**Badarak: Meaningful Moments**

*45 minutes to a richer worship experience (5th grade and above)*

**2. The Liturgy of the Word: Scripture Readings**

*For this lesson, timing is crucial. You will need to complete 1 and 2 below in time to be in church for the singing of “Soorp Asdvadz.” Make sure to ask a Parish Council member to alert you in time to get your students to church for that sharagan. You should leave church quietly and respectfully immediately after the reading of the Gospel.*

*The Liturgy of the Word or the Synaxis (a Greek word which means “gathering”) is the first of the two major parts of the Badarak. The focus is on education; it is sometimes called the teaching part of the Liturgy. It includes Bible readings, the sermon (note that the sermon has been moved to later in the Liturgy when more people are present) and the Creed. We learn God’s teachings from the Bible; through the sermon, we learn how to live out our faith in the world; and in the Nicene Creed, we learn the basic tenets of that faith.*

**Materials Needed**

* *For Teacher:* Pew Book, Bible, a photo of the Gospel book used in your parish’s Badarak
* *For Students:* Pew Book, copies of the Lectionary from the back of the Diocesan calendar for the current year, paper and pencils

1. *Show students the photo of the Gospel book. Ask:* What is this? Where and when do we usually see it? (*They may identify it as the Bible; if so, explain that it contains the first four books of the New Testament. See if they know the names of those four books. Hopefully, they will recall that they see it during the Liturgy elevated and carried in procession around the altar while we sing “Soorp Asdvadz” and that it’s read aloud to us as we stand attentively.) Ask:* Why do you think it’s so elaborately encased in gold and decorated in precious stones? *(It’s meant to remind us of the value and sacredness of the Gospel—the Word of God.)*

*Ask students to turn to pages 13 and 17 in the Pew Book, read the short sections under “The Gospel Procession” and “Reading of the Scriptures” and write 4 or 5 questions to test their classmates on the information presented. When you return to the classroom, students can test each other. It will be interesting to see what information your students think is important.*

1. *Distribute copies of the Lectionary. Explain that it’s a list of the Bible passages designated to be read during various church services, especially the Divine Liturgy. Ask students to find the readings for this particular day. Write them on the blackboard. Ask a volunteer to find the Gospel passage and read it aloud to the class (since the Gospel is* *always chanted in Armenian, this will ensure that the students understand what’s being read).*

*Note that in most of our parishes the Old Testament is not read, usually because of time constraints.*  (20 min)

1. Church. *Before going in to church, ask students to pay special attention to the epistle reading which is usually read in English and be prepared to share what it was about. Make sure you read it in advance in order to guide discussion.* (15 min)

1. *When settled back in class, discuss the epistle, and then have students ask the questions they prepared earlier. Ask if they have any questions about what they saw at Liturgy.*
2. *Close with the prayer on page 17 of the Pew Book, said by the priest (the lighter text is recited inaudibly), just before the Bible readings. It’s re-printed here:*

Lord our God, accept the supplications of us your servants, made with open arms, and be merciful to us according to your great mercy. Send down your compassion on us and upon all your people, who await the abundant mercy which comes from you. For you, being God, are merciful and you love mankind and to you is befitting glory, dominion and honor, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen. (10 min)