

Why the Narod?

The Narod is a red (sacrifice) and white (purity) braided cord with a cross at the end. The Narod is used during the services of Baptism and Marriage, yet this issue is focused on the former.

The Narod reminds us of the blood and water which poured from Christ's side when they pierced Him on the cross with a spear (Jn 19:34). This also reminds us of Christ's *sacrifice* for us as He died and resurrected to *purify* us from our sins.

During the baptismal service, we present the person getting baptized as an offering or a gift to God, wrapping the Narod around his/her neck as the gift's ribbon.



We named this pamphlet *Narod* to remind us of our baptism in the Armenian Church as followers of Christ, and for it to serve as the unbreakable cord between the Church and ourselves. For the more we know about our Church, the stronger is our bond.



The *Narod* pamphlet is published by the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston to provide the faithful significant information regarding the sacred traditions, rituals and services of the Armenian Apostolic Church. If you have questions regarding the topics covered in the *Narod*, please speak with our pastor, Fr. Vasken Kouzouian.

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Narod

The Sacrament of
Baptism

The word baptism comes from the Greek word Baptisma (βάπτισμα), which means “immersed in water.”

Water and washing indicate physical cleanliness, and oil indicates healing. Through baptism we are cleared and forgiven from our sins.

It brings upon us a new attitude and a new way of living in Christ. In the Armenian Church, we can only get baptized once in our lives.

Jesus said that unless we are born of the water and spirit, we cannot enter the Kingdom of God (Jn 3:5).

If we are not baptized, we do not have the right to enter the kingdom of God and receive salvation.

That is why baptism is very important and significant in the Armenian Church.

The whole community is involved in the process of baptism, for it is the act of the people of God.

We cannot achieve God on our own, yet by the means of baptism we are adopted by God and we become His children.

Just as God identified Christ on the day of His baptism: “This is my Son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased” (Mt 3:17), He will accept us as His children, embrace us with His love, deliver us from evil and forgive our sins. Hence, we surrender to Faith, Hope and Love.

A Brief Description of the Baptismal Service of the Armenian Apostolic Church

When the baptismal service starts, we turn our backs to the Altar in order to renounce evil in the world. After facing the Altar once again and confessing our faith to the Lord, we say a prayer by the Altar and proceed to the baptismal font. This is where the blessing of the water takes place and the Holy Oil/Chrism (Muron) is poured from a dove shaped vessel into the water.

The baptismal ceremony takes us back to Jesus’ baptism. For instance: the dove shaped vessel is a reminder of the spirit that descended upon Christ (Lk 3:22) and blessed the water of the Jordan River.



Once every seven years, the Muron is prepared with 40 different kinds of plants and flowers. The old Muron is always added as well signifying the sacred Apostolic tradition of the Armenian Church, and is blessed with the relic of St. Gregory the Enlightener and the Spear, which Christ our Lord was pierced with on the cross.

After immersing the candidate in the blessed water for three times in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the priest seals nine parts of his/her body with the Holy Muron: forehead, eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, heart, back and feet. Returning to the Altar, the godfather presents him/her to the priest who offers him/her to God.

Henceforth, he/she takes the first Holy Communion, becomes a Church member and a son/daughter of God.

This is not only a traditional event that takes place, but an essential ceremony that serves as our bridge to the Kingdom of God.