

RAISING SAINTS

CHILDREN + FAMILY MINISTRY // WEEKLY GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

Primary Grade Students

When the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and announced that she would become the mother of the Son of God, the angel said, "You will name him Jesus, because he shall save his people." That's how we know that Jesus is the Savior. Mary and Joseph did what all Israelites did and named the newborn baby Jesus.

+ Do you know who chose your name? Do you know what your name means? Many names have special meaning. For example:

GREGORY means one who is alert

MARAL means a doe or beautiful girl

JAMES which is the same as Jacob means one who follows God closely

GRACE means blessed or favored by God. The Virgin Mary was greeted by the angel, "Hail Mary, full of grace."

HAROUTYOUN or **HAROUT** means the Resurrection of Jesus Christ

+ With your parents' or teacher's help find out what your name means and write it here.

+ The prophet Isaiah gives us a message from God saying, "Don't be afraid _____ (write your name in the blank) I have called you by name, you are mine." How wonderful it is that God loves us and calls us his children. This is good reason that we need to respect and not make fun of each other's names.

+ Is your name or middle name that of a saint of the Church? If so, look on the Diocesan calendar to find out when your saint's feast day is.



**FEAST OF
THE NAMING OF
OUR LORD
JESUS CHRIST**

Intermediate and High School Students

January 13 is the eighth day of the Feast of the Nativity or birth of Jesus Christ. On this day we celebrate the naming of our Lord Jesus Christ as we read in the Gospel of Luke 2:21 "And at the end of the eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb." This feast celebrates an important event in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ and shows us how important and special names are as spoken by the Prophet Isaiah (43:1) "But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.'"

When your parents call your name, you know that you belong to them. When you hear your name spoken by your teacher or your friends, there's a sense of belonging to the group. What words describe how one would feel with the realization of belonging. Circle those you feel apply.

STRANGER SAFE LOVED LONELY
REJECTED SAD SECURE HAPPY

You may have seen pictures of your baptism when you were immersed into the baptismal font in the name of Jesus Christ at which time the priest gave you the name your parents had chosen for you. You were adopted by God to become a member of his Church. Your name is unique because you are known by God by your name. With this knowledge, how do you think we should treat each other's names? When some may make fun of you, harass you or reject you, in essence they are offending God since you are God's own, he knows you by your name and loves you.

Ask your parents how they chose your name. Who were you named after? Often Armenian families would give their child either a saint's name or the name of a family member such as a grandparent or another loved and respected relative. Learn as much as you can about the life of the saint or the family member you were named after. Their example will be a wonderful guide in your life as you emulate their values emanating from our Christian faith. Here's what you can do:

- Look through family pictures in which your namesake is found. Hear your mom and dad telling you about events in that person's life. What were characteristic traits of this person which you like? How does getting to know about this person's values, faith, and how he/she treated people help guide you in your relationships with family, friends and the church community. You may decide to write a paragraph or two or illustrate what you want to convey.
- If you were named after a saint of the Church, then learn about the life of the saint. Your priest may guide you to read about your saint. Remember that saints were not born perfect. They all had to struggle through the same life challenges that you may be facing, but because of their devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ they followed his life example and overcame their difficulties. You may find an icon or a holy picture of your saint online. You may decide to have your parents gift you with your saint's icon to place it in your room.
- Find out on which day your saint's feast day is by referring to the Diocesan calendar. That day is also your Name Day which among Armenian Church faithful was observed just like a birthday. They would greet you saying, "May you live emulating your saint." In Armenian they would say, "**Anou-no-vut abris.**"
- Having your namesake saint or relative you may go on living life always standing up for justice, kind behavior among your peers, and the wonderful knowledge that you are God's own child known by your name.

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