

## **THE BLESSING OF WATER SERVICE**

The Armenian Church's celebration of the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ on January 6 includes all the events associated with the birth of our Lord in Bethlehem. Included in the celebrations are the Adoration of the Magi, the Visitation of the Shepherds, the singing of the Gloria by the Angels, and the Escape to Egypt. The Armenian celebration also includes the Baptism of our Lord in the River Jordan, also called the Feast of Epiphany. Epiphany is a Greek word meaning revelation because during the baptism of Jesus the Father's voice from above revealed the true identity of Jesus as the Son of God. It is this particular event that we commemorate in the service of the Blessing of Water, with the symbolic dipping of the cross into the water in remembrance of the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan. In a popular tradition a young boy is selected, this year Patrick Markarian, to hold the cross when it is taken out of the water, thus earning the honorary title of Godfather of Jesus, or Godfather of the Cross. The ultimate purpose of the liturgy is to help us relive our own baptism and renew our faith in Jesus Christ as the Anointed One of God, the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

