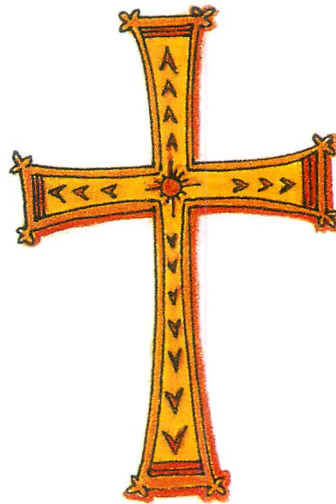


Easter

THE OLD COVENANT AND THE NEW COVENANT



God creates the world and man and makes a covenant with Abraham. Abraham and his people will love and worship God. God will care for Abraham and his people. But the covenant is broken by the sins of people. God helps Moses get the people free and give them the law. God sees that people need to learn how to live as he wants us to live. But the people lose their freedom and

turn away from the law. God sends his Son Jesus Christ to re-establish the relationship between God and people. Jesus teaches us how to live the way God wants us to live. Jesus offers the Kingdom to all who believe in him. Jesus institutes Holy Communion as our means of sharing in the New Covenant. Jesus dies on the cross to pay for our sins.

THE EASTER STORY • The Gospel of St. Matthew



After the sabbath, as Sunday morning was dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. Suddenly there was a violent earthquake; an angel of the Lord came down from heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid that they trembled and became like dead men.

The angel spoke to the women. "You must not be afraid," he said, "I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has been raised, just as he said. Come here and see the place where he was lying. Go quickly, now, and tell his disciples, he has risen from the dead, and now he is going to Galilee ahead of you; there you will see him! Remember what I have told you."

So they left the tomb in a hurry,

afraid and yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples.

Suddenly, Jesus met them and said, "Peace be with you." They came up to him, took hold of his feet, and worshipped him. "Do not be afraid," Jesus said to them. "Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me."

The eleven disciples went to the hill in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him, even though some of them doubted. Jesus drew near and said to them, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Go then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples; baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And I will be with you always, to the end of the age."

Remember and Be Happy

I first met Donald when he moved next door three years ago. We became friends at once. Our street was a good one for kids. It was a dead end and behind our houses were woods that belonged to a state park. We could ride our bikes up and down the street without worrying too much about cars. We could walk along paths in the woods and pretend all sorts of adventures.

There were eight of us on the street and we called ourselves the Road Gang.

In the spring one of our favorite activities was to hike through the woods to the open meadow and pick daffodils. Long ago someone had planted a bunch of bulbs there, and now there was a field of them. We all brought bunches home to our moms. It was

great. We didn't have to pay for them and we didn't have to worry that someone would complain about us picking them.

Donald was two years older than I, and very smart. He taught us lots of things about the woods. He showed us what skunk cabbage was, and to be careful not to step on it. He told us that when ferns are just beginning to grow and are all rolled up they are called fiddleheads. All of us had our special tree. Each was a different kind. Donald had taught us which was which. Mine was a horsechestnut. I loved the prickly pods and the shiny brown nuts inside. Once I strung a bunch of nuts together and made a necklace for Donald. He said he felt just like a brave Indian chief when he put it on.

Even the two older kids on our block liked and respected Donald. He was the unofficial leader of the Road Gang. Once he got all of us together to decorate our bikes for our town's Fourth of July parade. Donald said that Ralph and Ginger should lead our group in the parade because they were the oldest. I thought that was nice of Donald because he could have made himself the first one in line since he thought of the idea. The mayor gave us a special ribbon for being in the parade.

One day this spring while we were hiking through the woods on our way to the daffodil field, Donald got stung by a bee. Something strange happened to him and he fell down. We all got scared. Beth ran to tell his mom. I didn't know what to do so I just held his hand and asked God to make it all right. Soon an ambulance came and two men carried Donald out of the



woods on a stretcher. We all stood and watched the ambulance drive away until we could no longer hear the siren. Then everyone went home. Each family took turns going over to Donald's house to help out. Later my mom told me that Donald had died. It seems he was very allergic to bee stings, but no one knew it because he had never been stung before.

For a week we kids didn't play together. It seemed that every time we started a game we realized Donald wasn't with us any more and we just got so sad we couldn't play. Once I heard mom ask dad if he thought Donald's mother and father would sell their house and move away. I liked Donald's parents a lot. I didn't want them to go.

Palm Sunday had come and we went to church as we usually did. The priest did Turunpatzek and when he knocked

on the wood it reminded me of a time Donald had us all build a platform in a big tree in the woods. We nailed and hammered all day until it was done. The wood we used was gathered from everyone's house. We made a ladder up the tree and took turns climbing up. "This is great. It's like heaven up here," Tommy said when it was his turn. Donald took a hammer and knocked on the tree with it and said, "Come on down and give someone else a chance to go to heaven!"

Friday night when we went to the Taghman Gark service for the Burial of Jesus, I was surprised to see that this year all the flowers around the tomb were daffodils. We had not picked daffodils this spring without Donald. When the deacon gave me my daffodil to take home I felt like Donald was there in that tomb. I didn't want to go to church Saturday.

Easter morning I saw Donald's parents go to church before we left for our church. His mom smiled at me and said how nice I looked. When we got to church it was already crowded. Everyone was happy, but I didn't feel like I was part of the happiness. The priest had started his sermon and I wasn't really listening until I heard him say something about a new promise God had made to man. I remembered what Donald always said, "A promise is a promise." He would remind me when I wanted to back out of one of mine. I started to listen to the priest more carefully.

"The promise that Easter proves is that we will have another life, a new life with God one day. All who believe in Jesus are assured of that promise."

Then it struck me. Donald believed in Jesus. All of a sudden I felt happy. Donald is with Jesus now and one day I will be there too!

When we got home I ran to my room and took the daffodil out of the little vase mom had given me for it. It was still fresh-looking. I smiled at it and it seemed to smile a bright, yellow smile back at me. I took the flower over to Donald's house and rang the doorbell. His mother answered the door. "I got this daffodil at church this week and it reminded me of Donald. I wanted to share it with you," I said and I gave her the flower.

"Come in," she said. I sat at the kitchen table while she put the daffodil in a glass of water and placed it on the table. "Thank you so much for this flower. It reminds me of Donald and I miss him so much."

I got up and kissed her. It seemed like the right thing to do. She walked me to the door. "Can I come over tomorrow?" I asked. "I miss visiting at this house."

"Sure," she said. "You can come over any time. By the way, I have something for you. It is a gift you gave my Donald. I know he would want you to have it now." She reached into a box by the floor and pulled out the horsechestnut necklace I had made for my friend. The shiny brown nuts were as pretty as ever.

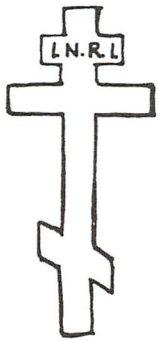
"Thank you," I said. I put it around my neck and walked home. I looked into the woods. Through the trees I could just see a splash of yellow, the daffodil field. Daffodils will always remind me of Donald and Jesus and how great heaven is!

Remembering Jesus

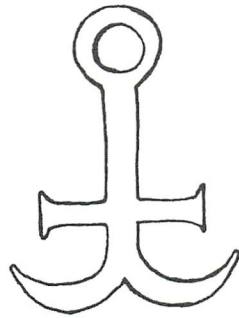
The cross is our reminder of Jesus and the New Covenant. In the Armenian Church we don't use a crucifix (a cross

with Jesus on it) except for the Lenten altar picture. We remember and glorify the risen Christ.

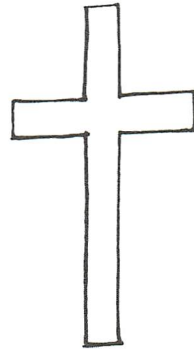
All Christian churches use the cross, but each in its own unique way. Here are some crosses to look at and learn about. After studying them, draw your own typical Armenian style cross.



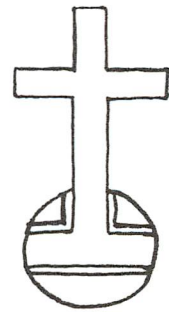
Eastern



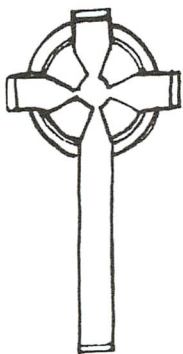
Anchor



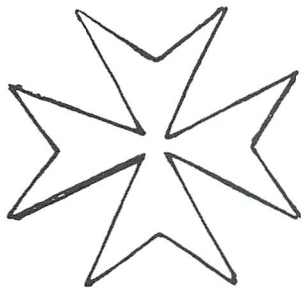
Latin



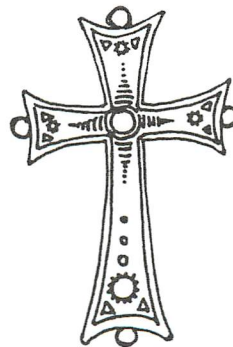
Triumphant



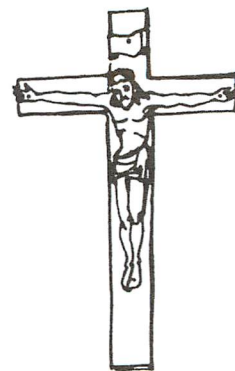
Celtic



Maltese



Armenian



Crucifix