



ABOUT HOKEHANKISD

Hokehankisd, or Service for the Repose of Souls, is a ritual we often observe, or even participate in, but give little thought to. It usually takes place at the end of the Divine Liturgy, and comprises hymns, a Gospel reading and a prayer. As the requesting family prays for its departed member(s), we join them, as members of their larger family, the Church.

The custom of praying for the dead is based on Scripture (II Maccabees 12:44-45), and has been part of the worship of the Church since the earliest days of Christianity. During *Hokehankisd* the hymns and prayers recall God's unending love for his creation, our Lord's willingness to forgive the sins of all those who believe in him, and the Last Judgment which we shall all face.

Patriarch Shnork Kaloustian's words about *Hokehankisd* sum up the Church's teaching very precisely:

"*Hokehankisd* is based upon the doctrine of the 'Communion of the Saints' which is an article of the Apostles' Creed. The 'Communion of the Saints' means the unity of all Christians, dead or alive, with Christ as their head. There is only One, Holy, Apostolic and Universal Church, with.... two departments: one in heaven, called the **Church Triumphant**, and the other on earth, called The **Church Militant**. "As in the Church Militant there are not only devoted, saintly, and active members, but also indifferent, sinning and almost 'dead' members; similarly there are in the **Church Triumphant** not only holy, purified members but also imperfect ones. The difference between the imperfect members of the **Church Triumphant** and of the **Church Militant** is this: Imperfect members of the Church on earth have the possibility and the chance of making themselves better Christians by faith and good works and the practice of Christian virtues. Whereas, the imperfect souls in heaven do not have this chance and possibility; therefore, they entirely

depend on the prayers of their brothers and sisters on earth for their improvement...

"In other words, their sins can be forgiven and their imperfections can be improved by the prayers and good works done for them by their fellow church members on earth."

It is customary to request *Hokehankisd* on the anniversary of the death of a loved one, but it is also appropriate to ask the prayers of our fellow Christians at any other time of the year (except on the Tabernacle Feasts, *Daghavars*). Each *Daghavar* is followed by a Memorial Day, *Merelotz*, usually the following Sunday, when *Hokehankisd* is held for those desiring it.

Our participation in *Hokehankisd* reaffirms our ties with the **Church Triumphant** and witnesses to our belief in "the resurrection of the dead" and our own "life eternal."

Now, the will of God is precisely
What Christ both did and taught.

It entails

Being humble in our life-style,
steadfast in our faith,
modest in our words,
just in our actions,
merciful in our dealings,
disciplined in our conduct,
incapable of inflicting a wrong
but able to bear one inflicted on us;

keeping peace with our brothers and sisters;
loving God with all our heart;
cherishing him as Father

while fearing him as God;

putting absolutely nothing before Christ,
since he put nothing before us;

clinging tenaciously to his love;
standing brave and confident, by his cross;
and,

whenever his name and honor are involved,
displaying

in our speech
the constancy to confess him,
under torture

the courage to fight for him,
and in death

the patience for which we shall be crowned.

This is what it means

to want to be co-heirs with Christ;

this is what it means

to carry out the commands of God;

this is what it means

to do the Father's will.

St. Cyprian of Carthage

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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20240

1. Name of the land
2. Location
3. Date of acquisition

4. Description of the land
5. Purpose of the land