

## Unit Three\* Following Jesus

# The Disciples



### We Speak to God

Heavenly Father, we pray for our leaders - the Catholicos, the bishops and priests of the Armenian Church and all the men and women who are not priests but also serve as leaders. We pray for their good health. Grant them a long life. +Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

### Let's Talk

Jesus went to a town called Capernaum, beside Lake Galilee. This is where he started to preach. "Turn back to God," he reminded the people. Jesus knew that he would need faithful helpers to continue his work. These helpers would be his special disciples. Jesus would choose twelve of them.



### Listen to This

One day when he was walking along the shore of Lake Galilee, Jesus saw two brothers who were fishermen. One was called Simon Peter, and the other one was Andrew.

"Come with me. I will teach you to be fishers of people." Fishing was a profitable business, but Peter (Jesus preferred to call him that) and Andrew knew that they had to answer Jesus' call for help.

Jesus walked further until he saw two more fishermen, James and John.

They were in a boat with their father mending fishing nets. Jesus called to them and asked them to come with him. They did not ask why. They did not say, “I don’t want to leave the family business.” They left their father and their fishing boat and went with Jesus.



*Jesus needs you. What can you do to help Jesus?*

1. You can attend church and Sunday School.
2. You can pray for those in the world who may have forgotten about Jesus and his teachings.
3. By the way you live your life, you can become an example of hope, faith and forgiveness to those around you.

## God Speaks to Us

From his many followers, Jesus chose the twelve who would be called disciples. The first job he gave them was to cure the sick and to preach his message – “Feel sorry for any sins you have committed and you will be forgiven.” Jesus gave these men special instructions and eventually sent them as true apostles to preach in far away places in the world. Later, many more men and women followed him and helped him teach others.

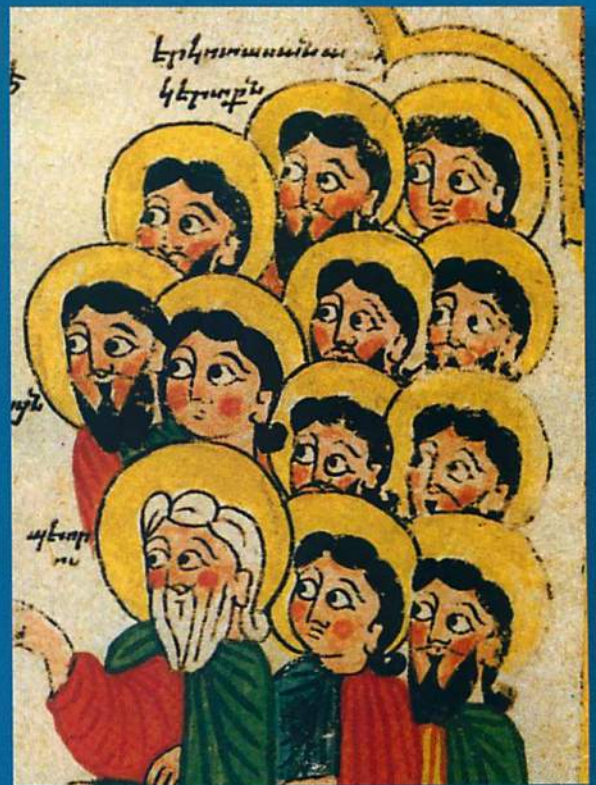
The twelve were:

**Peter...** the leader of the twelve apostles

**Andrew...** Peter’s brother

**James...** first apostle to be martyred

**John...** James’ brother and Jesus’ “beloved disciple”



**Philip ...** Close friend to Peter and Andrew

**Bartholomew...** went to Armenia

**Thaddeus...** went to Armenia

**Matthew...** a tax collector

**Thomas...** wanted to be sure Jesus was alive again

**James the Less...** first bishop of Jerusalem

**Simon...** a zealot for the Jewish law

**Judas Iscariot...** who betrayed Jesus, and was replaced by Matthias

*Mark 3:13-19*

## We Learn About God

The Holy Spirit helped Peter and all the apostles share the love they had for Jesus with others. They helped the church grow. Jesus chose the apostles to lead the church. In later years, the apostles chose others to take their place as leaders of the church. These leaders were called bishops. Bishops and priests lead and take care of the church today.



## Hearts and Hands

**St. Thaddeus** went to Armenia first. Thaddeus brought with him the spear that pierced Jesus' side at the time of the crucifixion. This spear rests in the museum of Holy Etchmiadzin.

There, Thaddeus converted many people to Christianity, including the King's daughter, Santoukht.

On his way back from India, **St. Bartholomew** visited Armenia, bringing with him a picture of the Holy Mother of God. He had a church built there called the Church of the Holy Mother of God.

St. Bartholomew performed many miracles in Armenia.



# Our Armenian Way

The Primate is the leader of the diocese.

A diocese is made up of many churches.

The Mother Cathedral of our diocese is St. Vartan Cathedral.

The Catholicos is the leader of the Armenian Church around the world. The Mother Cathedral of the entire Armenian Church is Holy Etchmiadzin (which means “the place where Jesus came down”).

A priest is the spiritual leader of a church – *yegeghetsi*.

A priest can be a married priest – *kahana* - or an unmarried priest – *goosagron*.

The name of our Priest is \_\_\_\_\_.

The name of our Primate is \_\_\_\_\_.

The name of the Catholicos of All Armenians is \_\_\_\_\_.



## For My Family



### Sharing Our Faith

Today we talked about Jesus' twelve disciples. It was with the help of this group of diverse men that the church grew all over the world. Thaddeus and Bartholomew, the apostles who were sent to Armenia to preach Christianity, were part of this original number.

How would you answer Jesus if he asked you to follow him? In class, the children discussed how we can be Jesus' messengers today.

### Living Our Faith

1. Encourage your child to tell you about some of the apostles.
2. Have a family discussion about how we can all be helpers/apostles of Jesus Christ.
3. Jesus sent his apostles all over the world. Two, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, were sent to Armenia. Encourage your child to share some facts about these two apostles.
4. Display the banner your child made of the two saints who traveled to Armenia.

4. Continue with **God Speaks to Us**. After each temptation, ask children to repeat what the Devil asked and what Jesus answered. Conclude with: “So here we see Jesus telling us three important things: God’s Word is as important to us as the food we eat. We can’t test God to see what he would do. And we worship only God and not the bad things of the world.”
5. In **We Learn About God**, have students focus on the picture of Jesus with his disciples. “The disciples have asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. We have already learned the Hayr Mer, remember?” Pray it together. “Let’s think especially of the part about temptation.” Review the lines “Give us this day our daily bread.....but deliver us from evil.” 10 min.
6. Read “Lost Sheep” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. After clean-up, go back to page 1 and read **Let’s Talk**. Then turn to page 4, **Hearts and Hands**. Say: “We are going to learn a chant to remind us of all the good behaviors we can show during Lent and all year round. Listen to the words first; then repeat after me.” Have them stand. Teach the chant that can be recited in unison or assign sections to pairs of children. 5 min.
8. Distribute cross hand-outs. “This is a cross to be used by you during Lent. Hang it somewhere where you can see it every day. Whenever you do something that is kind or helpful to your parents, your family, your friends or someone at school, color in one of the spaces on the cross. Your kind acts will please Jesus, too.”
9. Conclude with a prayer for Lent: “Lord, help us follow you closely for the next forty days. Fill our hearts with loving feelings and our minds with loving thoughts. Help us follow you, during all the days of Great Lent and all the days of our lives.” (Email parents to have their children mount the cross and work on filling it in during Lent. Follow up periodically.) 10 min.

## Unit Three\* *Following Jesus* *The Disciples*

### Lesson

# 4

#### Key Concepts

1. Jesus chose twelve people to help him. They were called his disciples or apostles.
2. After Jesus’ death, the apostles went all over the world to preach the word of God. They chose others, in turn, to lead the church.
3. Two of the apostles, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, were sent to Armenia.

#### Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Explore the meaning of “teacher” and “student” and why Jesus needed faithful helpers.
2. Read about how Jesus called the disciples to follow him.
3. Discuss how we can be present-day disciples of Jesus and apostles of his message.

4. Name the twelve disciples.
5. Identify Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew as the apostles who went to Armenia with the Good News.
6. Review the names of important places and people in the Armenian Church today.
7. Read “Follow Me” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
8. Create a banner of Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew.

### Materials Needed

1. Copies of the illustration of Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew
2. 12" x 18" colored construction paper
3. Glue, colored pencils, crayons, markers, yarn cut in 16-inch pieces
4. Large plain index cards or card stock (see Procedure #4)

### Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then have them stand in place or in a circle to pray.
2. Once children are seated, write the words “teacher” and “student” on the board. Ask them to describe the qualities of each. “What is a teacher?” (Someone who knows things that he or she will help others know, a person with a lot of knowledge, etc.) “What is a student?” (Someone who is learning things they don’t know). Explain that today the children will be taking a closer look at how Jesus gathered students around him so that he could teach them God’s ways and then they could teach others. Distribute their lesson and read **Let’s Talk** about Jesus’ calling of disciples. 10 min.
3. Read and discuss **Listen to This**. Explore with the children different ways they can help Jesus in addition to the ways listed. Examples: You can be a good neighbor (discuss how); help the poor (discuss how), grow closer to him (in prayer, by going to church, by reading Bible stories), etc. Teach **God Speaks to Us** and review the names of the twelve disciples. Write the names in big letters on the board and have the children stand. By raising hands, each can name a disciple and then sit. 10 min.
4. Read **We Learn About God** about the roles of the new leaders of the church – the bishops and priests. In **Our Armenian Way**, review the names of your parish priest, the Diocesan Primate, and the Catholicos. You could print these names on cards or paper in large print at eye level for children to see and copy easily. These can be left on display in the classroom and a picture of each added later. (Diocesan Primate: Bishop Daniel Findikyan; Catholicos of All Armenians: His Holiness Karekin II) 10 min.
5. Read “Follow Me” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. After clean-up, say “Today we learned that Jesus sent his apostles all over the world. Two of them went to Armenia. They were St. Bartholomew and St. Thaddeus.” Teach, do not read, the text in **Hearts and Hands**.
7. Say: “Today each one of you is going to make a banner honoring St. Bartholomew and St. Thaddeus.” Distribute the construction paper and the illustrations. Help the children with the craft as follows. Hold the paper vertically. Fold the top edge of the paper about 2 inches. Put a piece of yarn under the folded part and glue the folded edge to the paper. Have them color the illustration then glue it on to the colored paper. You might want to begin preparing their banners and tying the yarn while they are coloring. Conclude with a prayer: “Lord, help

us be good disciples, faithful and true. Give us the courage and vision of St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew and all the disciples who followed you without question and changed the hearts of millions of people. Amen.”

20 min.

## **Unit Three\* Following Jesus**

### **Leaders\* St. Gregory**

## **Lesson**

# **5**

### **Key Concepts**

1. The disciples of Jesus were committed to him and his teachings despite great challenges.
2. Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity. It was declared the state religion in the year 301 A.D.
3. Holy Etchmiadzin was the first church built in Armenia. It is known as the Mother Church.

### **Objectives**

During this session, students will

1. Explore the stories of Sts. Paul and Gregory.
2. Take part in a retelling of how Armenia became a Christian nation and the building of Holy Etchmiadzin.
3. Read “Jesus Is Welcomed Like a King” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. (Read this story on Palm Sunday also.)
4. Create a stained glass window of St. Gregory.

### **Materials Needed**

1. Make copies of the figure of St. Gregory found at the end of the Teacher Manual. Trace the window frames on black construction paper and cut them out prior to class. Be sure to cut out the shapes within the frame so that the tissue pieces can be added.
2. Sheets of colored tissue paper
3. A sample of a finished window

### **Note to the Teacher**

In church today, direct children’s attention to the stained glass windows.

### **Procedure**

1. Greet the children as they enter and then have them stand in place or in a circle to pray. Ask the children if they know what “enlightener” means (someone who brings a light to our understanding, makes us see something more clearly).
2. Once children are seated, distribute lessons and read **Let’s Talk**. After reading, ask: “Who can tell me what ‘pagan’ means? Why did some of the early Armenians, especially the kings, remain pagan?” Answers might include: it’s hard to change old beliefs; it was scary for kings to think of a powerful God – after all, they thought themselves to be god-like; they wanted the people to follow them, not Jesus.
3. Say: “Close your eyes. I am going to take you back in time. Use your imaginations to think