

COMMUNION/SACRAMENT SUNDAY #1

Baptism and Chrismation/Confirmation

<p>Preparation: (What I need to do and items to gather before I begin to teach.)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FOCUS his Sunday on taking students into church to receive Holy Communion and hear a special sermon, prepared by your Parish Priest. 2. CONTACT your parish priest in advance and let him know that this week's Sunday school discussion is about the first 2 Sacraments: <u>BAPTISM and CHRISMATION</u>. 3. ASK: Him to prepare a children's sermon and to please include sharing the Baptismal Font with the children while they are inside church. <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water • Water basin or large bowl • Baby doll • Dove • Oil • Red and white ribbon or yarn • Cross necklace • Pictures of a baby being baptized
	<p>Baptism and Chrismation</p>
<p>Scripture Reference(s):</p>	<p>"Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God" (John 3:5)</p>
<p>Emphasis or Theme:</p>	<p>There are 7 Sacraments of the Armenian Apostolic Church. They are (<i>in order of customary appearance in our lives</i>): Baptism, Chrismation or Confirmation, Penance, Holy Communion, Marriage (or Holy Matrimony), Ordination (or Holy Orders), Prayers for the sick.</p> <p>Today we focus on the first 2 sacraments: BAPTISM and CHRISMATION</p>
<p>Introducing the Lesson: (What you might say or do before the story to help create an interest or curiosity.)</p>	<p>SAY: Sacraments are signs of God's love. The Armenian word for sacrament, "<i>khorhoort</i>," means mystery. Jesus Christ is mysteriously present in the seven sacraments and is Himself the officiant through the person of the priest.</p> <p>Sacraments are visible signs of ceremonies that give us God's grace. What is grace? Grace is the gift of God's friendship, constant love, and His invitation for us to live in union with Him. Participating in a sacrament allows us to be physically reminded of God's love!</p> <p>The first sacrament we can experience is BAPTISM. Most of us are baptized when we are babies, although, some people are baptized when they are older.</p> <p>ASK: Does anyone remember their Baptism? Has anyone seen a picture of when you were baptized? (<i>Pause for responses. Share pictures of a child being baptized.</i>)</p> <p>SAY: Most of us were probably little babies when we were baptized. Baptism is the sacrament through which people are absolved of their sins and become children of God. Just as a man's earthly birth happens only once, likewise the spiritual birth can happen only once, that is why baptism is not repeatable.</p> <p>SAY: The second sacrament occurs immediately after baptism and is called CHRISMATION. Chrismation is when a baptized person is blessed with the gifts of</p>

the Holy Spirit. Confirmation is the completion and perfection of the baptism.

One way to differentiate between Baptism and Chrismation is that baptism blesses the person using WATER, while the Chrismation continues the blessing with OIL.

Performing the sacraments of Baptism and Chrismation together, (along with Communion, which we'll discuss during our next Sacrament Sunday) has been an ancient tradition of the Armenian Church.

Sharing the Lesson:
 (Outline the lesson here. Then describe the method you will use to tell the story. Examples might include showing pictures, props, visuals, drawing as you tell, using puppets, costumed characters, dramatic story-telling or any number of other methods.)

BAPTISM

SAY: Baptism is the first sacrament that a Christian receives. When we are born, we all have the first of all sins, This is called original sin and it was the one committed by our first parents, Adam and Eve. When we are baptized, we are washed of that sin as well as any others we may have committed. Unless people are baptized, they are forbidden to receive any other sacraments.

The ceremony of baptism can be performed in two ways:

- The priest pours or sprinkles the holy water three times upon the head and other parts of the body of a baptized person
- After having consecrated the water in the font with a prayer and the sign of the cross, the priest immerses an infant three times in the water.

God gets very happy when the priest, while pouring holy water on the baptized one, says, "I now baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The Armenian Church accepts as authentic the baptism of those churches (Orthodox, Catholic, or other church) that confess the Holy Trinity, and use "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*" during baptism.

The Sacrament of Baptism should take place in the Church. But under special circumstances, for example when a child is seriously sick, it is permissible to perform the ceremony of baptism at home or in some other proper place.

ASK: Who can tell me who and where Jesus was baptized? *(pause for responses)*

SAY: Very good! Jesus, Himself, was baptized in the River Jordan by John the Baptist. In the early days of Christianity, baptism was performed in rivers and pools. Today we use a special font for the sacrament. The Baptismal font became one of the most important parts of a Christian churches everywhere.

When a person is baptized they are given Godparents, in Armenian called "*gnkahayr*" and "*gnkamayr*"). The parents and the godparents, particularly the godfather ("*gnkahayr*") present the child for baptism. (The "*gnkahayr*" would also sponsor an adult seeking baptism.)

ASK: Do you know who your Godfather and Godmother are? *(pause for responses.)*

SAY: Some of the important symbols associated with baptism:

- "Narod", or red and white braid symbolizing the blood and water; placed around the neck of the child along with a cross
- The renunciation of Satan
- Water, the source of life
- The immersion into the water three times

When the child is immersed into the water he/she shares in Christ's baptism
 When he/she is taken out of the water, he shares in Christ's resurrection.
 (Model this using the doll and immersing it in and out of the water basin.)

After Jesus' resurrection, He commissioned the apostles to go forth and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Through apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew, we continue the tradition of baptism in our Armenian church!

CONFIRMATION or CHRISMATION

SAY: In the Armenian Church the Sacrament of Confirmation is called “*knounk*” or “*droshtm*”, which means “sealing.” By chrismation, the baptized person receives the blessings of the Holy Spirit to strengthen their spiritual life. When we are confirmed we can be certain that the Holy Spirit will be with us our entire lives, giving us hope and strengthening our charity to love God and others more deeply!

In the Armenian Church, they are anointed with the chrism, (in Armenian, called “*muron*”), which is made with olive oil and 40 different kinds of plants and flowers. “*Muron*” is consecrated once every 7 years, and only the Catholicos of All Armenians and the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia have the right to consecrate the chrism.

Option: “Making Chrism/Holy Oil” Demonstration - guide under Learning Activities.

Like water, oil is an essential religious symbol, one of healing, light, reconciliation, and peace. The dove brought Noah an olive branch announcing God's forgiveness the Great Flood. The peace and healing by oil is represented during the pouring of *muron* into the water from a dove-shaped vessel.

The priest then pours the Holy Muron into his palm and uses it to bless 9 parts of the body; forehead, eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, heart, back and feet.

Learning Activities:

(Games, crafts artwork, songs, memory verses, or other activities that bring fuller meaning to the scripture or make application to the lives of the students..)

1. Making Chrism/Holy Oil (“*Muron*”)
2. Making a “Narod-style” necklace
3. Chrismation Doves
4. Godparent’s “Narod-style” bracelet

Review:

(Solidify learning by repeating facts or themes or even the story itself through games, crafts, activities, or visual aids.)

1. The first Sacrament: BAPTISM
2. The second Sacrament: CHRISMATION or CONFIRMATION
3. Baptism and Chrismation are done together in the Armenian Church.
4. During the ceremony, the Priest shall ask the Child’s Sponsor (Godfather):
 “What does this child request?”
 The Sponsor (Godfather) shall answer: “Faith, hope, love and baptism.”

Closing:

(Prayer, last song, . . .)

SAY: A child’s day of Baptism is a very special occasion! Here is a list of the items needed on the Day of the Baptism:

1. A white outfit - worn by the child after the Baptism and Chrismation
2. A small gold cross on a chain - worn by the newly-baptized child and should be provided by the Godfather.
3. One or two large white towels - brought to the church on the day of the Baptism.

Since Holy Muron has been used to anoint the child, when the newly-baptized child is bathed for the first time after the Baptism, the bath water should be poured into a garden or like place rather than into a waste water system.