

Eastertide (Sacred Period that Follows Easter)

From Easter to the Sunday of Pentecost is a 50-day period called **Eastertide (also known as Quinquagesima)**. The first 40 days of Eastertide culminate with the **Feast of the Ascension**, celebrated on the Thursday of the sixth week. This entire period is dedicated solely to the mystery of the resurrected Savior's encounters with His Apostles and followers, with the exception of four special remembrances that do not detract from the preeminence of the Resurrection.

The first of these special remembrances is the **Decapitation of St. John the Baptist**, which occurs on the first Saturday of Eastertide. It is remembered by the lection (during the Morning Service) of the Gospel of St. Mark, which describes the episode.

The second is **New Sunday**, which is the first Sunday after Easter. Its purpose is to emphasize the wondrous Resurrection, with only minor variables in the hours services.

The next is the **Sunday of the World Church**, which follows New Sunday and commemorates the establishment in Jerusalem of the first Christian Church. According to some, it was founded in the Chapel on Zion, where the Upper Room was and where our Lord established the Sacrament of Holy Communion. (According to others it is the Cathedral of the Holy Sepulcher.)

The last is the fifth Sunday of Quinquagesima, when the **Feast of the Apparition of the Holy Cross** over Jerusalem is celebrated. This event took place during the time of Emperor Constants of Byzantium and Patriarch Cyril of Jerusalem.

After the Feast of the Ascension, which commemorates our Lord's ascent into heaven, the ensuing nine days until Pentecost celebrate Christ's Resurrection and Ascension.

The **Seventh Sunday of Eastertide**, which falls within this 10-day period, combines an ecclesiastical and national tradition, which is recalled in the *sharagan* of the day.

According to tradition, an angel visited St. Gregory the Illuminator daily during his imprisonment in Khor Virab; yet on one day the angel did not appear. On the following day when the saint asked the angel about his absence, the angel explained that each day a rank of heavenly hosts celebrated Christ's Ascension and since it was the fourth day and he belonged to the fourth rank he took part in the celestial celebration.

This Sunday is also known as the **Second Palm Sunday** because the gospel readings of Sunday recall Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem (on Palm Sunday).

The final feast of the Resurrection series is the **Advent of the Holy Spirit**, which takes place on the 50th day of Quinquagesima (a Sunday 10 days after the Ascension). It commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit to the Apostles in the Upper Room in tongues of fire, granting power and grace to them for the establishment of the Christian Church.

In ancient times this feast was celebrated only one day, since the next day the Fast of Elijah commenced. In the 12th century, St. Nersess the Graceful established the 7-day celebration of **Pentecost** retaining the fast.

Readings: The Raising of Lazarus: John 11:1-44

Palm Sunday: Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-40, John 12:12-19

Holy Week: Matthew 26:1-27:66, Mark 14:1-15:47, Luke 22:1-23:56, John 13:1-19:42

Resurrection-Easter: Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-8, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-18

Decapitation of St. John the Baptist: Mark 6:14-29

Ascension: Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-53

Pentecost: Acts 2:1-4

Celebrating Easter Year Round

The feasts connected to the Resurrection encompasses a 64-day period that begins with the Saturday prior to Palm Sunday (dedicated to the Raising of Lazarus) and concludes with the seven-day period of abstinence dedicated to the prophet Elijah. This period includes the commemoration of the Raising of Lazarus, Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Easter Sunday, the days from Easter to the Ascension (a Thursday, 40 days after Easter Sunday), and the period from the Ascension to Pentecost (another 10 days), followed by the six days of abstinence dedicated to the Prophet Elijah.

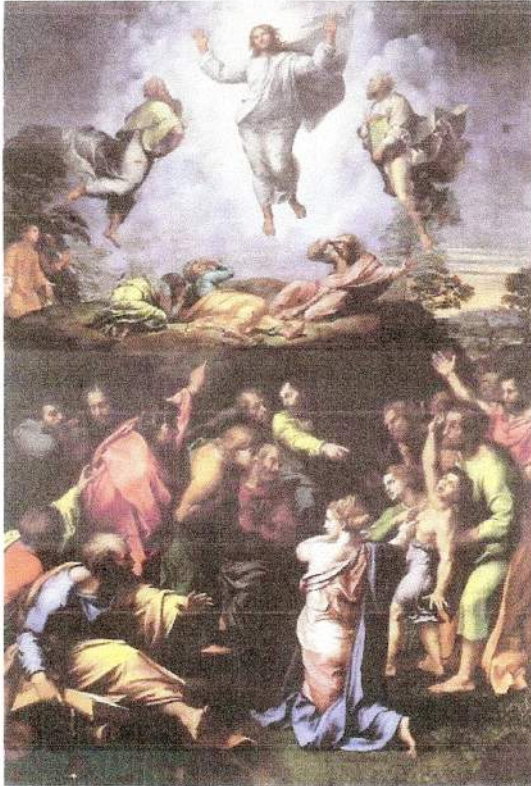
If you include all the days falling under the Easter cycle in the Armenian Church calendar -- stretching from the Fast of the Catachumens to the Feast of the Transfiguration -- Easter encompasses 24 weeks, or 168 days.

Aside from the days mentioned above, all Sundays of the year are dedicated to Christ's Resurrection within the Armenian Church. Other churches, while dedicating Sundays to the Resurrection, also celebrate other feasts and saints days on Sundays. But in the Armenian Church, Saints days are never celebrated on Sunday. Only a few Dominicals are celebrated on Sunday, such as the Transfiguration, Assumption of the Holy Mother of God, Exaltation of the Holy Cross, or Discovery of the Holy Cross, but always with an emphasis on the Resurrection.

EASTERTIDE SUNDAYS AND THE FEAST OF PENTECOST

Eastertide / Quinquagesima

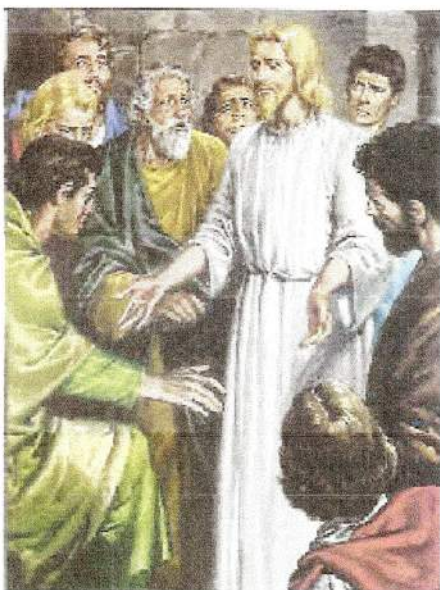
Eastertide= fifty days, in Armenian, *Hinounk*, *Hinants* or *Hissoonk*. Thus is known the period of fifty days from Easter to Pentecost, which are entirely dominical feasts, in honor of the Resurrection, and the last ten days



to that of the Ascension, while the fiftieth day is devoted to the coming of the Holy Spirit. All these fifty days are festival because the Armenian Church does not wish to have any fasting on dominical days outside the Lent.

Therefore, Eastertide or Quinquagesima (Latin), is the period of fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost. The first 40 days end with the feast of Ascension, which is celebrated on the Thursday of the sixth week of Resurrection. This 40-day period is dedicated to the mystery of the various and numerous appearances of the resurrected Savior. During the forty days between His Resurrection and

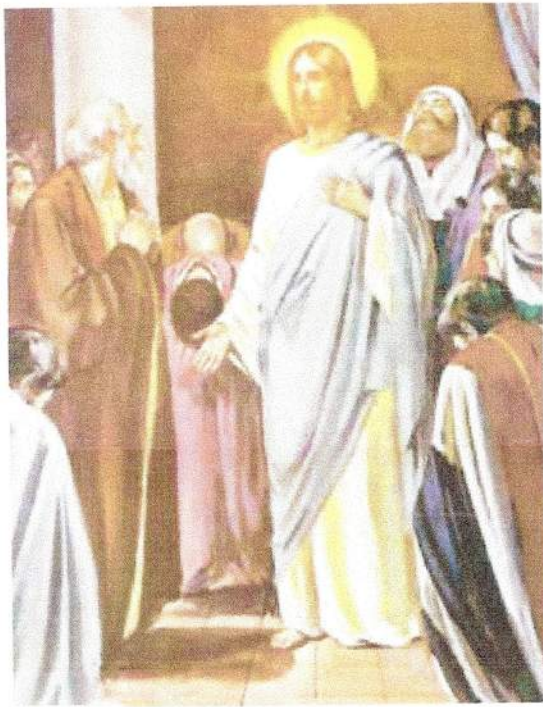
Ascension, Jesus Christ appeared and showed Himself to his disciples and prepared them for the task of carrying on His work and preaching His Gospel. He did this in each one of the appearances described in the Gospels



(Luke 24:13-35, John 20:19-23, 24-31). Jesus Christ was on earth after He was raised from the dead. This is proof that He was raised from the dead.

He showed Himself to many people:

1. To 500 people who saw Him at one time (I Corinth. 15:6).



2. To Mary Magdalene (John 20:14-16).
3. To the women returning from the tomb (Matt. 28:8-18).
4. To Peter (Luke 24:34).
5. To His followers toward evening (Luke 24:33-36).
6. To the two followers on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31).
7. To all the apostles eight days after His Resurrection (John 20:26).
8. To seven by the lake of Tiberias (John 21:1-23).
9. To James (I Corinth. 15:7).
10. To the eleven (Matt. 28:16-20).
11. To Stephen outside Jerusalem

(Acts 7:55).

12. To Paul near the city of Damascus (Acts 9:3-6).

The Fathers of the Church have placed *five feasts* during this 40-day period. These feasts are:

- a) The Beheading of John the Baptist
- b) New Sunday
- c) Green Sunday
- d) Red Sunday
- e) Apparition of the Cross.

Our Arm. Church has four feast days in honor of the Holy Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The Appearance of the Holy Cross.
2. The Elevation of the Holy Cross.
3. The Holy Cross of Varak.
4. The Discovery of the Holy Cross.

