

# Armenian Church News

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[Diocese of the Armenian Church of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland](#)

[His Grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Primate](#)

Diocesan Office

Tel. 0208 127 8364  
primatesoffice@armenian  
ndioocese.org.uk

## ST. SARKIS FEAST CELEBRATION



On the occasion of the feast of St. Sarkis a solemn episcopal liturgy was celebrated by His Grace Bishop Manukyan St. Sarkis Church in London on Sunday, January 28th. According to the calendar of the Armenian Church, January 27th was the feast of St. Sarkis, the patron Saint of the Church.

At the end of the service special prayer service was held in the blessing memory of the late benefactors and trustees of the Church and a special agape meal (մատար) was shared at the Church hall. Preaching to the congregation Primate also invited the faithful to renew their faith and seek not for the worldly goods but the grace of God following the examples of saints.



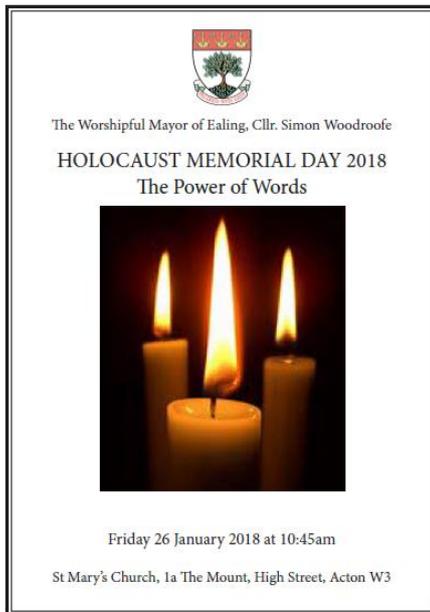
## FEAST OF ST. SARKIS YOUTH EVENT

On 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2018, youth gathered at St Sarkis Church, to celebrate feast of St Sarkis. The event started with a mass performed by his grace Bishop Hovakim, father Jirayr and father Shnork, where youth were blessed and welcomed to join celebration at Gulbenkian Hall next to the Church.

Celebration started with a blessing and speech by his grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, after which young participants ate traditional salty cookies. The event was greatly prepared and organised with Ladies committee collaboration. During the reception food, participants were discussing the culture and tradition of St Sarkis feast. After reception food, ACYO coordinator welcomed all participants to introduce themselves. Following a short speech by youth, Armenian music had been turned on and all participants were dancing and spending enjoyably time together. Many thanks to the Ladies committee, Ter Shnork, His Grace Bishop Hovakim for organising and supporting the event as well as all participants without whom the event wouldn't be such great pleasure.



## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY 2018: POWER OF WORDS



On Friday 26 January, Bishop Hovakim Manukyan participated in an event at St. Mary's Church, Acton, organised by the Worshipful Mayor of Ealing, Simon Woodroofe.

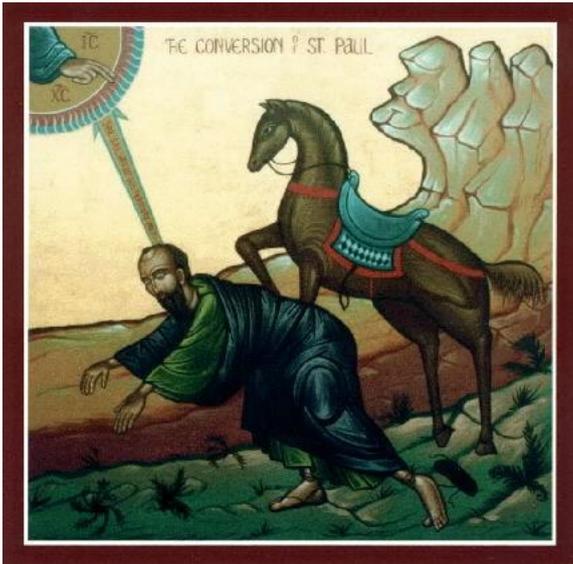
There were a number of participants, such as the Rt. Revd. Pete Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden and Acting Bishop of London, Mrs Hannah Lewis, Holocaust Survivor; Reverend Dean Ayres, Associate Rector of Acton; The Centre for Armenian Information & Advice, Gomidas Institute, pupils from Acton High School and others.

After a welcome from The Mayor of Ealing, Cllr. Simon Woodroofe, there was an introduction by the Revd. Dean Ayres, Associate Rector of Acton; and a speech by Hannah Lewis. After a 1 minute silence, HG Bishop Hovakim Manukyan offered a prayer. After that, students read the Holocaust Pledges below. Read the detailed report [here](#).

### The 7 Holocaust Pledges

1. We recognise that the Holocaust shook the foundations of modern civilisation. It's unprecedented character and horror will always hold universal meaning.
2. We believe the Holocaust and acts of genocide must have a permanent place in our nation's collective memory. We honour their survivors, and reaffirm our shared goals of mutual understanding and justice.
3. We must make sure that future generations understand the causes of genocide and reflect upon its consequences. We vow to remember the victims of Nazi persecution and of all genocides
4. We value the sacrifices of those who have risked their lives to protect rescue victims, as a touchstone of the human capacity for good in the face of evil
5. We recognise that humanity is still scarred by the belief that race, religion, disability, or sexuality make some people's lives worth less than others. Genocide, anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and discrimination still continue. We have a shared responsibility to fight these evils.
6. We pledge to strengthen our efforts to promote education and research about the Holocaust and all other genocides. We will do our utmost to make sure that the lessons of such events are fully learnt.
7. We will continue to encourage Holocaust remembrance by marking Holocaust Memorial Day. We condemn the evils of prejudice, discrimination and racism. We value a free, tolerant and democratic society.

## NEWS IN BRIEF



Bishop Hovakim Manukyan was invited to preach at the St. John's Church in Notting Hill Gate on 21 January 2018. The occasion was Conversion of Paul and Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. He was present at Divine Liturgy led by Rev. Dr. William Taylor and other clergy.

He spoke about the meaning of discipleship, reflected on the topic of martyrdom as well as how the present martyrdom of Christians in the Middle East unite us.



Hrant Dink memorial event was held in London on 19 January 2018 by the Armenian Institute, Article 19 and English Pen at Free World Centre to commemorate the advocate of Turkish–Armenian reconciliation and human rights in Turkey who was tragically assassinated in 2007. There were several speeches by Katie Morries, Antonia Byatt, and Nouritza Matossian; and a keynote speech by Maureen Freely, a screening of an interview with Hrant Dink and a performance from the Kurdish singer Suna Alan.



February 11 is Poon Paregentan – Eve of Great Lent. Armenian Church has the forty-day period of abstinence, Great Lent (in Armenian, “Medz Bahk”), while other churches have virtually eliminated long-duration abstinence. Great Lent in the Armenian Church starts on Monday and continues for forty days to and including the Friday before Palm Sunday. Read and learn more about Great Lent [here](#).

## SPIRITUALITY: FAST OF CATECHUMENS



The Fast of Catechumens is peculiar only to the Armenian Church. It begins three weeks before the Great Lent. In ancient times people could eat only bread and salt during the fast of Catechumens. On those days it was not allowed to celebrate Divine Liturgy either.

The meaning of the Fast of Catechumens is the purification of the five human senses from pagan impurity. In the ancient Church there was a custom to fast during five days before baptism. St. Gregory the Illuminator ordered King Tiridates and others to fast for five days before baptism in order to get freed of the evil. That is the reason also for fasting of Catechumens to be called “fast of salvation” from the evil.

According to the tradition, the fasting of Catechumens was initiated by St. Gregory the illuminator in memory of the above-mentioned practice.

There are two explanations regarding the name of this feast.

It is called the fast of Catechumens:

1. As the precursor of the Great Lent, and
2. As the first Armenian fast.

On the fifth day of the fasting of Catechumens, on Friday, the remembrance day of the Prophet Jonah is celebrated, but it is celebrated not as the feast of

Prophet Jonah, but as the memory of an example of great repentance and abstinence which Jonah urged. At times, wrongly, the fasting of Catechumens was called the fast of St. Sarkis, because the Armenian Church celebrates the feast of St. Sarkis on Saturday following the fast. In Middle Ages the Byzantine and the Georgian Churches blamed the Armenian Church for the fasting of Catechumens, relating it to St. Sarkis, to whom they ascribed sorcery. According to the testimonies of Armenian medieval writers. Greek and Latin Churches also had the fasting of Catechumens in ancient times.

Source: <http://armenianchurch.ge>

Image: Hovhannes Aivazovski, "The Baptism of the Armenian People. Gregory the Illuminator".

## SPIRITUALITY: FEAST OF VARDAN AND 1036 WARRIORS



On the Thursday preceding the Great Lent (this year on February 8), the Armenian Church marks the St. Vardanants Day, commemorating Armenian Commander Vardan Mamikonyan and his comrades-in-arms who martyred in the Battle of Avarayr against the Persian state in 451. This holiday is also considered to be the christening day anniversary for all people bearing the names of Vardan Mamikonyan and 7 other warriors and soldiers who fought heroically and died for the sake of their faith and country.

The plain of Avarayr, located in the extreme northwest of Iran, was the scene of an important battle which took place during an Armenian uprising against the Persians in the mid-fifth century A.D. The cause of the rebellion was a decree issued in 449 by the Sasanian king, Yazdegerd II (439-57), in which he ordered the Armenians, the bulk of whose country had become a vassal state of Iran at the Romano-Persian partition of 387, to convert from Christianity to Zoroastrianism. The Armenians refused and were forced to take up arms to defend their stand. In the course of this conflict, the Persians attempted an invasion of Armenia which was met by a combined force of Persarmenian nobles on the field of Avarayr lying along the banks of the Thmut River (Rūd-e Zangemār), apparently the Armeno-Persian frontier at that time.

The battle took place on May 26, 451. The battle of Avarayr has become the Armenian national holiday; its anniversary is a festival of the Armenian Church, and Vardan Mamikonyan has become one of its saints. The defense of the Christian faith by the Armenians has been hailed as a landmark in the history of the struggle for religious freedom, and the fallen of Avarayr have been held up as examples of heroism, patriotism to generations of young Armenians.

On the Commemoration Day of victims, a divine liturgy is served in all churches of all dioceses which is followed by religious procession with cross and banners. The participants of the procession illustrate the war scenes and imitate the warriors and soldiers who put their lives into risk for the sake of Armenia and our faith against the Persians. Among the participants there is a rider on the white horse who embodies Armenian Military Commander Vardan Mamikonyan. This Divine Liturgy is a tradition marking the eve of the great battle against Persia, when Armenian clergy blessed and baptized their troops.

This holiday is one of our national favorite festive days as it symbolizes the insuperable and imperishable power of our faith. And now we celebrate the Commemoration Day of Victims of the Great Battle in memory of those brave soldiers who spared no efforts to save the unity of our country. The martyrdom of St. Vardanants warriors is the victory against collapse.

**Image: Grigor Khanjyan, "Vardanank", mural**



*15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala*

with  
Sarkis Najarian & Band *Aréve*  
from France



Saturday 24 February 2018  
Cocktail Reception 7.30pm | Doors open 8pm  
Radisson Blu Edwardian  
140 Bath Rd, UB3 5AW  
£55 | 6-12 years £35 | under 5 years free – no chair  
Narineh Gholian 07958 538 630 | Salbee Beshirian 07583 236 391



*15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Performance*

Sunday 8 April 2018

Logan Hall  
20 Bedford Way, London WC1H 0AL

Doors open 6.30pm  
Performance starts 7pm sharp

£25 | 3-12 years £15

Narineh Gholian 07958538630 | Preny Hovanessian 07903362227 | [akhtamar.uk@gmail.com](mailto:akhtamar.uk@gmail.com)

[www.akhtamar.org.uk](http://www.akhtamar.org.uk) Charity No. 1098240





## Armenian Diocese of the United Kingdom and Ireland

### Feast of the Resurrection

*Easter in Jerusalem*

Led by Bp. Hovakim Manukyan, Primate

**April 4-11, 2018**

*Includes visits to:*

Armenian Patriarchate/ St. James' Monastery, Old City/ Tomb of Christ (Holy Fire),  
Bethlehem, Sea of Galilee, Jordan River, Dead Sea, Nazareth

**Trip Includes:** Full transportation and transfers in Holy Land as specified in itinerary; Breakfast and Dinner daily; 4\* Hotel accommodation (Double occupancy); Entrance fee to all sightseeing destinations; Tour Guide (English); Tips (driver/guide)

**Cost per person (based on double occupancy): \$1,350**

Single supplement \$650

Space is limited.

*For more information, contact:*

[primatesoffice@armenniandiocese.org.uk](mailto:primatesoffice@armenniandiocese.org.uk)

Tele #: 020 81278364

or

[Nourtravels@gmail.com](mailto:Nourtravels@gmail.com)





## A PILGRIMAGE JOURNEY THROUGH ARMENIA

with the Anglican and Eastern Churches Association

24 September—2 October 2018

In 301, when St Gregory the Illuminator converted King Trdat III to the faith, Armenia became the first country in the world to adopt Christianity as its state religion. The Armenian Church is called Apostolic because the country had been evangelised by two of the Twelve Apostles, Thaddeus and Bartholomew.

Armenians claim descent from Noah's great-great-grandson Haik, from whom their name for their country, Hayastan, derives. Armenia is symbolised by the looming snow-capped peak of Mount Ararat, where Noah's Ark landed, now over the Turkish border. Historically often much larger in area, the Republic of Armenia which emerged out of the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991, is about the same size as Belgium.

Highlights of our tour will include Echmiadzin, the spiritual centre of the nation, Sevan, one of the world's largest fresh-water mountain lakes, and the capital Yerevan. We shall visit monuments from the earliest days of Christianity, together with jewels from the Middle Ages.

In addition to seeing many living churches and inhabited monasteries, we will enjoy the wonderful and varied landscapes, flora and fauna of the country – especially the bird life, for which Armenia is justly famous.

## TOUR INFORMATION

The cost of this 9-day tour is £1,345 per person sharing twin-bedded accommodation. We will be staying at locally graded three star hotels, all rooms having private facilities.

Flights are with Aeroflot Airlines via Moscow to Yerevan.

Travel through Aeroflot is by air-conditioned coach accompanied by a local guide.

All entrance fees are included as are gratuities to guide, driver and hotel staff. We also include all meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner daily).

British and EU passport holders no longer require a visa to visit Armenia.

The travel insurance premium is £49 to age 74 and £74 if older (and no

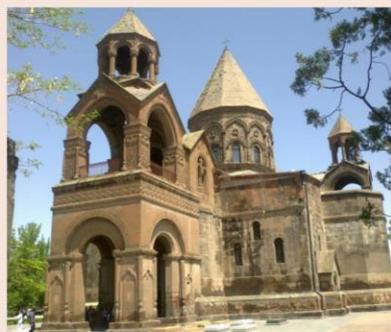
medical screening is required). Travel insurance is essential but you may have annual or another suitable insurance.

Single rooms are available at an extra charge of £295. Please, however, see our note 'Travelling Alone' overleaf.

Any special diets should be printed on the Booking Form.

A deposit is payable now with the balance due eight weeks prior to departure.

Your final travel documents will be sent to you two weeks before departure and will contain final flight times and hotel contact details.



## TO MAKE A RESERVATION

To reserve your place on this tour please complete the enclosed booking form and send it with a deposit of £200 plus the insurance premium (£49/£74) to the tour leader. Please make cheques payable to 'McCabe Pilgrimages'.

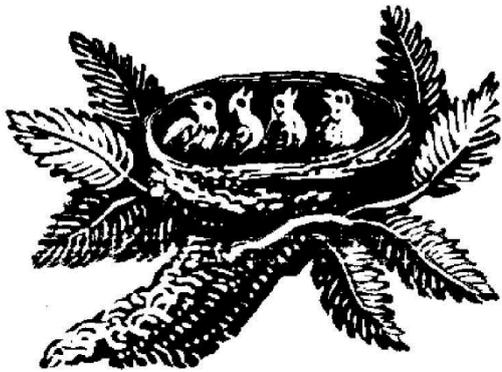
**Revd Andrei Petrine**

38 Claremont Road  
Basildon SS15 5PZ

Tel: 07723 026925

Email: pater@me.com

## FUNDRAISING FOR THE SOCIETY FOR ORPHANED ARMENIAN RELIEF (SOAR)



The Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR) is a global charity providing humanitarian relief to orphaned Armenian children throughout the world. Through their steadfast humanitarian relief efforts, SOAR strive to provide orphaned Armenians with resources fundamental to their physical, emotional, and intellectual development and over time, aim to provide this underprivileged population with the tools necessary to become accomplished, educated, and self-supporting Armenians.

To raise funds for SOAR, Vatche Cherkian the president of SOAR London chapter and chapter members Mariam Safaryan and Marina Mograbyan all successfully completed respective 10K runs at Osterley Park and Regent's Park in December. Together they raised over £3,200 in donations which will be spent on helping the current needs of some of the orphanages in Armenia. Further funds were also raised by selling handmade Christmas cards (made by the orphans themselves) at the Christmas Carol Service on Sunday 10th December at St Yeghishe Church.

SOAR would like to thank Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, Father Shnork Baghdassarian and ACYO for their support and look forward to working together again in the future. SOAR would also like to thank all our supporters for their kind and generous donations thus far.

For more information and support or if you would like to donate to this cause then please visit their respective donation pages below:

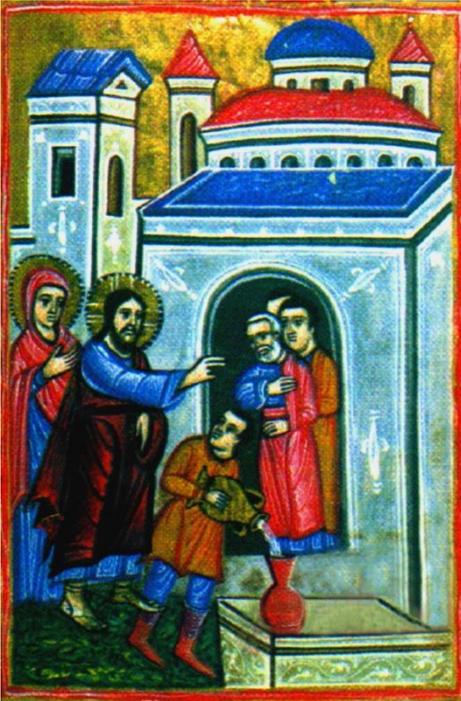
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/vatche-cherchian>

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/mariamsafaryan>

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/marina-mograbyan>

<http://soar-us.org/>

## HOUSE BLESSING (ՏՆՕՐՅՆԵՔ)



One of the traditions of the Armenian Church is the Home Blessing Service. It symbolises the visit of Resurrected Christ the Upper House and blessing of the disciples (John 20:19).

Priests and bishops visit the homes of the faithful on the occasions of Christmas (Theophany) and Easter (Holy Resurrection) to bring the good news of our Lord's Nativity and Resurrection to bless them and their homes through a special Service.

During the Service the priest prays to God and asks Him to keep the home, its inhabitants and the children in good health, so that they live a devout life, glorify the name of Almighty God and strengthen the Holy Church.

House Blessing Services: those faithful who want a priest to visit and bless their home are welcome to contact their respective parishes or the Primate's Office.

### A Message from the Primate Office

His Grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan wishes to inform you that at the bottom of our weekly e-newsletter you will find the contacts of our Churches and Parishes in the UK and Ireland. Details are also available on the websites of the respective Churches and Parishes. Please do not hesitate to contact any of these addresses if you need any help regarding Church services. You will receive a reply either from the Parish Council Chair or from the priest.

If you encounter any kind of problems regarding communication with the above, please contact the Primacy (Առաջնորդարան) directly at the following address:

Bishop Hovakim Manukyan  
The Primates Office  
c/o The Armenian Vicarage  
Iverna Gardens  
London, W8 6TP  
Tel: + 44 (0) 208 127 8364  
**e-mail: [primatesoffice@armeniandiocese.org.uk](mailto:primatesoffice@armeniandiocese.org.uk)**  
[Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Bible Studies**

Thursdays at 7:00pm, Gulbenkian Hall

**8 February 2018, 18:30 pm**

Liturgy at St. Yeghiche Church for the feast of St. Vartan and 1036 warriors

**11 February 2018, 11:00 am**

Episcopal liturgy in Dublin parish and AGM

**13 February 2018, 19:00 pm**

Tiarnydaraj, presentation of our Lord Jesus Christ to the temple, blessings and celebrations at St. Yeghiche Church

**March 2018 (tbc)**

Vernatun Programme: Series of lectures

**1 April 2018 (details tbc)**

Easter family celebration

**4-11th of April, 2018**

Pilgrimage to Holy Land

**May 2018 (details tbc)**

Mother's Day Celebrations

**July, 2018**

Youth Gathering in the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin



ACYO London introduces their new project

## "Welcome to our new borns"

If you have a new born or know someone who has just had a baby in the community please write to the [primatesoffice@armeniandiocese.org.uk](mailto:primatesoffice@armeniandiocese.org.uk) and let us know, we would love to send a gift to them. Kindly send us your baby's full name and your home address.

For more information about ACYO London, to donate or to help us with any of our projects please contact us on:

[acyolondon@armeniandiocese.org.uk](mailto:acyolondon@armeniandiocese.org.uk)

Facebook – ACYO London Telephone: 0208 127 8364



**The Armenian Church News publishes announcements of any Armenian organisation as it is an inclusive channel of communication.**

The objectives of CAN are to inform the wider publish and its constituency members about:

- Activities of the Primate
- Organisations under the auspices of the Primate: ACT UK, ACYF, Ladies Committee
- Worldwide Armenian Church
- Parishes
- Upcoming events in the community

The announcements about the community events (up to 150 words) are published upon the request of a particular organisation.

**ACN do not raise funds on behalf of any other organisation except for Armenian Church (ACT UK, ACYF, Primate's Office, Ladies Committee, St. Yeghiche, St. Sarkis, Holy Trinity, Dublin, Cardiff, Birmingham, Oxford).**

**Editorial:**

The main objective of the diocesan e-newsletter is to serve and reach out to Armenians throughout the United Kingdom and Ireland. The community members and organisations are welcome to send their announcements for the e-newsletter, including information not only about public events but also about important family events such as christening, matrimony or passing away.

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**Disclaimer: considering that there are many names in the coverage of events, it is possible that some of them are misspelled or incorrect. We apologise in advance for any misspelling.**

## Worship Services in the Armenian Churches

Services are held in the Armenian Churches in London every Sunday starting at 11:00 am. **In Manchester, there is a service on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month.** For further details, please contact the parish nearest to you:



### Holy Trinity Armenian Church

229 Upper Brook Street  
Manchester, M13 0FY  
Tel: 0161 273 1074

[www.armenianchurchmanchester.org](http://www.armenianchurchmanchester.org)  
1<sup>st</sup> SUNDAY OF THE MONTH



### St. Sarkis Church

Iverna Gardens  
Kensington, London, W8 6TP  
Tel: 020 7937 0152

[www.stsarkisparish.co.uk](http://www.stsarkisparish.co.uk)



### St. Yeghiche Church

13b Cranley Gardens  
Kensington, London SW7 3BB  
Tel: 020 7373 8133

[www.styeghiche.org.uk/](http://www.styeghiche.org.uk/)

### Other Parishes of our Diocese:

**Cardiff** - Tel: + 44 771 279 2304, +44 2920779248 | [john@jagproperties.co.uk](mailto:john@jagproperties.co.uk)

**Dublin** - Tel: +44 2891 863559 | [www.armenians.ie](http://www.armenians.ie)

**Birmingham** – Tel: +44 121 675 1469 | St John's Church, Stratford Road, Birmingham, B11 4EA

**Oxford** - Tel: +44 7810 490242 | [armenian.society@studentsclub.ox.ac.uk](mailto:armenian.society@studentsclub.ox.ac.uk)

We invite those who have questions or wish to gain deeper understanding of the faith, moral discernment, teachings and traditions of the Armenian Church to contact the Office of the Diocese of the Armenian Church in United Kingdom and Ireland:

His Grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan  
The Primate's Office  
c/o The Armenian Vicarage  
Iverna Gardens  
London, W8 6TP  
Tel: 0208 127 8364  
Email: [primatesoffice@armeniandiocese.org.uk](mailto:primatesoffice@armeniandiocese.org.uk)

Registered office address:  
Kemp House 152-160 City Road, London EC1V 2NX  
[Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

The Primate thanks Nyraff Ltd & the Tanielian family for their continued support to ACT UK and the ASF

