

A Different Type of Resolution for the New Year

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As many of us know, in the Armenian Apostolic Church we celebrate the Birth or Nativity of Christ, along with his Baptism, or Epiphany on January 6. As we also know, in the Western Churches, these two Feasts are separated - Christmas or Nativity is celebrated on December 25, and the Baptism or Epiphany on January 6 or the Sunday that falls between January 2 and 8. The Armenian Church's approach along with that of the other Eastern Church's is the older approach, when all Eastern and Western Churches celebrated both Feasts on January 6. There are theological and historical reasons why these differences came about, yet there are some implications that are very important for us even to this day.

When the Armenian Church celebrates the Birth and Baptism of Christ *together* on January 6, She makes the emphatic point that for a meaningful life *both* God's blessings are necessary *and* simultaneously the human willing response to utilize these blessings. In the Nativity we see the Son of God becoming Incarnate and being born through St. Mary. In his Baptism, we see Christ's response to his calling and his willingness to take upon himself the mission that he was given by God the Father. Thus, in the Nativity we see the *potential* of Christ, while in his Baptism, we see Christ *willingly transforming that potential for the glory of God* into a mission that changed the course of humanity. When we celebrate both together, we celebrate the need for the simultaneous presence of both in order for a person, family, and community to have a meaningful life.

The implications for us are just as relevant today as they were for those who lived 2,000 years ago. There are many who are born with great potentials, yet those who discover their potentials are those who transform their potential into the service of God by having a positive impact in the life of fellow humans. It is interesting to note that we discover the potential of our blessings *only* when we help others by placing those blessings in the service of the very Bestower of those blessings, God.

This insight opens up new possibilities for even more joyous life and meaningful relationships in the upcoming year, in short for new and different resolutions. The best way to accomplish these is through using our potentials in the service of God by having a positive impact in the life of others in our very community of the faithful, our Church and Parish.

We may have special talents such as writing, reading, singing, listening, drawing, painting, in athletics or organizing events. In order for us to maximize the fulfillment we get from these talents, we can resolve to put these to use in the service of God in our Parish. We can be assured that nowhere else will our talents be fully revealed and appreciated and have a lasting impression than in our very own Church and Parish.

So for the upcoming year, let us reveal and discover a potential in us by putting a talent we have in the service of God by having a positive impact in the life of our fellow Parishioners. This is an important implication of the statement *Krisdos Dsúnav yév Haynéztav. Orhnyal é Haydnootyoonún Krisdosi* –“Christ is Born and Revealed. Blessed be the Revelation of Christ!”