



## Holy Cross Soorp Khatch

CELEBRATED ON THE SUNDAY CLOSEST TO SEPTEMBER 14

*Winning back the cross*

**Do you wear a  
cross on your  
necklace?**

Was it given to you  
by your godparents  
at your baptism?  
Do you know why  
you wear it?

against the Persians and recapture the Holy Cross. The army succeeded and on the way back it passed through Armenia and stopped at Garin (Erzeroom), where the Holy Cross was raised high for everyone to see.

The transportation of the Holy Cross over Armenian lands was considered a great

blessing.

This event is commemorated in a special service called *Antasdan*. A cross adorned with basil is carried to the four corners of the church symbolizing the blessing of the whole world.

For Armenians, the cross is a symbol of Christ's love and our reminder that God will help, guide, protect and support us whenever we need Him because He loves us always.

The Armenian Church has dedicated four different celebrations to honour the cross.

*Khatchverats*, (raising of the cross), is one of the five major feasts of the Armenian Church and is commonly called *Soorp Khatch*.

Many years after Jesus' resurrection, Jerusalem was conquered by Persians who took the cross on which Jesus was crucified to Persia. A Byzantine emperor brought together an army of soldiers from Christian countries, including Armenia, to march



The Armenian cross has two special features:

- Vines grow outwards from its base, resembling the roots of a tree, as a reminder that the cross gives life.
- The absence of the crucified body of Jesus is a reminder that Jesus was resurrected.

Do you know how to cross yourself?



Join the thumb, index and middle fingers of your right hand.



Then move your hand first to your forehead and say  
*"anoon hor"*  
 (in the name of the Father);



then to your chest and say  
*"yev vortvo"*  
 (and of the Son);



then to your left shoulder and say  
*"yev hokvooyñ"*  
 (and the Holy Spirit);



then to your right shoulder and say  
*"serpo"*  
 (Holy);



and conclude by putting your open palm on your heart and saying  
*"amen."*  
 (amen).

Some of the names celebrated on this day are **Khatchig** and **Khatchadoor**.