing arrangements.
- All funeral arrangements must be in accordance with the Canons of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church. As such, the church service takes place approximately 10:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m., depending upon where the cemetery is located. No funeral service may take place on a Saturday afternoon after 3:00 PM, nor on Sunday.
- Following the church service, the family is encouraged to do the internment and then they may wish to have a "Hokejash" (Memorial Meal in memory of the deceased).
- Cremation is against the Canons of the Armenian Apostolic Church. It is viewed as a mutilation of the body (God's Creation). There is no provision in the Armenian Church for the burial of cremated remains. Hence, in the case where someone wishes to be cremated, only Dan Gark and church services are allowed. Upon completion of the church service, the funeral director will take the loved one to be cremated.
- In the case of suicide, the Pastor must be informed prior to making funeral arrangements. Such situations are outside of the Canons of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church. Instructions must be received from the ecclesiastical authority (the Primate).

## **Clergy:**

According to the protocol of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church:

The Pastor is the one to invite any and all guest clergy. If the guest priest is a member of the Armenian Church, he may be invited to perform the service. In addition to an Armenian priest, a clergy of a different religious tradition may be invited provided he meets certain requirements. According to the Canons and Armenian traditions, the Pastor will assign to him those portions he deems appropriate. Any priest of a different denomination is an invited guest and not a concelebrant.

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### **Other Items of Importance:**

- Compatriot, fraternal or any other organization may not perform services in the Church Sanctuary.
- Per the tradition of the Armenian Church, an altar server or deacon is required. The Funeral Director will make these arrangements through the Church Office.
- During visitation, the Altar curtain will be closed. It will be open during the liturgical services.
- Per Diocesan Directive # 798, no lay person may speak or give “eulogies” in the Sanctuary. Lay person(s) may speak at the funeral home or “Hokejash”.
- Komitas Choir participation, if requested, should be made through the Funeral Director.
- Should the family desire a soloist and/or musician, approval must first be obtained from the Pastor. Upon the Pastor’s approval, this is arranged independently by the family.
- In addition, any song/hymn and/or piece of music performed in the Sanctuary, must have the Pastor’s approval 24 hours prior to the service.
- At least one day prior to the funeral (church service), the family must provide a one page summary of the deceased’s life for the Pastor to incorporate into his eulogy. An example template of such information can be provided by the Church Office upon request.
- If In Lieu Of Flower donations are designated for St John Armenian Church, the church will provide specifically designated envelopes.
  - St John Armenian Church will acknowledge the In Lieu of Flower donations by sending a personalized letter to the donor in memory of the departed individual. This letter is an acknowledgement from St John’s.
  - As soon as possible, St John Armenian Church will send the family an updated list of donors. By the “Karasonk” (Fortieth Day Memorial), a final computerized list from St John Armenian Church will be provided to the family to send a separate acknowledgement on the family’s behalf.
  - The family should contact the church office to arrange the “Karasonk” (Fortieth Day Memorial) service.
- Rosaries and crucifix crosses are outside of the tradition of the Armenian Church and should not be used. Exceptions can be made with consultation through the Pastor.

## Funeral Sacramental Offering

Offering	St John Armenian Church Steward in Good Standing <sup>1</sup>	Non-St John Armenian Church Steward
Funeral Service	\$0	\$300
Visitation (use of church night before funeral)	\$300	\$300
Pastor	Family Discretion	Family Discretion
Visiting Clergy	Consult with Pastor for Details	Consult with Pastor for Details
Deacon(s)	\$150 <sup>2</sup>	\$150 <sup>2</sup>
Organist <sup>3</sup>	\$100	\$100
Komitas Choir	Minimum donation \$100	

1 - *The deceased must be a St John Church Steward or a member of an Armenian church within the Eastern Diocese.*

2 - *Deacon(s): Participates in 3 facets to a funeral ->Dan Gark, Funeral, and Cemetery. - Deacon to be paid \$50 for each facet of funeral participation.*

3 - *Organist honorarium should be made to St. John Armenian Church <sup>3</sup>*

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