

Grade One
We Believe Curriculum
Student Text

God and Me Together

Table of Contents

Unit One: All About God: Being Holy

1. Knowing God: The Holy Trinity
2. God Sent Us His Son
3. The Holy Spirit: Helping Us Grow In Faith
4. Sunday: The Holy Day
5. My Badarak Book
6. The Holy Book
7. The ABC's of Faith: How the Armenian
8. Alphabet Helped us Grow Closer to God

Unit Two: God & Me Together

1. God Made Me to Know Him
2. Our Special Day: Name Days
3. Spirit Gifts/Special Gifts
4. The People of the Bible Had Gifts Too
5. We Share God's Love
6. Thanksgiving
7. Home Blessing
8. Christmas

Unit Three: Jesus: Being Followers

1. Following Jesus: The Saints
2. Poon Paregantan
3. Great Lent
4. The Disciples
5. Leaders: St. Gregory
6. Easter

Unit Four: The Church Family Being Together

1. Jesus Is With Us at Church
2. We Listen to God's Word
3. We Say What We Believe
4. Peace
5. Our Gifts to God Become Jesus
6. The Church Forgives Us in God's Name
7. Let's Celebrate Our Happy Year Together!

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Unit One All About God* Being Holy Knowing God* The Holy Trinity

Lesson

1



We Speak to God

All-Holy Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, help us know you and love you. Let us be your heart and hands in the world, loving others and being the church together. In your name we pray. †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Some of you may call your grandfather Grandpa, Gramps or Medz Baba. Your mom might call him Dad or Hayrig. Your grandfather's friends may call him by his first name. Yet, he is still the same loving person – just called by different names.



Listen to This

Hasmig was seven years old. She was spending the weekend with her grandfather. She loved him very much. Often they would go fishing in the lake near her grandfather's house. One Saturday afternoon, they were fishing together when Hasmig said, "Grandpa, may I ask you a question?"

"Of course, is it about fishing?"

“No, my Sunday School teacher read a Bible story about how God created the world, and I wondered - was Jesus there, too?”

Hasmig’s grandfather waited a moment. Then he answered, “That is quite a question, my anooshig (this means “little sweet one” in Armenian). I will do my best to answer it. Yes, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were there at the Creation. Jesus carried God’s words to earth, and the Holy Spirit watched as God created the waters of the earth. In the Armenian Church, we believe that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are part of God the Father.”

Hasmig sat quietly for a few minutes, thinking about what her grandfather had told her.



God Speaks to Us

“Go to the people of all nations. Tell them to believe in God. Baptize them **in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**. Teach them everything I have taught you. I will be with you always.”

Matthew 28

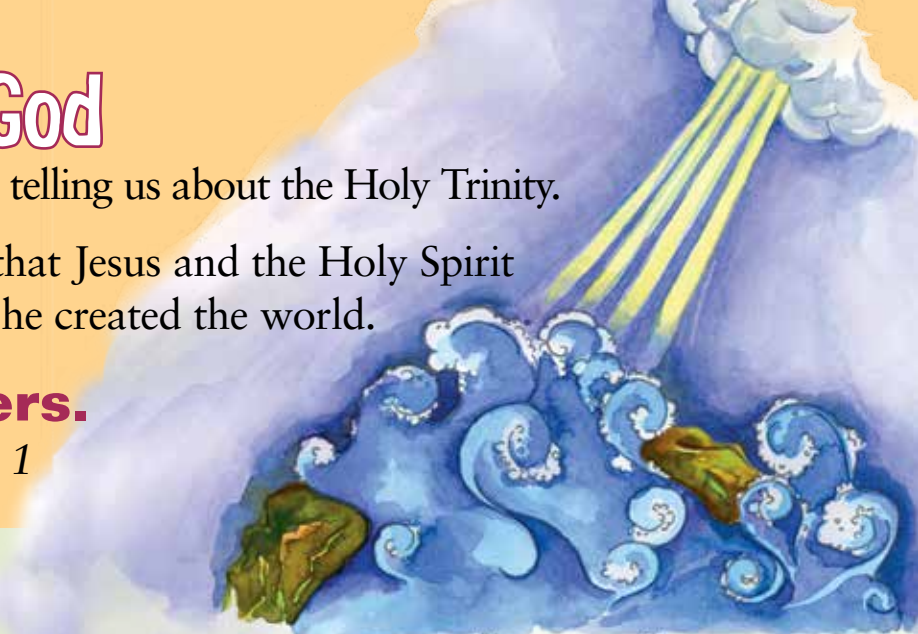
We Learn About God

Here are some stories from the Bible telling us about the Holy Trinity.

From Hasmig's story, you learned that Jesus and the Holy Spirit were there with God the Father as he created the world.

God created the waters.

Genesis 1



When you were in kindergarten, you heard a story about a man named John the Baptist who traveled through Palestine helping people to get ready for Jesus. Those who believed what John said followed him to the River Jordan where he baptized them. John also baptized Jesus in the River Jordan. At the moment of his baptism, God sent the Holy Spirit down from heaven in the form of a dove. As it flew down toward Jesus, God said:

This is my son. I love him.

Mark 1: 9-11

God was there. Jesus was there. The Holy Spirit was there.

Jesus and Peter, James, and John, his disciples, went up on a high mountain. Jesus' face was shining like the sun, and his clothes were sparkling white. Moses and Elijah appeared. They talked with Jesus. A voice from above said, "This is my Son. Listen to what he says."

Luke 9:28-36




Our Armenian Way

Before prayers and after prayers, we remember the Trinity by saying, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. +Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyrn Srpo. Amen.

Here is part of a hymn, honoring the Holy Trinity, sung during the Badarak.

Holy is the Father
Holy is the Son
Holy is the Spirit

Amen. Hayr Soorp Ամէն. Հայր Սուրբ



A - men. Hayr Soorp.
Vor - teet Soorp.
Ho - keet Soorp.

Hearts and Hands

There is only one God.

There are three persons in one God:

God the Father,

God the Son,

and God the Holy Spirit.

We call the three persons in one God the Holy Trinity.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

During the Badarak and other services, we honor the Holy Trinity in prayer and in song.

The concept of the Trinity is difficult to explain to children. With the help of the Bible, the children heard three stories in which the Holy Trinity was present — the creation of the world, the baptism of Jesus Christ, and his transfiguration.

Living Our Faith

1. At the beginning or end of a bedtime prayer, ask your child to make the sign of the cross, saying: +Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyrn Srpo. Amen. (In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.)
2. With the help of your child, hang the cross that he or she has made as a reminder of the Holy Trinity.
3. Gather twigs on a walk and make a cross for a special family member or friend.

Unit One All About God: Being Holy

God Sent Us His Son

Lesson

2



We Speak to God

Dear Father in heaven, you sent your son to teach us about kindness and love, being helpful and forgiving. Whatever we do or say, help us always ask: “What would Jesus want me to do?” †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Look at the picture. It is a picture of a _____.

A king tries to be like a father to his people. He takes care of them. He gives them rules to live by.

Jesus is also like a kind and caring father. He helps us to live our lives, making good choices and helping to make the world a better place. In the Badarak, Jesus is called the King of Glory (*Takavor Paratz*).

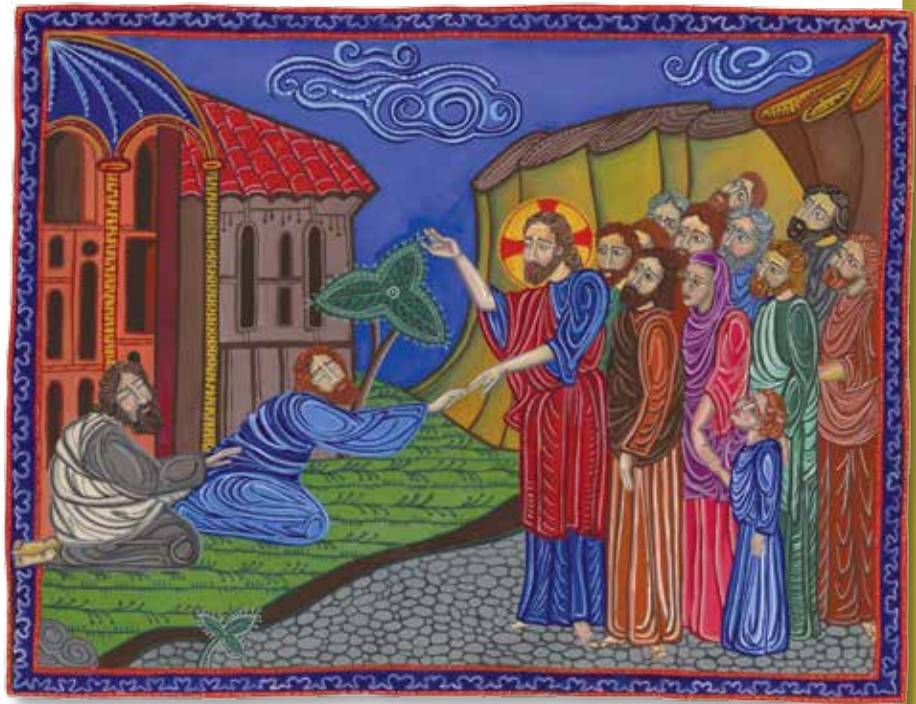
Թագաւոր Փառաց



Listen to This

Jesus was a
teacher
miracle worker
healer and
storyteller.

Jesus and the Two Blind Men
(Matthew 20:29-34)



God Speaks to Us

In Psalm 24 of the Old Testament of the Bible, God is called a glorious and all-powerful king.

God takes care of the earth and the people on it.
God will bless those who worship and serve him.
Who is this glorious king?
He is our God, the All-Powerful.



We Learn About God

We are God's children. God promised to be with us and to love us always. When people turned away from him, he did not stop loving them. He sent his son Jesus as a sign of his great love.

Jesus is God's gift to us.

Hearts and Hands

The disciples told Jesus. “We only have five fish and two loaves of bread.”



Two blind men were sitting by the side of the road. “Lord have pity on us.”



When you pray, you should pray like this, “Our Father who art in heaven.”



What would you do if you had one hundred sheep and one of them wandered off?





Our Armenian Way

In the early days of the church, the people would bring gifts of bread and wine to be used during the *Badarak* for Holy Communion. In the church today, wine is bought and bread is made by the priest. The priest blesses the gifts with the sign of the cross and puts them in a large cup or chalice. The deacon places the chalice in a niche in the wall near the main altar.

Later in the *Badarak*, the deacon takes the chalice from the niche and presents it to the priest. The deacon and the priest take turns reciting the following:

Priest: Ov eh sa takavor paratz?

Ո՞վ է սա թագաւոր փառաց:
(Who is this king of glory?)

Deacon: Sa eenkn eh takavor paratz!
(This is the king of glory!)

Priest: Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

This part of the *Badarak* is called the Presentation of the Gifts.

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Jesus was sent to remind us of God's great and unending love. While Jesus was carrying out his ministry, he was called teacher, miracle worker, healer and storyteller. In the *Badarak*, Jesus is also referred to as the King of Glory (*Takavor Paratz*).

Living Our Faith

1. Prompt your child to remember Jesus' amazing ministry by noting what a great teacher he was and then ask about what else he was (miracle worker, healer, and storyteller).
2. Your child heard some Bible stories today featuring Jesus in each of the above roles. Plan a Bible Read-Aloud time with your family using those stories (Matthew 6: 5-14; 14:13-21; 18: 10-14; 20:29-34). Ask your child to share one of these stories with a grandparent.
3. Hang up your child's picture of the Ascension. Talk with him or her about it.

Unit One All About God* Being Holy The Holy Spirit* Helping Us Grow In Faith

Lesson

3



We Speak to God

Dear God, we thank you for sending the Holy Spirit to watch over us and guide us to grow in your love.

†Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyñ Srpo.

Amen.

Soorp Hokee **Սուրբ Հոգի**

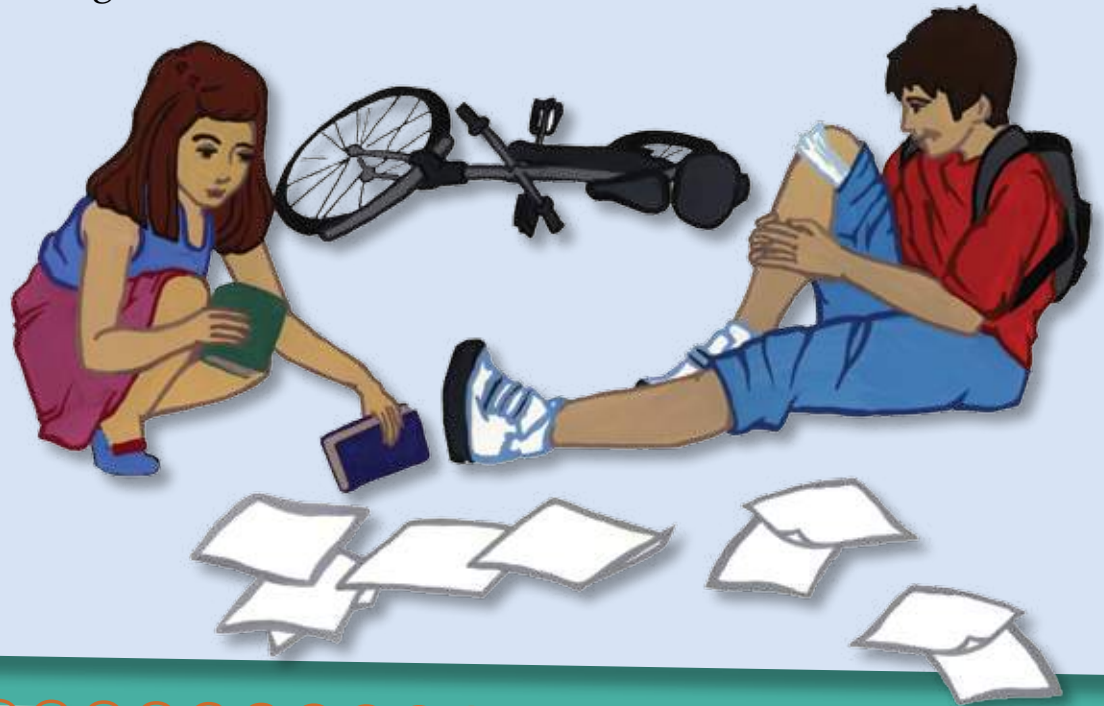
Let's Talk



The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Holy Trinity. The Holy Spirit comes to you when you are baptized and confirmed and is always with you. The Holy Spirit listens to your prayers. Pray to the Holy Spirit to fill your heart with love. Share this love with others.

Listen to This

The Holy Spirit helps you to share God's love. The Holy Spirit gives you gifts of kindness, gentleness, faithfulness and forgiveness. These are not gifts you can touch, but you can see them in the smiling face of another person. You can feel these gifts in your heart because of the happiness they bring to others.



We Learn About God

Before Jesus rose up to heaven after his crucifixion, he appeared to his disciples. He wanted them to tell others about God's love. He promised that the Holy Spirit would come to be with them always. Then he was taken up to heaven.

His followers went to Jerusalem. They prayed. They waited for the Holy Spirit to come and guide them as Jesus had done.



Early one morning, the disciples heard the sound of a strong wind. They looked around and saw flames of fire over their heads. The Holy Spirit had come as Jesus promised. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and ready to spread the word of Jesus.

From that moment, the disciples were able to speak many languages – Armenian was one of them. This day is called Pentecost. We celebrate Pentecost fifty days after Easter.



God Speaks to Us

I will ask the Father to send you the Holy Spirit who will help you and always be with you.

John 14:16

Hearts and Hands

Holy Spirit, you are with us all the time.

When we are excited or happy,

Holy Spirit, fill our  with love.

When we are lonely or sad,

Holy Spirit, fill our _____ with love.

When we feel brave or strong,

Holy Spirit, fill our _____ with love.

And when we are tired or afraid,

Holy Spirit, fill our _____ with love.



Our Armenian Way

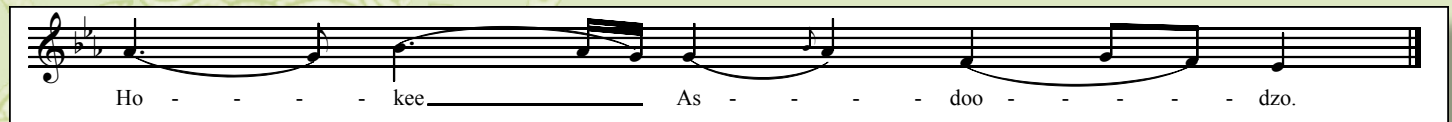
During the Badarak, the priest prays to the Holy Spirit to have the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus.

The choir sings a special hymn to the Holy Spirit. It is called Hokee Asdoodzo (Spirit of God). In this hymn, we pray to the Holy Spirit to grant rest to those members of our family who have died.



Hokee Asdoodzo

Հոգի Աստուծոյ



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today the children were introduced to the third Person of the Holy Trinity – the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit

- Helps us to carry on the work begun by Jesus and the apostles.
- Helps us to live our lives in ways pleasing to God.
- Helps us to share God's love with others.
- Helps the church to grow.
- Helps us grow in faith. Hears our prayers.

Living Our Faith

Today, your child cut out four tongues of flame, symbols of the Holy Spirit that came down upon the apostles at Pentecost. During this week, on each one write an act of kindness done by your child to a friend or family member, e.g. "I helped my grandfather rake his back yard. I helped my friend take care of his baby sister." Also put your child's first name. Send them back to Sunday School for us to post on a Bulletin Board!

Unit One All About God* Being Holy Sunday* The Holy Day

Lesson

4



We Speak to God

Thank you, God, for your gift of Sunday! Help us use this day to pray with our church family, to enjoy the warmth of our families and homes, and to rest in you. †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Կիրակի Sunday



Let's Talk

Since the early days of Christianity, Sunday has been the first day of the week. Sunday is known as God's Day or the Lord's Day.



Listen to This

Sunday is very special because... God rested after he finished the Creation.

Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday.

God Speaks to Us

God worked six days, creating the heavens and the earth.

At the end of the sixth day, he looked at what he had done and he was pleased. God had finished his work. So he made the seventh day special, and he rested.

Genesis 2:1-3



God said, "There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly." Exodus 34:21

We Learn About God

Creation is God's gift to us. Close your eyes and think about the Creation story. How can we take care of all that God has given us? How can we say thank you to God?

1. We can care for our environment:

Pick up litter.

Recycle.

Plant gardens to make the world a more beautiful place.



2. We can care for the animals:
Respect all living things.
Take care of our pets.
Hang a birdfeeder near our home.



3. We can care for others:
Respect all people.
Share God's love.
Be forgiving.

4. We can show God that we care:
Attend church services with our families to say thank you for the gifts he has given to us.

Hearts and Hands

We thank you, God!

Thank you God for

Our Armenian Way

Giragi is the Armenian word for Sunday. It means the Lord's Day.

St. Gregory, the Enlightener, wrote about the Lord's Day. He said, "On Sundays, after attending church services, we should spend the day honoring the Lord."

What do you think that means?



For My Family



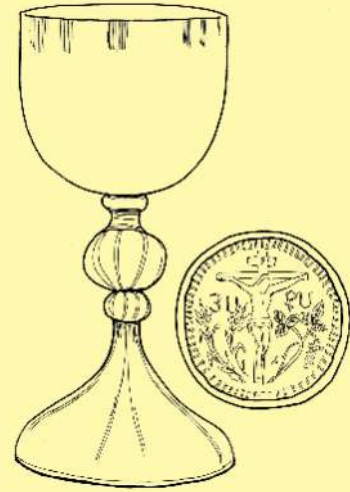
Sharing Our Faith

Our lesson today was about Sunday - Giragi. In a fourth century text, St. Gregory the Enlightener states that after attending church on Sunday, we should spend the day honoring the Lord. We discussed ways in which we can give thanks to God the Father for his gift of Creation.

Living Our Faith

1. Set up a bird feeder near a window. Go to the library. Get books to help you identify your feathered visitors.
2. Plan and plant a small indoor herb garden (parsley, basil, sage, dill) in a few pots.
3. As a family, plan ways to "keep the Sabbath holy."

My Badarak Book



Պատարագի Գիրքս

_____ Name



Fold on this line



14 The priest and deacons come down from the altar for our final prayers together. We sing “I will bless the Lord at all times.”

Fold on this line



3 The priest prepares himself to go up to the Holy Altar. We pray for him. He washes his hands and says: “I will wash my hands in innocence and will go around your altar, O Lord.”



2 Sunday is the Lord's Day. We come to church with our family and friends to celebrate what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper. Jesus promised: *"Where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them."*

Fold on this line



15 The priest gives us a blessing before we go. Then we kiss the gospel. This helps us remember to be like Jesus the rest of the week.



4 The priest goes among the people to venerate the altars, the icons and the people. We kiss the hand cross. We say: *"Remember me before the immortal lamb of God. Heesheh zees Asdoodzo annah Karin archev...."*

Fold on this line



13 We receive Holy Communion. This brings us close to Jesus and makes us strong in spirit!



12 We ask God to forgive us.
I have sinned before God.
Megha Asdoodzo.

Մէղայ Աստուծոյ

Fold on this line



5 We listen to readings from the Bible. Before the Gospel is read, we all sing:

Aseh Asdvadz!
God is speaking!



10 The priest takes the cup and says:
Arpek ee sumaneh
Արբէք ի սմանէ
Drink this all of you.
This is my blood.
Do this and remember me.

Fold on this line



7 The deacon carries the veiled chalice containing the bread and wine to the priest. This is the Great Entrance.
This is the King of Glory!
Sa eenkn eh takavor paratz!
Սա ինքն է թագաւոր փառաց:



6 Together we recite what we believe. We hold our hands together with thumbs crossed.
Havadamk
We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth...

Fold on this line



11 We get ready to receive Holy Communion. Together we sing Hayr Mer.
Հայր Մեր
Our Father
Who art in heaven...



8 Jesus wants us to live in peace with one another. We pass the Kiss of Peace.
Krisdos ee mech mer haydnetzav.
Christ is revealed among us.
Orhnyal eh haydnootyoonun Krisdosi.
Blessed is the revelation of Christ.

Fold on this line



9 We remember what Jesus said and did at the Last Supper. The priest takes the bread. He says:
Arek Gerek
Առեք Կեռեք
Take. Eat. This is my body.

Unit One All About God* Being Holy

The Holy Book

Lesson

6



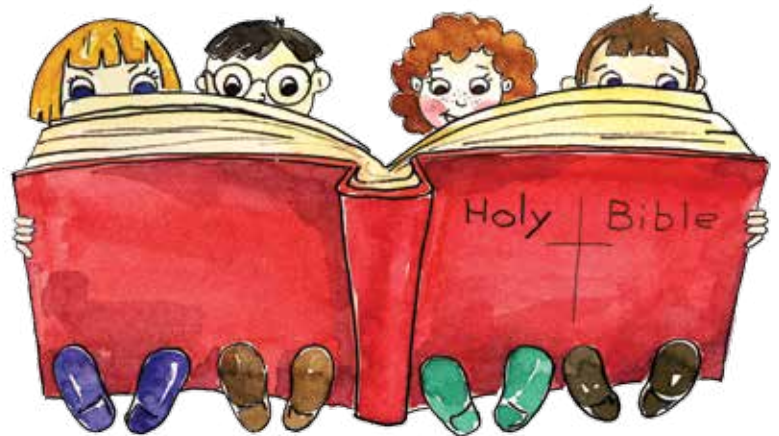
We Speak to God

Heavenly Father, what a beautiful gift you have given us in your holy word, the Bible. Open our hearts to your will for us and help us to read it often and with love. †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

*The Holy Bible, you will see,
Shares God's stories with you and me.*

*God loves us – you will agree.
How did the Bible come to be?*



God Speaks to Us

The Holy Bible consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament. In the Old Testament we hear about the beginning of the world and all that happened to the people of God.

One of the stories is about a man named Daniel who got thrown into a lion's den.





In the New Testament we read about the life of Jesus and how the church grew with the help of the Holy Spirit.

When the shepherds saw Jesus, they told Mary and Joseph what the angels told them. “A Savior is born. He is Christ the Lord.” Let’s hear the story.

We Learn About God

Jesus traveled all over Galilee preaching to the people. He talked about many wonderful things:

- love God
- help your neighbor
- have faith
- keep your promises
- give to the poor
- pray often
- and much more!

One time his disciples came to him and said, “Teach us how to pray.”

So he said to everyone, “When you pray, don’t go on and on. God knows what you want. Pray like this.”

We have said this prayer for many, many years.

Hayr Mer Հայր Մեր

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hayr mer, vor hergins yes,
hallowed be thy name.
soorp yeghitzi anoon ko.
Thy Kingdom come,
Yegestze arkayootiun ko,
Thy will be done
yeghitzin gamk ko
on earth, as it is in heaven.
vorbes hergins yev hergri.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Uzhatz mer hanabazort door mez aysor.
And forgive us our debts,
Togh mez usbardis mer,
as we forgive our debtors.
vorbes yev mek toghoomk merotz bardabanatz.
And lead us not into temptation,
Yev mi danir uzmez ee portzootiun,
but deliver us from evil,
ayl purgia ee chareh.
for thine is the kingdom
zi ko eh arkayootiun
and the power
yev zorootiun
and the glory,
yev park,
for ever. Amen.
havidians. Amen

Matthew 6: 7-13

Hearts and Hands



Սուրբ Գիրք

Soorp Keerk

Աստուածաշունչ

Asdvadzashoonch

Listen to This

The Holy Bible was written a very long time ago. It is God's story written by people who wanted to share what God had done for them. We call God's story the Holy Bible.

In Armenian, the Bible is called by two names — *Soorp Keerk* (Holy Book) and *Asdvadz – a – shoonch* (the breath of God).

Our Armenian Way

Jesus used the Hayr Mer (the Lord's Prayer) to teach us how to live our lives. From it, we learn about God's love for us, the importance of prayer, being strong in our faith, being forgiving and helpful to others.

On Sunday mornings, in churches all over the world, people recite the Lord's Prayer — the same prayer that Jesus taught to his followers. In the Armenian Church, the prayer is also recited in Armenian.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today's lesson was about the Bible. In particular, we focused on the Lord's Prayer (Hayr Mer). When Jesus taught the people and his disciples how to pray, he told them not to worry about the words they used, since God knows what's in our hearts. So he gave them and all of us a prayer we still recite today. The children made a table prayer card that can be used at home.

Living Our Faith

1. Take the prayer card your child made today and place it on the kitchen table for use at mealtime or other occasions when the family gathers.
2. Plan a family sharing time. Say to your family, "What is one thing we can do as a family to live as Jesus taught?" Discuss suggestions.
3. Cut out a paper cross with your child. Choose one of the suggestions discussed above and write it on the cross. For example, your child can write one of these words: *pray, forgive, help others*. Put the cross on a bedroom door or other prominent place.

Unit One All About God* Being Holy

How the Armenian Alphabet Helped Us Grow Closer to God



We Speak to God

Lord, thank you for the good people who helped Armenians pray in their own language long ago. Bless us always with people who dream and hope for you. Lord hear our prayer! †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Shortly after Jesus Christ was crucified and rose from the dead, two apostles of Jesus arrived in Armenia.

They were St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew. They taught everyone about Jesus. The Armenian Church is known as an apostolic church because the two apostles were sent by Jesus to preach in Armenia.



Thaddeus and Bartholomew could speak Armenian. The people could understand them, but there were no books written in Armenian letters.

How would you have felt if you met St. Thaddeus or St. Bartholomew? What questions would you ask them?

When St. Gregory baptized the King of Armenia almost two hundred years later, there was still no Armenian alphabet!

This is what “Love one another!” might look like in another alphabet.

Любите друг друга

Listen to This



Long ago there was an Armenian language but no alphabet. So even grown-ups could not write their names in their own language. There was one book that the people wanted to understand and that was the Bible.

In church they would hear the Bible in other languages.

“O Lord, let us hear your word in our own Armenian language.”

This was the prayer of the Armenian people.

With the help of Catholicos Sahag and others, a priest named Mesrob Mashdotz created an Armenian alphabet. But there were some letters missing. He prayed every night: “O Lord, give light to my mind, so that I may find the missing letters.”

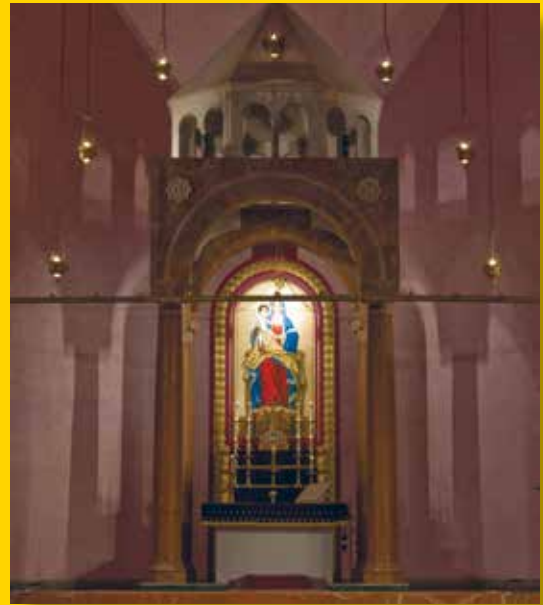
One day, his prayer was answered. St. Mesrob was half asleep and half awake. A smooth rock appeared in front of him, and a divine hand was writing the missing letters! St. Mesrob woke up and gave thanks to God.

The Bible was the first book to be translated. The prayers of the Armenian people were answered. This happened more than 1600 years ago, around 406 A.D. Both Sahag and Mesrob are saints of the Armenian Church.

God Speaks to Us

Your word is a lamp to
my feet and a light for
my path.

Psalm 119:105



We Learn About God

Those words were said long ago by someone who loved God's word.
Listen to what he said again. How does the Bible light up *your* life?

Hearts and Hands

These are the first three letters of
the Armenian alphabet: ayp, pen,
keem. This is just like saying a,
b, c! Trace them. Decorate the
letter ayp.

ա ա ա

բ բ բ

գ գ գ



Our Armenian Way

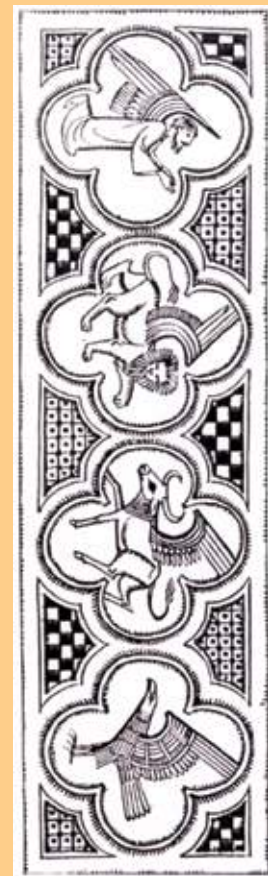
“O Lord, let us hear your word in our own Armenian language.” This was the prayer of the Armenian people. With their own alphabet, they could truly pray together in one voice. They heard the Bible in words they understood.

In the Armenian Church, we hear the Bible read to us every Sunday. We hear from the Old Testament prophets. These prophets reminded everyone how to follow God. We also hear St. Paul’s letters and other writings that tell the story of the church and how to believe.

When the stories of Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John are read, we all stand and sing. God is speaking!
Aseh Asdvadz.

Aseh Asdvadz

Ասեհ Աստված



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today, first graders learned about how Sts. Thaddeus, Bartholomew, and Gregory the Illuminator brought the good news of Jesus to Armenia. Without their own alphabet, it was hard for the people of that time to worship and understand the Bible. With the help of St. Mesrob Mashdotz, St. Sahag, and others, Armenians finally had their own alphabet in 406 A.D. The children made a gospel bookmark for use in their Bible or storybooks.

Living Our Faith

1. Get a copy of an Armenian language Bible - if you don't own one, go online or borrow one from a friend or the church - and show it to your child. Explain that this was (and still is) the everyday language of the people living in Armenia.
2. Read a Bible story together from the Gospels. Before you begin, sing *Aseh Asdvadz*.

Unit Two God & Me Together

God Made Me to Know Him



We Speak to God

Dear Father, you gave life to us and to the creatures of the earth and sky. We thank you for our special place in your creation. We promise we will love and care for the world as it is a beautiful gift! †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

God planned Creation carefully. Each day he looked at what he had done, and on the next day, he would add a new and wonderful piece to the universe – night and day, the sky and water, the sun, moon and stars, oceans, animals, the earth and humans.



God loved us so much that he chose us to care for his Creation.



Listen to This

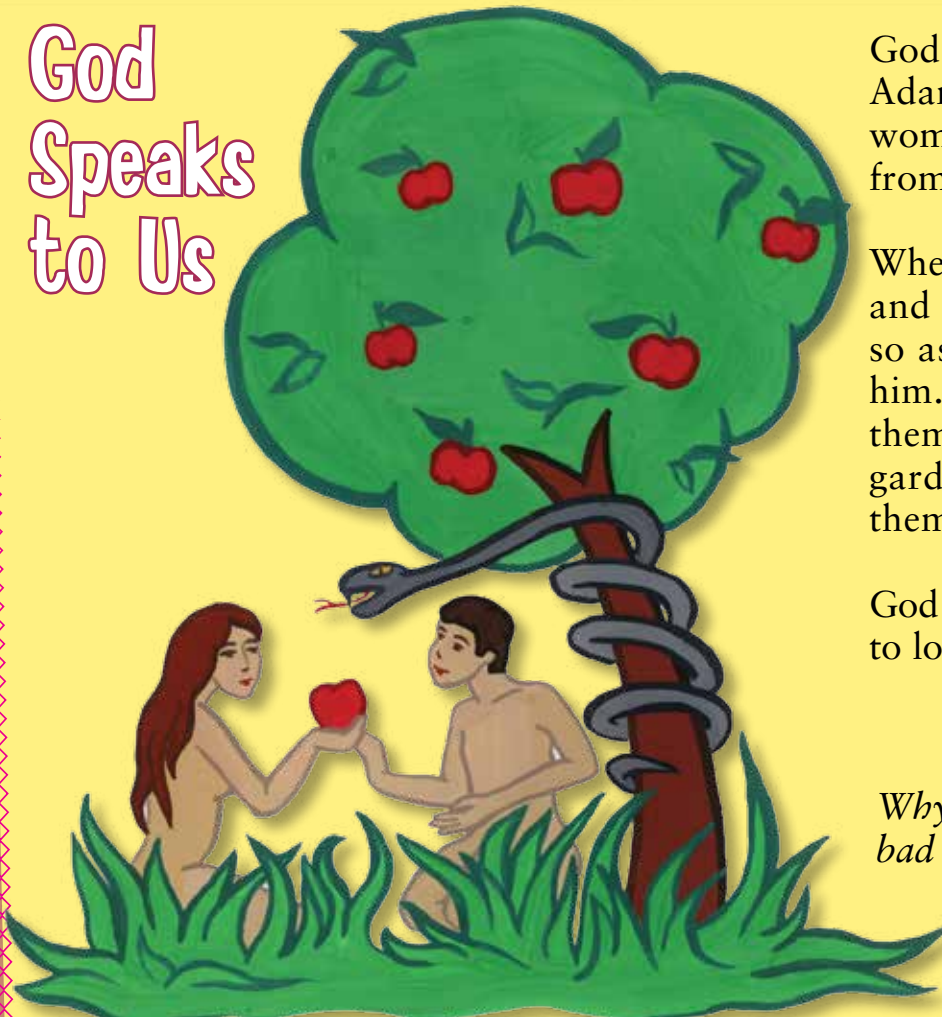
What does God ask us to do? He asks us

1. To care for others – the poor, the sick, the helpless.
2. To care for the environment.
3. To care for the animals.

Look at these pictures. How are the people taking care of God's creation?



God Speaks to Us



God made a beautiful garden for Adam and Eve, the first man and woman. He told them not to eat fruit from a certain tree, but they did.

When God came to the garden, Adam and Eve hid from him. They were so ashamed that they had disobeyed him. God looked for them and found them. He told them to leave the garden, but he never stopped loving them.

God never stops loving us. He promises to love us always.

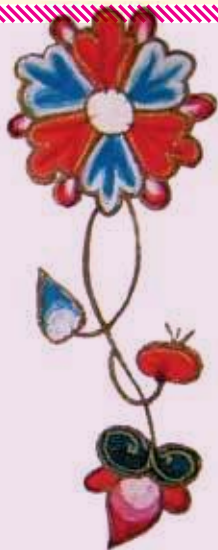
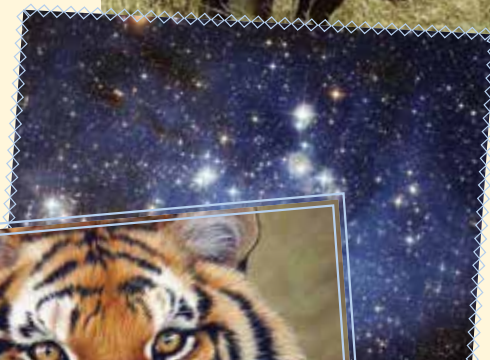
Genesis 2&3

Why do you think Adam & Eve felt bad about what they had done?

We Learn About God

In Psalm 148, we see how all of creation praises God.

Praise the Lord from the heavens,
Praise him from the heights!
Praise him, sun and moon,
Praise him, all you shining stars.
Praise the Lord from the earth,
Great sea creatures, snow and clouds...
Mountains and all hills...
Wild animals and all cattle,
Small creatures and flying birds,
People of all ages.
Let them praise the name of the Lord,
For he commanded and they were created!



Our Armenian Way

God has given us many gifts. Every Sunday at the end of Badarak, we sing a song to remind us to remember God, to sing blessings to him and to promise to use our mouths for prayer and praise.

“I will bless the Lord now and always, now and always; we will sing His praises now and always!”

Translation inspired by the CD “We Sing Armenian Church Songs” by Nvair Beylerian and the Hye Family Children’s Chorus (find it on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon Music and Apple Music)

Orh - ne - tseets uz - Der ha - me - nayn zham; ha - me - nayn zham

orh - noo - tyoon no - ra ee pe - - - ran eem.

Hearts and Hands

God made all living things in our world. He made all the animals, big and small. God said, "It is good."

Genesis
1:24-25

God Made the World.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today's lesson was a very meaningful one for the children. We learned that we will always have God's love and forgiveness and that God entrusted his creation into our loving care. Both are powerful messages.

Living Our Faith

1. Take a nature walk and talk about God's beautiful world.
2. Practice the song "Orhnetseets uzDer" together.

Unit Two God & Me Together

Our Special Day (Name Days)

Lesson

2



We Speak to God

Dear Heavenly Father, you created all the creatures of the world and helped Adam give them names. You knew us even before we were born. Thank you, God, for the gift of names! †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Your parents carefully chose a name for you. It might be the name of a saint. It might be the name of your great-grandfather or grandmother or a favorite aunt or uncle. Perhaps your parents liked a particular name, and they wanted you to have it.

It is your name. “*May you grow old with it,*” say the words of an Armenian blessing (anoonovut dzeranas).

My name is _____

I am a child of God.

Ask your parents about your name. How did they choose it?

What does it mean?



Listen to This



Many years ago, there were no calendars like the ones we use today. People used the Armenian Church calendar to remember special events in their lives. If a baby was born near the feast day of St. Vartan, the parents would choose a name from the list of names in the Armenian Church calendar for the feast day of Vartanantz. Possible names for the baby might be Khoren, Ardag, Vartan, Dajad, Vahan, Arsen or Karekin. These were all names of people who are connected with that day.



Trick question: What name might be special to the feast day of St. Stephen? (December 24, 25 or 26)

Yes! Stephen!

God Speaks to Us

So the Lord took some soil and made animals and birds. He brought them to the man to see what names he would give each of them. Then the man named the tame animals and the birds and the wild animals. That's how they got their names.

Genesis 2:19-20



We Learn About God

Through Baptism and Chrismation, we become children of God and members of our church family. We are blessed, and our names are blessed. Our name day celebrations are a way we thank God for his blessings which we enjoy every day of our lives.



Hearts and Hands

Anoonovut Dzeranas

Անունովդ ծերանաս





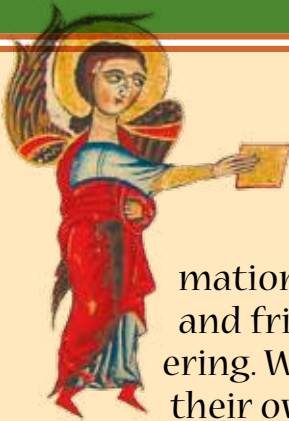
Our Armenian Way

In Armenia and other places, the family and relatives of the child celebrating his or her name day will attend church services and then gather for a family party. The party is a celebration of thanksgiving. Fruits and nuts are served as well as other treats. Oranges with candles burning in them are brought to the person whose name day it is, and sharagans and church songs are also sung.

How do you celebrate *your* birthday?

All names are special. If your name is not connected with a particular feast, then it is celebrated on the feast of All Saints Day in November or on Vartanantz.

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

The children learned today how special their names are and how they were blessed, by name, at their baptism and christening. In the Armenian tradition, Name Days are celebrated by family and friends – first, by a visit to church and then home for a family gathering. We talked about the meaning of names and the children made their own name plate that went up on a display board.

Your child may be full of questions about his or her name.

Living Our Faith

1. Tell your child how a name was chosen for him or her. This might be an opportunity to hear stories about the special person in his life for whom he might have been named.
2. With your child, make a list of a few questions about names that could be used to “interview” grandparents or other relatives. These could be simple: “Who named you? Why did you get this name? What does it mean? Do you like your name?” Bring the interview answers to your child’s teacher.
3. As part of the evening prayer, suggest that your child pray for the children of the world, asking God to bless and keep them. Remind your child that we are all a part of God’s family.



We Speak to God

Holy Spirit, Jesus promised you would teach us how to live in faith and goodness. We give thanks to you, Holy Spirit, for your special gifts. †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk



The Holy Spirit helped the church to begin.

The Holy Spirit still helps the church today.



The Holy Spirit can give us courage and joy.

The Holy Spirit helps us understand God better.

The Holy Spirit helps us to share God's love with others.



Listen to This

Pray to the Holy Spirit (Soorp Hokee) for his special gifts:

When I am sad or lonely,

*Holy Spirit, fill my heart
with love.*

When I am tired or afraid,

*Holy Spirit, fill my heart
with peace*

When I feel helpless and have questions

Holy Spirit, fill my heart with faithfulness.

When I am angry,

Holy Spirit, fill my heart with patience.

Unıpp ʒnqı



God Speaks to Us

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22

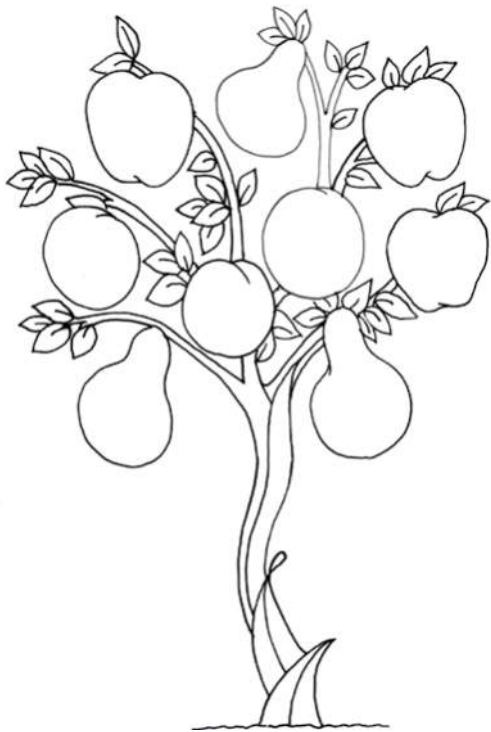
We Learn About God

Think about a time when the Holy Spirit filled your family with joy and excitement.



Hearts and Hands

Fruit of the Holy Spirit



The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22



Our Armenian Way

The Holy Spirit is with us during the baptism service. The priest prays over the font (avazan).

For the coming down of the gifts of the Holy Spirit together with this oil, let us pray to the Lord.

He asks God to send down the gifts of the Holy Spirit to the baby who is being baptized. The priest pours holy oil into the font, making the shape of a cross, and the baby is gently placed into the font.



Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-control

These are some of your gifts from the Holy Spirit. Live your lives sharing God's love; have faith, be joyful, kind and respectful. The world will become a better place when we care for each other.

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

At baptism, the priest prays to God to send the gifts from the Holy Spirit to the baby. These are "fruit" of the Spirit that the children learned from Galatians 5:22: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The children discussed these and the special joy they have experienced in their families.

The Holy Spirit continues the work of Jesus, and it is with the gifts of the Holy Spirit that the children will grow in the church and become responsible citizens of the world.

Living Our Faith

1. Help your child understand the meaning of the fruit of the Spirit by using family or school situations to define them further. As a class, we discussed the subject of joy.
2. Think together about how these gifts are manifested in family life:
 - Solving a quarrel between siblings
 - Finding a solution to a problem
 - Being patient with one another
 - Performing an act of kindness

Unit Two God & Me Together

The People of the Bible Had Gifts Too**We Speak to God**

Father in heaven, help us to see your light as it shines through the lives of the people of the Bible. And help us to use our gifts from the Holy Spirit to help others.
 †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyv Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

The Holy Bible is filled with stories about people who lived thousands of years ago. They heard the voice of God and spent their lives sharing their gifts of faith with others. Turn the page to hear about just a few of them!



Listen to This



Moses was a man who listened to God's voice and followed his instructions. With the help of God, he convinced Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave Egypt.



Esther was a young woman from Israel who became queen of Persia. She never forgot her people even though she was queen of another country. She helped her people survive at a time when they were in danger.



David was a young man chosen by God to become one of the greatest kings of Israel. He wrote many psalms and prayers, all showing his love and respect for God.



Mary Magdalene suffered from an illness. When she met Jesus, she was cured and became a devoted believer and follower. She was one of the women at the foot of the cross when Jesus was crucified.



Lydia was a businesswoman. She sold expensive purple cloth to the rich. She listened to St. Paul and became a believer in Jesus Christ. She and her family were baptized, and her house was used as a small church.

I used my gifts from the Holy Spirit to glorify God. Who am I?

I was one of God's prophets. I went to the Pharaoh of Egypt and told him that God wanted him to let my people leave his country. _____

I asked St. Paul to baptize my family and me. My small house was used as a church.

I wept for Jesus at the foot of the cross. _____

I was a woman from Israel married to the King of Persia. I begged the king, my husband, to protect my people who were in danger, and he did. _____

My love for God was great. I wrote many prayers and songs about him. _____

How can I use my gifts to glorify God?

God Speaks to Us

Such a large crowd of witnesses is all around us. We must be determined to run the race ahead of us. We must keep our eyes on Jesus who leads us and makes our faith complete.

Keep your mind on Jesus. Then you won't get discouraged and give up.

Hebrews 12:1-3



We Learn About God

Witnesses are those people who accepted Jesus, even those already in heaven. They are watching over you, praying that you will be strong and will not get discouraged.

THE RACE

Witnesses

We have gone before and will witness your journey with Jesus.

Followers

We will grow in faith.

We will not get discouraged.

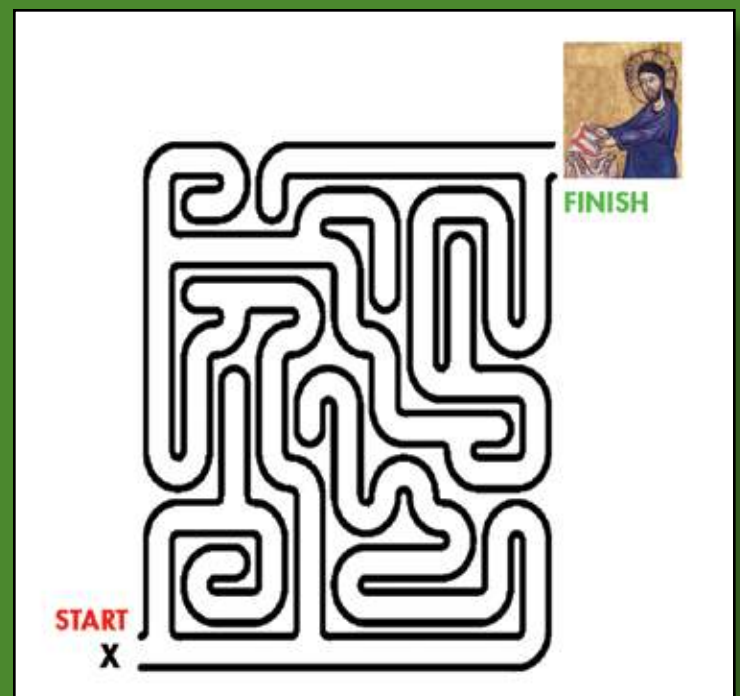
We will not give up.

We are the faithful.

We will run the race!

Hearts and Hands

Work on the full-size maze your teacher will give you. At the X, draw a small picture of yourself and begin your journey to Jesus Christ.



Our Armenian Way

Intercessions (Hee-sha-da-goo-tyoon-ner) are the prayers that we say for others.

During every badarak, the priest prays for all people, young and old, who have lived and died as faithful Christians.

He prays for world peace; for the Armenian Church, the Catholicos and the clergy; for the poor, for travelers, for prisoners, for the sick and suffering. He prays for good weather to produce plentiful crops to feed the hungry.

This is the time when we, too, can share with our heavenly father any concerns or cares we might have.

Be mindful, Lord, and have mercy.

Յիշեալ Տէր

Heeshya Der yev voghormya.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today, the children talked about special people of the Bible and the gifts they used to glorify God. We talked about how each one of us can glorify God as well.

During our Badarak every Sunday, the priest prays not only for the Armenian Church and the welfare of its people but for other people as well. These prayers are called "Intercessions."

Living Our Faith

We discussed a special Bible passage today – Hebrews 12:1-3. The image is that of a race with Jesus Christ as the leader. We, the followers, are being encouraged by all those who have borne witness to faith, never to give up or get discouraged.

1. Attend church with your child. In the Badarak book, follow the list of those remembered in the Intercessions.
2. Love and kindness are two of the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit. Suggest that your child plan a very special birthday party. Instead of presents, the guests can bring canned goods for a food pantry, a gift for a child in a shelter or children's books, gently used or new. There is joy in giving.

Unit Two God & Me Together

We Share God's Love

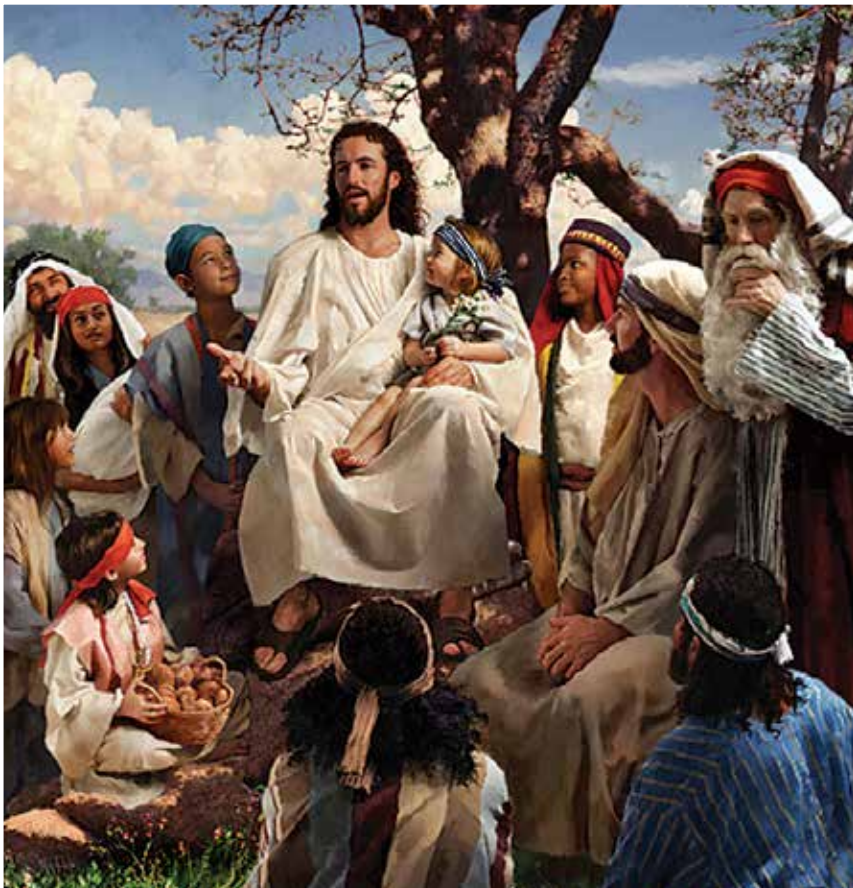
Lesson

5



We Speak to God

Dear Heavenly Father, help us grow in faith. Let us always love one another as you remind us to do in the Kiss of Peace. †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.



Let's Talk

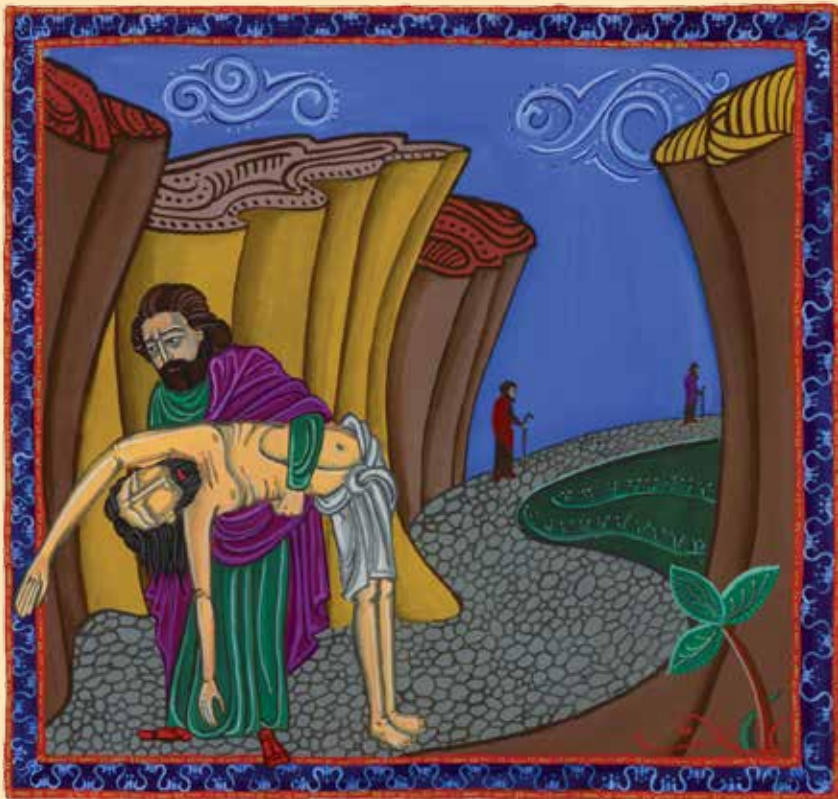
God loves us very much.
How do we know that?

God sent his son Jesus to us.

Jesus spent his life on earth loving, caring and teaching about his father in heaven. He taught us to love God and to love, respect and care for one another.

Can you think of a story that Jesus told about caring and love?

Listen to This



*The Good Samaritan
Luke 10:30-37*

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:37,39)

This is known as the Great Commandment.

How can we show God that we love him?

We can try to do those things that will please him.

We can pray. It is our way of talking to God. He listens to our prayers.



God Speaks to Us

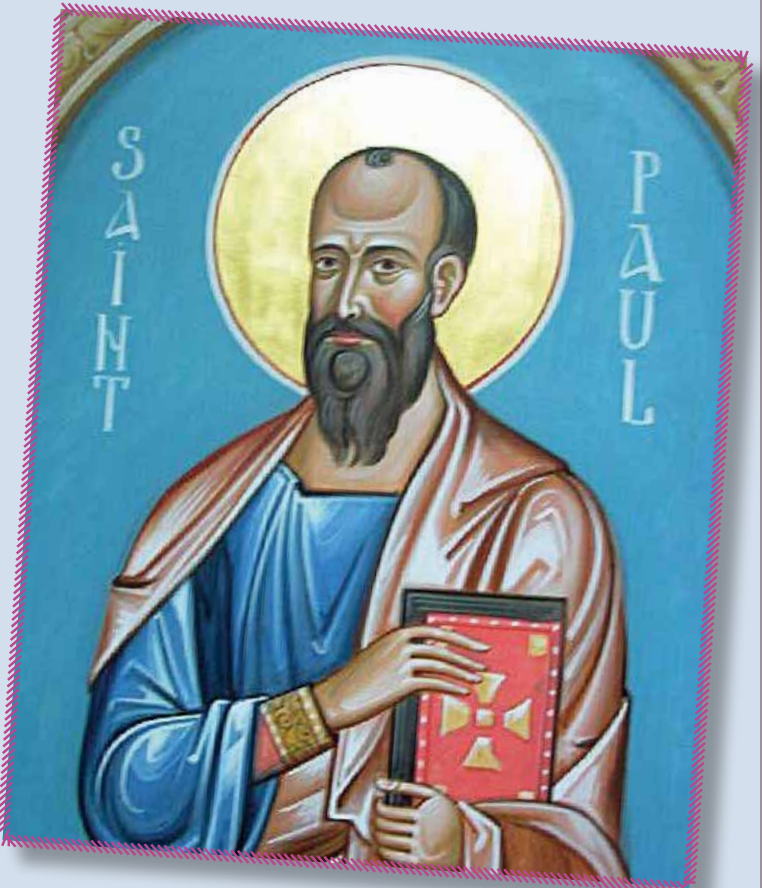
St. Paul wrote in a letter:

“Good-by, my friends. Do better and pay attention to what I have said. Try to get along and live peacefully with each other.

I pray that God, who gives love and peace, will be with you. Greet each other with a holy kiss. All of God’s people send their greetings.

I pray that the Lord Jesus Christ will bless you and be kind to you! May God bless you with his love and may the Holy Spirit join all your hearts together.”

2 Corinthians 13:11-13



Hearts and Hands

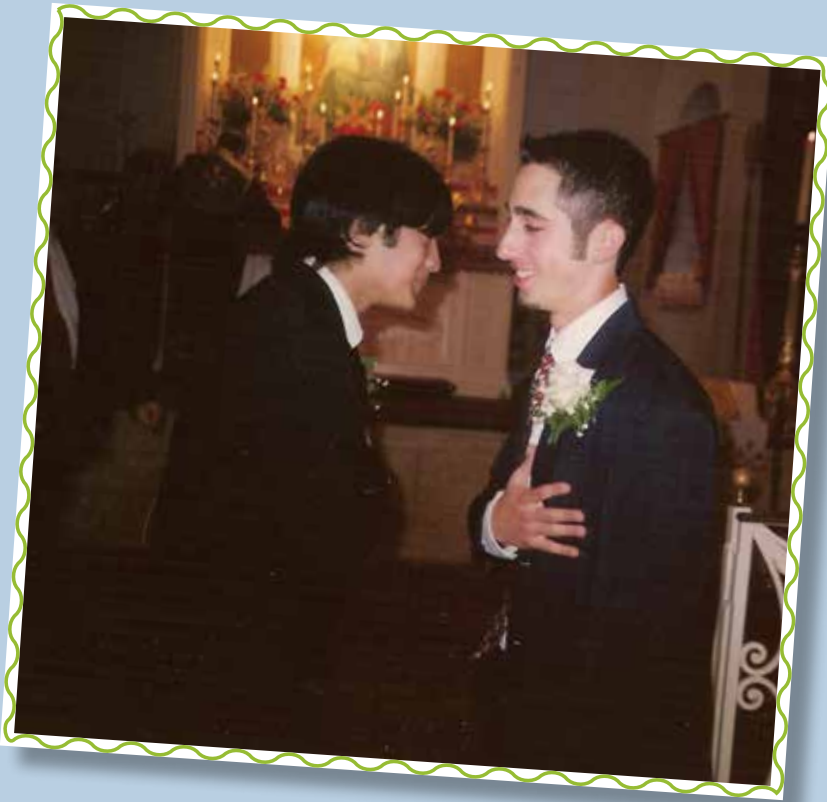
To share the Kiss of Peace, move your head to your left and then to your right over the shoulder of the person being greeted. Say: “Kreesdos ee mech mer haydnet sav” which means “Christ is revealed among us.” The answer is “Orhnyal eh haydnootyoonun Kreesdosee” which means “Blessed is the revelation of Christ.”

Our Armenian Way

Since early times, wherever Christians have gathered, they have greeted one another with “a holy kiss.” The Kiss of Peace, during the Badarak, is the holy kiss. It is a sign of our great love for Jesus.

Քրիստոս ի մէջ մեր յայտնեցաւ:
Kreesdos ee mech mer haydnetsav.
Christ is revealed among us.

Օրհնեալ է յայտնութիւնն
Քրիստոսի:
Orhnyal eh haydnootyoonun
Kreesdosee.
Blessed is the revelation of Christ.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Our lesson today was about God’s love for us. He sent his son Jesus to tell us about his father’s love and his desire to be with us always. In early times, Christians greeted each other with a “holy kiss” of friendship. This has found its way into our Badarak. Every Sunday we pass the Kiss of Peace to show our unity and love of Jesus.

Living Our Faith

1. Share with your child the different ways we can pray, as a way of expressing our love for God.
 - Pray by yourself, using your own words.
 - Pray with your family.
 - Pray with your friends and your church family.
2. With your child compose a prayer for the peace of the world.
3. Practice the Kiss of Peace with your child.

Unit Two God & Me Together

Thanksgiving



We Speak to God

Dear Father in heaven, we give thanks to you for all that you have given us and especially for your Son, Jesus Christ. Thanksgiving Day is a special day of thanks, but help us to live every day in thankfulness! †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyv Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

You get up in the morning to get ready for school. You eat breakfast, grab your lunch and off you go to wait for the school bus. Or perhaps a parent drives you to school or you walk with friends.

When you wake up, do you remember to thank God for all he has given you?

What could you thank him for?





Listen to This

In 1620, a group of people made a very long journey from England to Plymouth, Massachusetts on a boat called the Mayflower. They left England because they wanted to worship God

in their own way. One hundred and one men, women and children made a sixty-six day journey to a new world. It was winter when they arrived. So they decided to spend the winter on board the ship.

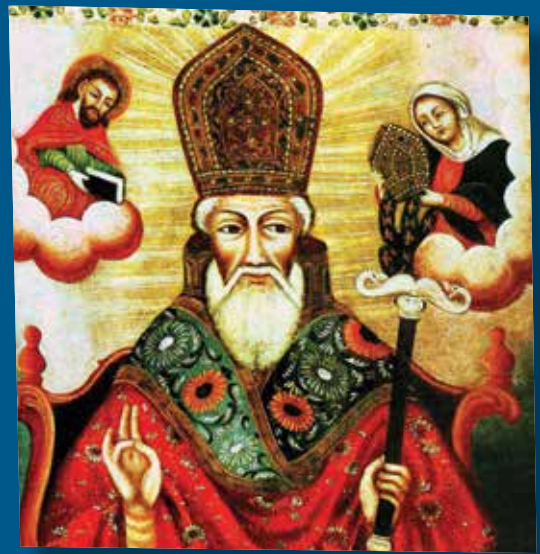
In the spring, they left the boat to begin planting seeds. A Native American named Squanto came into Plymouth one day. He saw that the Pilgrims needed his help. He taught them how to fish and how to plant. He helped them to explore the land.

When the Pilgrims harvested their crops, they celebrated along with Squanto and other Native Americans. They gave thanks, feasted and played games. The Pilgrims called it the Harvest Feast. Later the name of the feast was changed to the holiday we know as Thanksgiving.

God Speaks to Us

“You were chosen to live together in peace. So let the peace that comes from Christ be with you always. Let the message about Christ completely fill your lives, while you use all your wisdom to teach and instruct each other. With thankful hearts, sing psalms and hymns to God. Whatever you say or do should be done in the name of the Lord Jesus, as you give thanks to God the Father.”

Colossians 3:15-17



We Learn About God

Every day, we should give thanks to God for all the things he has given us. Who said thank you to God? Can you guess?

- 1 Thank you, God, for keeping my family safe during the flood.
- 2 Thank you, God, for rescuing me from the lion's den.
- 3 Thank you, God, for letting me give birth to Jesus, the Savior of the world.
- 4 Thank you, God, for helping me bring the teachings of Jesus to Armenia.
- 5 Thank you, God, for letting Simeon and me see the baby Jesus in the temple.

Answers to choose from: St. Gregory, Daniel, Noah, Anna, Mary



Hearts and Hands



Our Armenian Way

During the Badarak or Eucharist (which means “thanksgiving”), the congregation expresses their thanks to God through songs and prayer. We especially thank God for sending his Son, Jesus Christ, who gave us a new way of living so that we could grow closer to God.

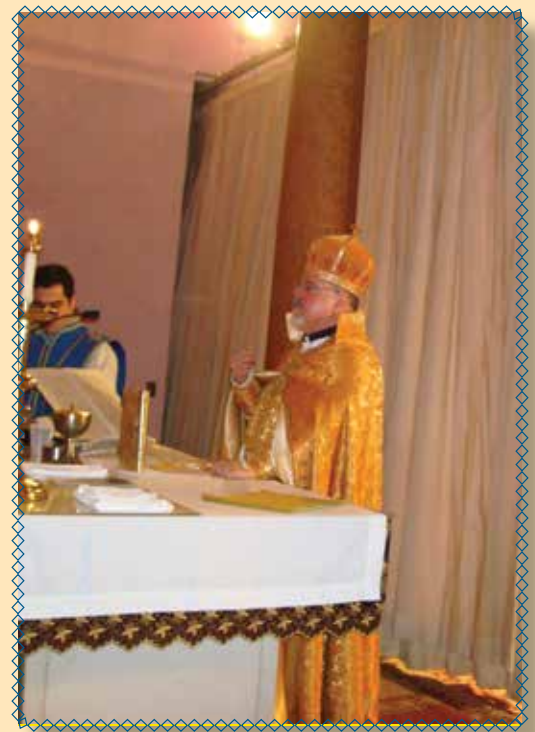
After Holy Communion, behind the closed curtain, the priest puts some extra Holy Communion in a container to take to the sick. He cleans the chalice and says a prayer of thanks to the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit.

Kohanamk uzken, Hayr Amenagal. We thank you, Father Almighty, for our holy church. Alleluia.

Kohanamk uzken, Kreesdos Takavor. We thank you, Christ our King, for your mercy and forgiveness. Alleluia.

Kohanamk uzken, Hokeet Jushmareed. We thank you, Spirit of Truth. Keep our Holy Church safe forevermore. Alleluia.

While the priest recites this prayer of thanksgiving, the choir sings the Hymn of Thanksgiving.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Live in peace and with thankful hearts, sing psalms and hymns to God. (Colossians 3:15-16)

Today, the children learned about giving thanks to God for sending his son Jesus to teach us about mercy and forgiveness. They also learned about the Thanksgiving celebrated by the Pilgrims and shared with the Native Americans. As class ended, we made a poster of all the people and things we are thankful for.

Living Our Faith

1. Design “thank you” stationery.
2. Help your child write a note of thanks to a member of your church family, e.g. parish priest, parish council chair, choirmaster, organist, deacon, Sunday School superintendent.



We Speak to God

Heavenly Father, thank you for making our homes holy places where families honor and love you and one another. Help us keep our homes always holy. †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Did you know that all Armenian churches are blessed? A bishop or archbishop comes to perform the blessing. Holy Muron is used in the church blessing. Foundation stones are blessed. Walls of the church are blessed. A small, blessed stone cross from Holy Etchmiadzin is placed near the Holy Altar.

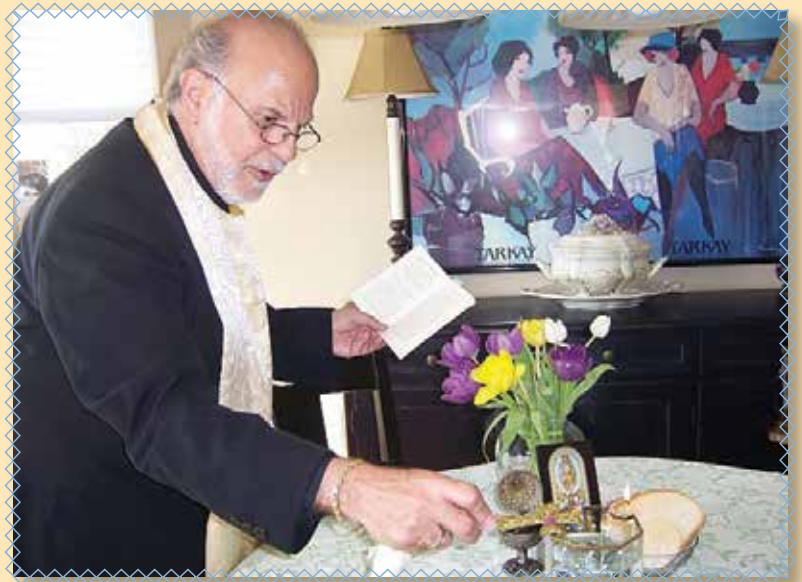
We are God's family, and we gather in his blessed home to worship him.



Listen to This

Beside the church, there is another place where God is honored by loving and caring people: our own home! As Christians, we know our homes are holy places, too, and invite the priest to bless them every year, often at Christmas or Easter. With this home blessing, we welcome God into our home to be a part of our family.

My home is a special place because _____



God Speaks to Us

I pray to you, Lord!
Think of my prayer
as sweet-smelling incense,
and think of my lifted hands
as an evening sacrifice.

Psalm 141:2



We Learn About God

After the resurrection of Jesus, the early Christians met secretly to worship in caves and other hidden places. They also gathered in temples and homes to preach and teach about Jesus and to pray with the help of the Holy Spirit. So, from early times, the home was important as a place to honor the Son of God.



Every day they spent time in the temple and in one home after another. They never stopped teaching and telling the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.

Acts 5:42

Our Armenian Way

Throughout the year, Armenian homes are blessed. They are blessed most often at Christmas and Easter. A family, moving into a new home, contacts the priest to come for a home blessing.

The family provides a slice of bread, a glass of water and a small dish of salt on a tray. These three things are known as life-giving gifts from God.

Der Hayr and a deacon come to the home with incense, an incense burner and a wafer or nushkhar.



The priest blesses the incense (khoong).

The burning incense and the smoke rising are our prayers on their way to God. In church, the priest and deacon use the censer (poorvar) to cense the congregation and holy objects.

The priest blesses the bread (hatz).

We need bread to provide our bodies with nourishment. During the Badarak, we remember the Last Supper. We believe that the bread becomes the body of Jesus Christ.



The priest blesses the water (choor). Like bread, water is necessary for life. Water also reminds us of our own baptism in holy water.

The priest blesses the salt (agh). Salt provides flavor to our food. Jesus called his followers “the salt of the earth.” Because each one of us is different, we can make the world a better place. Like adding salt, we can add our own special flavor to the world – our faith, our hope, our acts of

kindness, our love for other people and animals, our own ideas.

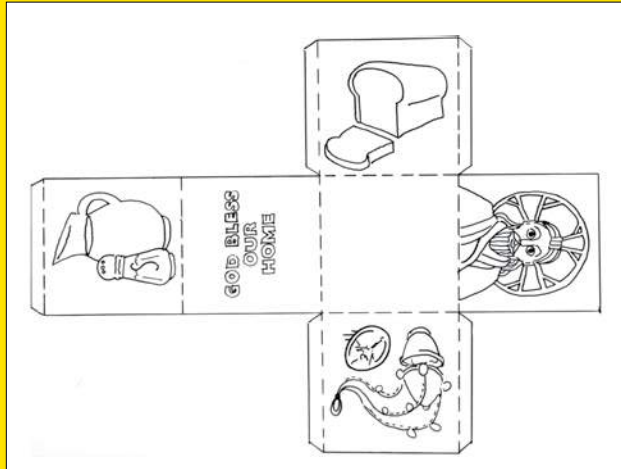
The priest asks God to continue to provide the family with the gifts of bread, water and salt. He also asks God to bless and keep the family and grant them good health.

When the service is finished, the priest leaves the wafer (nushkhar) for the family. The family usually places the wafer in a jar of rice, flour, or lentils (or other grain). This is done as a way of asking God to keep these grains always in supply for the family to use.

Amen Alleluia

A - - - - men. Al - le - lu - - - - ia,
al - - le - lu - - - - ia, al - le - - - - lu - ia.

Hearts and Hands



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today the children learned about the Armenian tradition of church blessing and house blessing. After this lesson, your child may want to have your home blessed. Traditionally, this is done at Christmas and Easter. Other times can be arranged.

Living Our Faith

1. Your child will bring home a "Home Blessing Cube" made in class today. Ask your child about it; place it on your kitchen or dining room table.
2. Call your pastor to arrange an appointment for a home blessing.
3. Encourage your child to take an active role in the home blessing. Ask your pastor to assign a task to him/her.
4. Some other blessings in the Armenian tradition include Blessing of the Grapes, the Blessing of the Water and Blessing of the Field. These can be witnessed by your family on Assumption Day, Armenian Christmas, and Exaltation, respectively.



We Speak to God

Heavenly Father, you gave us the gift of hope - your Son. Help us prepare to remember his birth with great joy. May Christmas be filled with the real reason for the season - Jesus! †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Advent means “coming.” It is a period of 50 days before Christmas when we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Son of God, Jesus. We fast, pray, read the Bible and attend church.

God promised us he would send his son, Jesus, and we prepare for him.





Listen to This

Armenians celebrate Christmas and Jesus' baptism on one day — January 6. Most Christian churches celebrate Christmas on December 25. *Why?*

A pagan feast, called the Birth of the Sun, was celebrated on December 25. The church fathers in Rome wanted the people to forget this feast and to remember the birth of Christ. So the date for Christmas was changed from January 6 to December 25.

The Armenian Church continues to celebrate Christmas and the Baptism of Jesus on January 6. But all Christians celebrate the season together!

God Speaks to Us

There was a law that everyone had to return to his or her own hometown to be listed in the record books of that town. Mary went with Joseph to Bethlehem, his hometown. She was going to have a baby; and while they were there, she gave birth to her first-born son. He was born in a stable because there was no room at the inn.

The shepherds on the hills heard angels say, “I have good news for you which will make everyone happy. This very day in Bethlehem a Savior was born. He is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2

We Learn About God

We give gifts to those we love. Name some things that you treasure. Would you ever give one of your treasures as a gift?

David was six years old. It was his father's birthday. He did not have any money to buy a gift. He thought and thought. What could he give his father?

He went to his box of treasures that he kept under his bed.

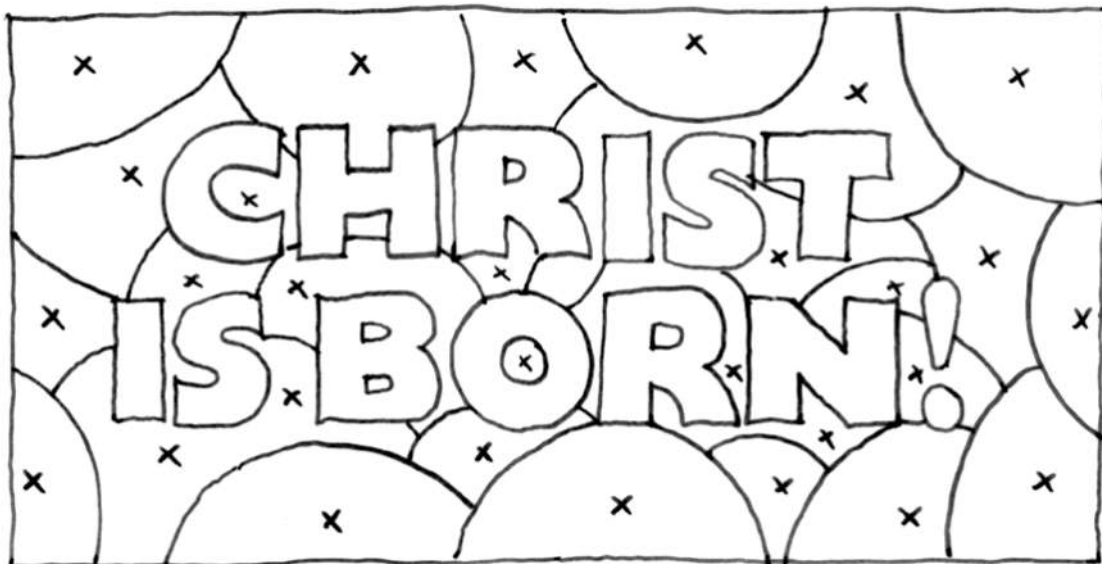


He opened the box. There he saw the blue feather he found in the backyard, the sparkling red ribbon from a Christmas box, the stickers his aunt had sent to him, the white rock with the shiny speckles he found at the beach, his tennis ball. He decided what it would be. The special gift would be the white rock with its glistening specks. David brought it and put it in his father's hand. What do you think his father said to him?

- God loves us. He gives us gifts. What are some of the gifts God has given to you?
- God's greatest gift to us is Jesus Christ, his Son. What can we say to God? How can we thank him?

Hearts
and
Hands

Kreesdos
dzunav!



Our Armenian Way

The baptism of Jesus Christ is celebrated on the same day as Armenian Christmas, January 6. At the end of the Christmas Badarak, a special service is held to remember the baptism of Jesus Christ in the River Jordan. It is called Churorhnek (the Blessing of Water).



Water is poured into a bowl. A cross is placed in the water to remind us of the baptism of Jesus. Holy Oil (Muron) is poured into the water from a dove-shaped vessel to remind us that the Holy Spirit was sent by God and was present at the baptism. At the end of the service, the priest removes the cross from the water and gives it to a member of the congregation chosen as the godfather of the cross.



The congregation comes forward to kiss the cross and to receive some of the Holy Water. They can drink the water or take it home.

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Our lesson for the day was Armenian Christmas and the special service called Churorhnek (the Blessing of Water). Both are celebrated on the same day – January 6.

Living Our Faith

God loved us so much that he gave us his Son. What can we do to show him our love?

1. Work on a family project. Collect used greeting cards. Cut out the pictures and make a collage for a local nursing home, hospital or senior family member.
2. With the cards that depict birds, make a Holy Spirit mobile. Tie the cut-outs individually with string or ribbon and hang it on a clothes hanger or branch.
3. Think of the parents and children who have very little in the way of clothing or toys. Every six months, organize a clothing and toy drive.

Let it be a time of joyous giving.

Unit Three Following Jesus

The Saints



We Speak to God

Dear Heavenly Father: Help us follow the example of your special believers, the saints. Help us to make the same good choices in our lives every day, just as they did.

†Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.



Let's Talk

There are many saints in the Armenian Church. During the Badarak, we remember some of them by name.

Why is a person called a saint?

Do you think that these saintly men and women never had any problems? What did they do? When their hearts were troubled, and they faced serious decisions, they prayed. They looked to God for help, and God heard their prayers.

Listen to This

Mrs. Ashjian's first grade class studied the life of St. Vartan Mamigonian. They were very excited about the play they were going to present to the Sunday School. "Who can tell me one thing about the life of this great saint?" she asked. The students raised their hands eagerly to volunteer.



Ani said, "I know. His teacher was his grandfather, Catholicos Sahag. He created the Armenian alphabet along with St. Mesrob."

Aram said, "St. Vartan led the Armenian army in a war so the Armenian people could worship God and not the sun and fire."

The class began to chatter about who was going to play the part of Vartan until finally their teacher said, "No more discussion now. Parts will be assigned next Sunday."

Miriam and her friend Susan were whispering to each other. Miriam raised her hand, "Mrs Ashjian, were there any women in this army?"

"Well, there might have been. But there was certainly a woman who taught Vartan Mamigonian and his two brothers to live their lives as true Christians. That woman was St. Vartan's mother.

Cross out every other letter starting with the 'X', and you will find her name. Write it on the line below.

S/X/A/O/H/P/A/M/G/J/A

Y/N/U/O/C/O/Q/S/B/H/F

S _____

God Speaks to Us

Our Lord Jesus will come again with all his saints. Remember and live your lives in ways pleasing to God the Father.

1 Thessalonians 3:13

We Learn About God

Long, long ago, Armenians were trying hard to live in ways pleasing to God. But they had a big problem! It was the year 451 A.D. and the fire-worshipping Persians and the Christian Armenians were about to fight a religious war. Why?

The Persian king ordered all the Christians under his rule to give up their religion and worship the sun and fire. Ghevont Yerets, a priest, called a special meeting. He invited Vartan because he needed his help to get the Persians out of Armenia. A letter was sent to the Persian king.



Hearts and Hands



Our religion is not like a coat that we can put on and take off. It is a part of our blood and bones. We will serve you loyally in your army and pay your taxes if you will leave us alone. If you force us, we are willing to suffer and to die. There is no power on earth that can separate us from Jesus and make us change our religion.

What do you think the Persian king did when he read this letter?

Our Armenian Way

The Persian king sent an army of about 220,000 soldiers to Armenia to make the people change their minds about being Christian. The Persian army even had elephants.

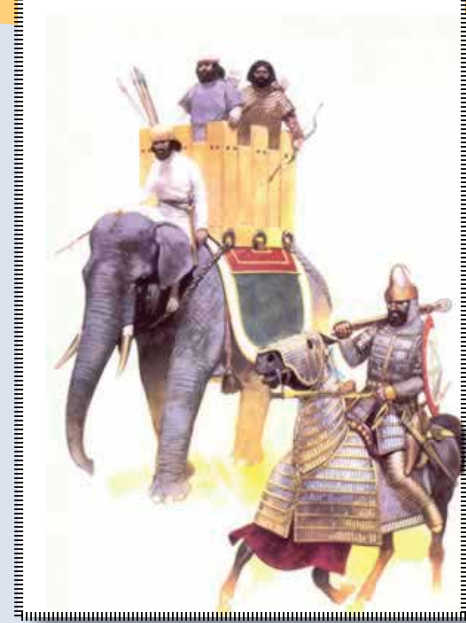
The day before the battle, the Armenian soldiers spent the night in prayer. Leading them were Catholicos Hovsep, the priest Ghevont and General Vartan Mamigonian. At dawn, the soldiers received Holy Communion.

The band of Armenian fighters, 66,000 of them, stood on the field of Avarayr near Mt. Ararat with their leader General Vartan.

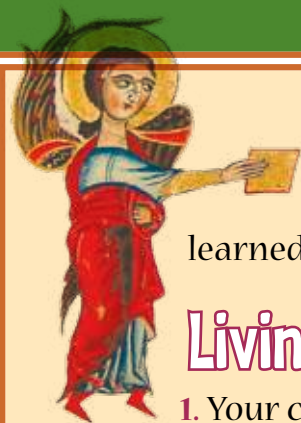
He led the men across as he rode on his white horse. At one point, he found himself surrounded by a circle of elephants. An arrow struck him, and he died. The battle lasted only one day and there were great losses on both sides. Still the Armenians did not give up their Christian faith.

Thirty years later, Vartan's nephew Vahan Mamigonian made a treaty with the Persians which granted the Armenians full religious freedom.

1. What was the most exciting part of the story about the Battle of Avarayr?
2. Did Vartan really lose the battle?



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

This morning, we discussed what makes a saint a saint. The children learned about St. Vartan. You can read his inspiring story on this page.

Living Our Faith

1. Your child made a shield. On it, are symbols honoring Vartan, his soldiers and the Battle of Avarayr. Discuss the story of St. Vartan and the symbols your child chose.
2. Next time you're in church with your child, notice one of the stained glass windows that depict a saint and talk about it.

Unit Three Following Jesus

Poon Paregentan



We Speak to God

Thank you, God for the beautiful world and everything in it! Praise God for the sun, the moon and the stars! †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.



Let's Talk

This is an amazing story! In six days, God created...

Day and night.

The sky.

The land, the ocean, the plants and trees.

The sun, the moon and the stars.

The creatures in the sea and the birds in the sky.

The wild and tame animals and the reptiles.

God finished his work, and on the seventh day, he rested. He looked at what he had done and was pleased.

The story of the Creation appears in the first chapter of the first book of the Bible. This book is called Genesis and means “the beginning of things.”

Listen to This

God created the earth. He made it for all of us. It is up to us to take care of it. What are some ways we can take care of God's beautiful creation?

God Speaks to Us



God made a garden in a place called Eden. He took a handful of soil and breathed life into it, making the first person who would take care of the garden. God called this creature "Adam." He told Adam that he could eat fruit from any tree in the garden except the one that would teach him about good and evil.

"It is not good that a person should live alone." So the Lord made animals and birds. He brought them to the man so he could name them. Then God decided to create a companion to the man. He took a bone from Adam's ribs and created a companion. When he brought her to the man, the man said, "Here is someone like me. I will name her woman."

They lived happily in the garden.

We Learn About God



The first graders were chattering like little birds about the Poon Paregentan celebration to take place the next Sunday. They remembered that this was a day of fun and lots of food. Their teacher told them they could wear costumes, and they were going to make masks!

Mrs. Markarian began to explain this special day of Good Living called Poon Paregentan.

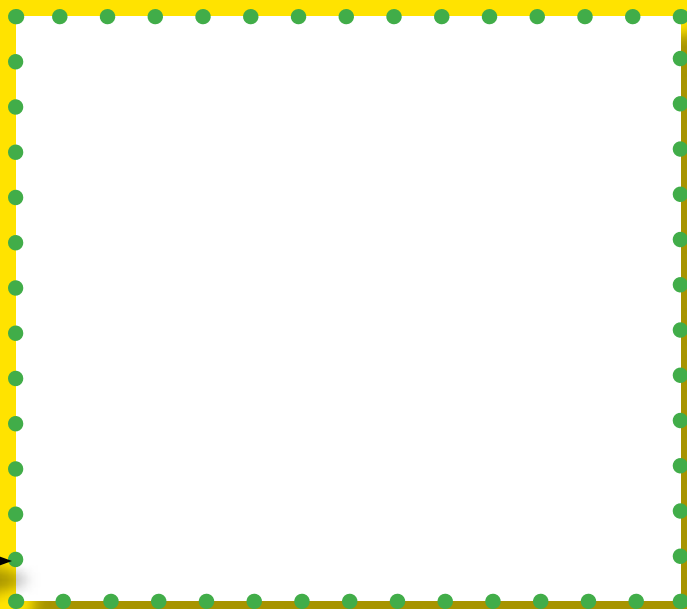
She reminded the boys and girls that this Feast Day recalled the beautiful days when the first people lived in the Garden of Eden. “They were very happy there. They had everything they needed.”

“The man and the woman were as happy as they could be. They obeyed God’s warning and did not take any fruit from the tree of knowledge of right and wrong until one day the Devil, in the form of a snake, slithered over to the woman. ‘Did God warn you about eating fruit from that tree? You should be able to eat fruit from any tree in the garden.’

“So Adam and Eve ate the fruit.

“God had to send them out of the Garden. They could have lived there, comfortably and happily, without fears or worries; but they had disobeyed God.”

Draw your favorite thing in God’s beautiful world →



Our Armenian Way

Why do we celebrate Poon Paregentan with music and masks, parades and lots of food?

On that day, we remember the story of the creation of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, and the happy times they spent in the Garden of Eden. God made them so they could live together with their children and their children's children without problems or worries. He asked them for only one thing – to obey him. Adam and Eve committed the first sin. They disobeyed God.

On Poon Paregentan, we remember the happier times in the Garden of Eden and what might have been if only Adam and Eve had listened to God.

God promises that we will be with him again in the same kind of Paradise! In some parts of the Armenian world, people would have parades and special feasts on this day.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Poon Paregentan is a family celebration held on the day before Lent begins. It is a day to celebrate the joy felt by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, a short-lived joy because they yielded to temptation and disobeyed God.

In order to relive the joy promised by God to Adam and Eve, we celebrate on this day with music and dance, costumes, masks and food.

Living Our Faith

1. Encourage your child to share with you...
 - the story of the Creation
 - why we celebrate Poon Pargentan
2. If this lesson is being taught on Poon Paregentan, enjoy the day and celebrate!
3. Display your child's mask in a visible place and recall the traditions of Poon Paregentan as a family.

Unit Three* Following Jesus Great Lent



We Speak to God

Heavenly Father, help us to say no to temptation.
Help us be brave when we are afraid, strong when
we feel weak and kind when we feel like being mean.
†Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.



Let's Talk

Great Lent is a special time in the church. It is a period of forty days when we remember Jesus and all that he did for us. We thank him for teaching us to be forgiving. We thank him for teaching us to love one another and to help those in need. After Lent is over, we remember how Jesus was crucified, and we celebrate his resurrection.

Listen to This



To be tempted means that you might think about doing something that will disappoint the people who love you, including Jesus.

Here are two short stories. Decide which child said no to temptation.

Tony found \$5.00 on the school playground. He bent over and picked it up. He couldn't believe it! As he was about to put it in his pocket, he thought, "Someone is probably looking for this." So he took it inside to the school office.

At lunch, Nancy said to her friend, Maria, "I have some change left over from lunch. Let's stop at the candy store on the way home."

Nancy remembered that her parents always told her to bring home the change left over from lunch. In spite of that, she said to Maria, "I'll meet you by the front door after school."

Nancy will disappoint her parents.

What could she have said to Maria when they met after school?

What could her friend have said to her?

How do you think she will feel when she gets home?



God Speaks to Us

After his baptism, Jesus spent forty days and forty nights alone on a mountain. Jesus was tired and hungry so the Devil decided to tempt him.

"If you are God's Son, tell these stones to turn into bread."

Jesus answered, "We cannot live only on food. We also have to live by God's words."

Next, the Devil took Jesus to the Holy City of Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest part of the Temple.

“If you are God’s Son, jump off. God will send his angels to catch you. You won’t get hurt.”

Jesus answered, “The Bible says, ‘Do not test God.’”

Finally the Devil took Jesus up on a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms on earth.

“I will give all this to you if you will bow down and worship me.”

Jesus answered, “Go away Satan! The Bible says ‘Worship your God and serve only him.’”

The Devil left, and the angels came to take care of Jesus.



Matthew 4:1-11



We Learn About God

Jesus’ disciples asked him to teach them how to pray. He began...

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and for-

give us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

Remember the words of the Lord’s Prayer when you are being tempted.

Our Armenian Way

Yev mee daneer uzmez ee portzootyoon,
And lead us not into temptation

Portzootyoon is the Armenian word for temptation.



Hearts and Hands

Children of God, children of God,

We are children of God.

We love God and others, too.

We are children of God.

We will help those in need.

We are children of God.

We will be kind to those we meet.

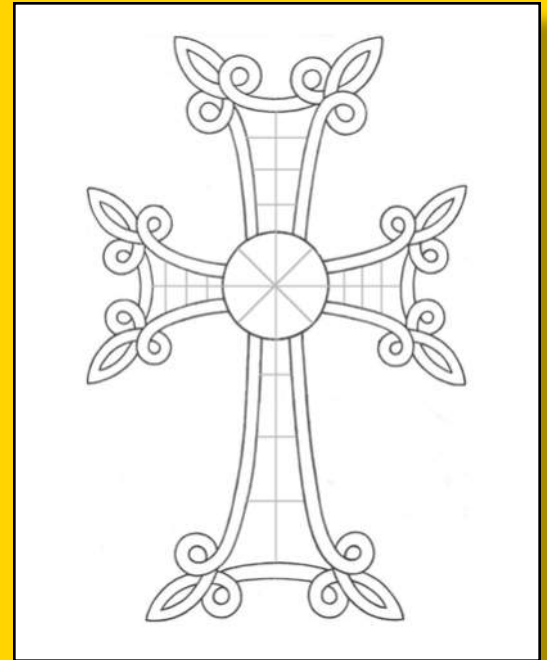
We are children of God.

We will pray for a peaceful world.

We are children of God.

Children of God, Children of God,

We are children of God.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Great lent is a very meaningful part of the church calendar. It is at this time when we spend many weeks really thinking and praying about the life of Jesus and the lessons he taught us: love one another, forgive others and help those in need.

We talked about the meaning of temptation, using as an example the forty days that Jesus spent in the wilderness where he was tempted by the Devil.

Living Our Faith

1. Your child is bringing home a Lenten cross today. Hang this in a special place. During the forty days of Lent, whenever your child does a kind or helpful act, he/she can color in one space on the cross.
2. Please let me know if you want additional copies of the Lenten cross for other children in your family.

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. A disciple is like a student. He or she follows and learns from a teacher. 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 good 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.

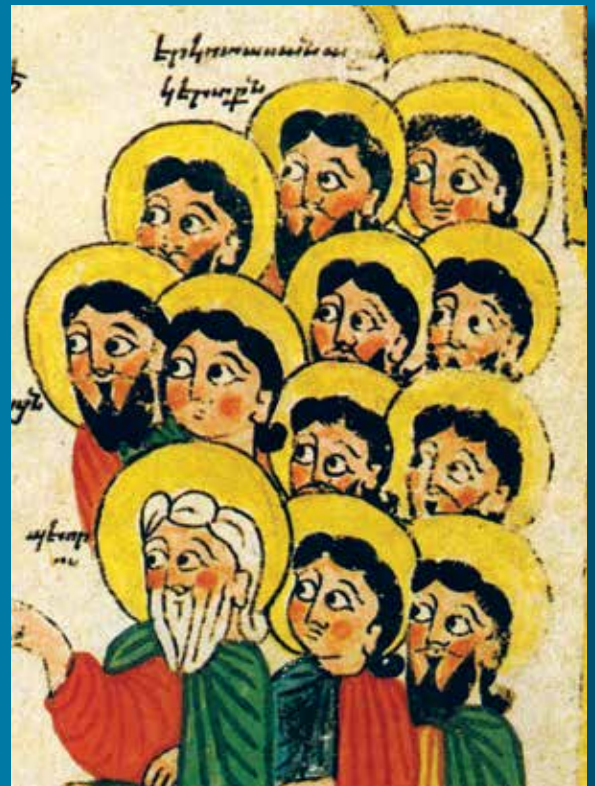


Jesus needs you. What can you do to help Jesus?

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. The word “apostle” means “someone who is sent.” 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.

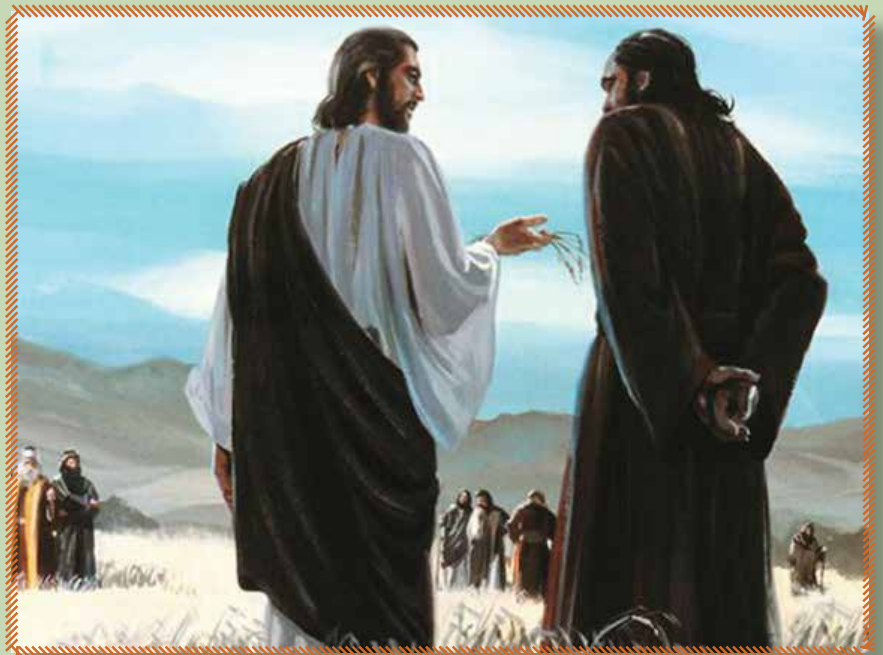


We Speak to God

Dear Heavenly Father, we pray for the enlighteners of our church, St. Thaddeus, St. Bartholomew and, in particular, St. Gregory the Enlightener. Help us to be enlighteners for you, too! †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Not all the people believed what the apostles were telling them. Why? At that time, the Armenian kings were pagans. They did not believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and the people were forced to believe in what their kings believed.



Many people in Armenia had the courage to follow the teachings of the apostles. They would meet secretly to pray and worship together.

For nearly three hundred years after the arrival of Thaddeus and Bartholomew, the Armenian kings were against Christianity. One of these was King Khosrov, and later his son, King Drtad.

Listen to This

Imagine that you are one of those early Christians in Armenia...

Your family and a few other families in your village are Christians.

Who are you with?

To attend church services, you have to leave your house secretly and walk quietly to a cave a distance away from your village. *What is the weather like that day? Do you feel the sun on your face? Or rain? Or?*

You meet other families along the way. You enter the cave. *Is it cool inside or hot?*

The priest has already begun the service. *What do you hear?*

You pray and sing together. You receive Holy Communion.

After the service ends, families share a little time talking with each other. *Whom do you meet after worship?*

Then you begin the walk home. *How do you feel? Are you tired? Hungry? Happy?*

On the way, you and your friend walk together. You think about what you heard and saw. You wonder why Christians have to meet in secret.



God Speaks to Us

Saul was a man who was totally against Jesus and his followers. One day while he was walking on the road to Damascus, a bright light shone all around him. Saul fell to the ground. He heard a voice asking, "Saul, Saul, why are you so cruel to me?"

Saul asked, "Who are you?"

"I am Jesus. Why are you cruel to me? Get up and enter the city and you will be told what to do." The men traveling with Saul were speechless. They saw no one. When Saul stood up, he realized that he could not see. The men helped him and walked with him to Damascus to a certain house.



A man named Ananias lived in Damascus. He was one of Jesus' followers. Jesus said to him: "Go to Saul and help him. You will find him in a house on a street called Straight." Ananias knew about Saul and the terrible things he had done to the Christians, but he obeyed Jesus.

"Saul, Jesus sent me to you. He wants you to see and to be filled with the Holy Spirit." Ananias put his hands on Saul. Suddenly he could see! Saul was baptized; and from that day on, Saul was called Paul. He spent the rest of his life traveling from place to place, preaching the words of Jesus.

Acts 9:1-19

We Learn About God

When Jesus asked his followers if they were willing to carry on his work, they promised they would. Even people, like St. Paul, who were against Jesus at first.



When St. **Gregory** was ordered by King Drtad to worship a statue, he said, "I do not worship statues of gold, iron or stone. I am your servant, but I am first loyal to Jesus Christ." As punishment, he was placed in a pit (*khovirab*) and remained there for many years. He never stopped believing in Jesus; and when he was released from the pit, he continued to do good works in Jesus' name.

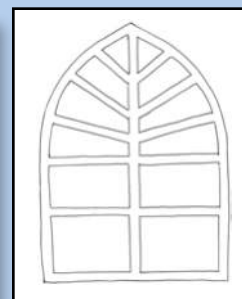
Jesus told **Ananias** to find Saul and put his hands on him so that his blindness could be cured. Ananias knew about Saul and his cruel treatment of Christians. In his heart, he wondered why Jesus was sending him to do this; but he did what Jesus asked him to do.



Like the apostles, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, St. Paul, St. Gregory and Ananias, you, too, will be called upon to make choices. Like the early Christians, you have to be strong in your faith, ready to remain true to Jesus Christ.

Hearts and Hands

Armenia, First Christian Nation



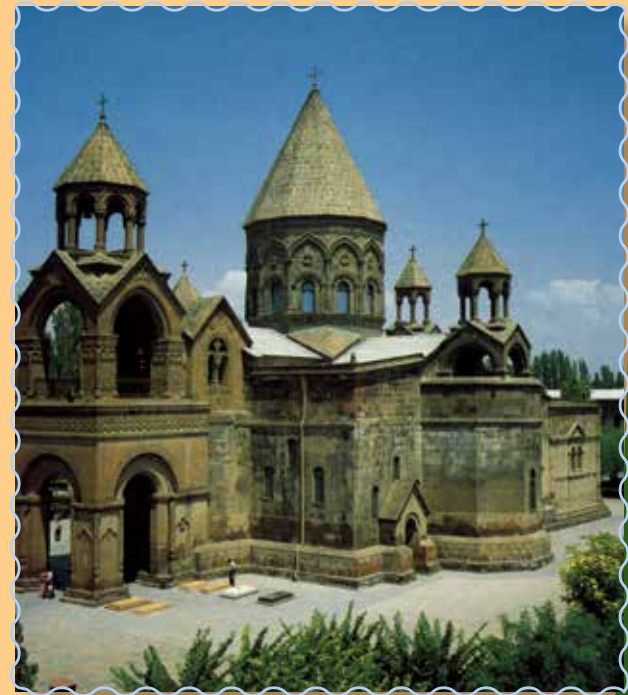
Our Armenian Way

King Drtad became very ill. His sister, Princess Khosrovitoukht, knew that Gregory was still alive in the pit. She felt very strongly that he would be able to cure her brother. She sent for Gregory, and he cured the king. King Drtad was grateful to Gregory. He knew that it was Gregory's belief in Jesus that cured him. He asked Gregory to baptize him and his family. The king wanted Armenia to be a Christian country.

One night while Gregory was praying, he saw a vision. The heavens opened up, and a man with a radiant face spoke to him. "Gregory!" Gregory recognized the Only-Begotten Son of God (Miadzin), holding a golden hammer in his hand. Jesus struck the ground with the hammer.

When he woke up, Gregory knew that Jesus wanted him to build a church in that place. King Drtad and his family joined the people. Together they helped build the church at Holy Etchmiadzin, the place where the Only-Begotten came down.

The church was big and beautiful. Gregory was the first Catholicos of Armenia, the first Christian nation.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today we learned about some of the early followers of Jesus Christ; the choices they had to make; and the difficulties they faced while remaining true to their faith. We also discussed how we are called upon to make good choices in our lives.

For nearly three hundred years after Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew went to Armenia, the nation still remained a pagan one, although there were many converts. King Khosrov was a pagan as was his son, King Drtad; both of these men played a part in the Armenian nation becoming the first to accept Christianity.

Living Our Faith

1. Recall with your child the lives of two of the early fathers of the church.
 - St. Paul.
 - St. Gregory the Enlightener
2. Be strong in your faith like St. Gregory and St. Paul. Say, "I will follow you, Jesus."



We Speak to God

Christ is risen from the dead! Blessed is his resurrection! Dear Father in Heaven, we say these words with glad hearts. We believe that you are with us always.
†Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Varteni and her parents entered church on Easter Sunday. Two members of the Parish Council greeted them at the door. “Krisdos haryav ee merelotz,” one of them said. Varteni’s father answered, “Orhnyal eh harootyoonun Kreesdosee.”

They entered the church and took their places. Varteni looked at the altar. It looked so beautiful with Easter lilies everywhere.

She pulled gently on her father’s sleeve and said, “The church looks happy today, Baba.”

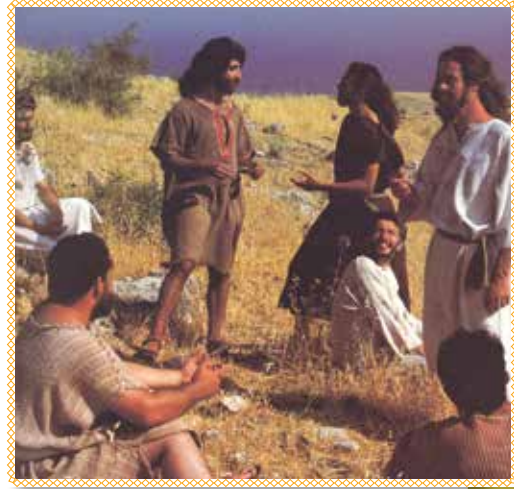
Her father leaned over to answer, “Easter is a time of joy. We remember that Jesus died but rose to new life.”



Listen to This

This was God's plan. He sent Jesus to be with us on earth for a short time to tell us about God the father and to give us this message of hope:

"I am ready to forgive you your sins if you are truly sorry for what you have done."



God Speaks to Us

It was almost daybreak on Sunday when Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the tomb. Suddenly, the earth shook, and the Lord's angel came down from heaven.

How do you think the women felt? What do you think an angel would look like if an angel appeared to you? Draw it here:



The women approached the tomb, and the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid! I know that you are looking for Jesus. Come see the place where his body was lying. Then, hurry! Go and tell the disciples that he has been raised to life and is on his way to Galilee. Go there, and you will see him. That is what I came to tell you."

How do you think the women felt after they heard the angel's words?

The women were frightened but very happy. They hurried from the tomb and ran to tell the disciples.



Matthew 28

We Learn About God

While the disciples were talking about what happened to Jesus, he appeared to them and greeted them. At first, they were frightened.

Jesus told them what they had to do. "All people must be told to believe in God, to believe that God will forgive your sins if you are truly sorry. Wait in Jerusalem until my Father sends the Holy Spirit. Wait until the sign is given to you."

Then they all went to Bethany. Jesus blessed them and was taken up into heaven.



Hearts and Hands

Write the correct number under each picture.

1. Mary Magdalene at the tomb.
2. Mary and Jesus having a conversation.
3. Mary telling the disciples that Jesus will appear to them.
4. Jesus comes to his disciples.
5. Jesus explains what will happen after he leaves them.
6. Jesus rises up to heaven.

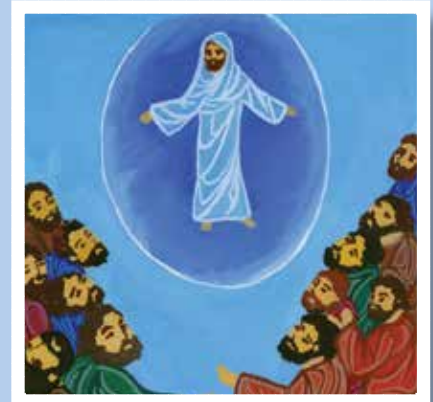












Our Armenian Way

At Easter time, rather than just saying hello, this is the greeting shared by people:

Kreesdos haryav ee merelotz!

Քրիստոս յարեալ ի մեռելոց:

Christ is risen from the dead!

Orhnyal eh harootyounun Kreesdosee!

Օրհնեալ է յարութիւնն Քրիստոսի:

Blessed is the resurrection of Christ!



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today's lesson was about the joy of Easter. God's message, sent through Jesus to us, was that we have the chance to live with him forever through the salvation offered to us on the cross. Jesus died for our sins; but after the crucifixion, Christ rose from the tomb and revealed himself to his disciples, giving them instructions and telling them about the coming of the Holy Spirit. After that, he ascended to heaven to reign forever at the right hand of the Father.

Living Our Faith

With your child

1. Make Easter cards for grandparents or other family members.
2. Share the Easter story with younger siblings.

Unit Four The Church Family* Being Together

Jesus is With Us at Church



We Speak to God

Dear Father in heaven, help us be loving members of our families. Bless them and our church family, too. Help us see you in our homes and here at church where you are present in all the loving things we do. †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk



What are some things I do with my family?



What are some things I do with my church family?



Listen to This

When we are in church...

We remember the birth and the life of Jesus Christ.

We celebrate special holidays, called feast days.

We pray and sing.

We listen to stories.



God Speaks to Us

Jesus said, “Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you.”

Matthew 18:20

We Learn About God

Kohar’s grandmother, Margaret, lived with Kohar and her family. Kohar loved her grandmother very much. She watched her each evening as she went quietly to her room to pray. When she finished her prayers, she would come into the living room.

One evening, Kohar asked, “Medz Mama, you pray at home. Isn’t that like saying your prayers in church? Why do you want to go to church every Sunday?”

“My sweet child, when we go to church we enter God’s house with many other people. We become the church family. God is there with us. We sing together, and we pray. When the Kiss of Peace is passed from person to person, we become one family. We are God’s family. Do you understand now, hokees, why I want to be in church every Sunday?”

“I understand, Medz Mama,” she answered. Kohar smiled at her grandmother and kissed her.



Our Armenian Way

These are on or near the Holy Altar:



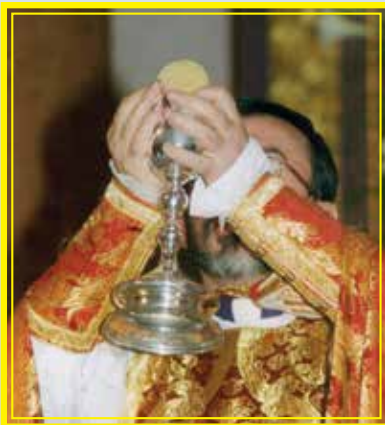
The chalice (sugih) from which the priest gives Holy Communion to the people. At certain times, it is covered with a special cloth.



An object that looks like the sun. It is called Jajanch. In English, we call it the "Radiance." It is an ornament on the altar, representing the blessings that come from holy things.



A candlestick (ashdanak). The light from these candles remind us of how Jesus brings light to the whole world.



The wafer (nushkhar) is prepared by the priest and is used during Holy Communion. On it is pictured the crucifix, wheat, and a cluster of grapes.



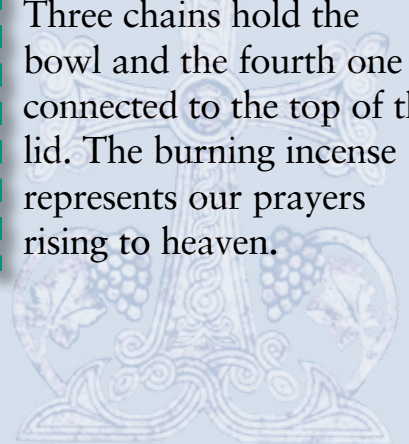
A fan (kushotz), a disc of silver with a six-winged cherub (angel) on both sides and little bells around it. It is fixed on a wooden rod. Fans were originally used to drive flies and other insects away. The cherubs symbolically drive away evil spirits.



A decorated book with a cross on it. It is the Gospel book (Avedaran). You will see the deacon hold it high in a procession around the altar and then read from it during the Badarak.



A censer (pourvar) is a silver incense burner. It is in the shape of a bowl. Three chains hold the bowl and the fourth one is connected to the top of the lid. The burning incense represents our prayers rising to heaven.



Hearts and Hands

What do we see on the altar?



For My Family



Learning Our Faith

Today's lesson introduced the children to their place in the church as members of the church family. A child asks her grandmother, "Why do you have to attend church services when you can pray at home?" In a loving response, the grandmother talks about the many ways the Liturgy bonds the church family together. "God wants us to be there with him," she explains.

The children also learned about important church vessels.

Living Our Faith

1. As a family attend Badarak together.
2. Light candles and pray together.
3. At home, practice the Kiss of Peace.
4. Make a collage of photos of family events.

Unit Four The Church Family* Being Together *We Listen to God's Word*

Lesson

2

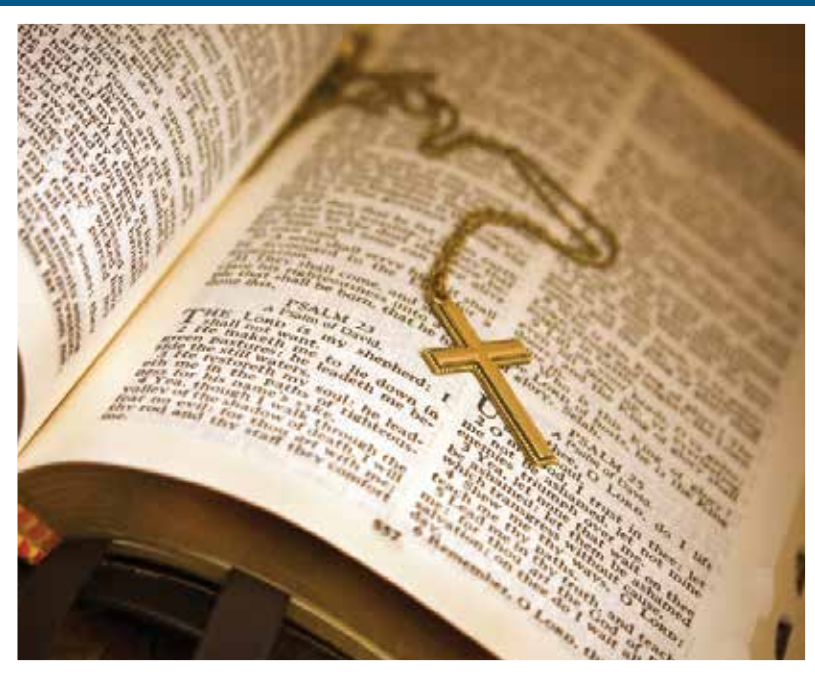


We Speak to God

Thank you, God, for the beautiful gift you gave us in the words we find in the Holy Bible. They are truly like a lamp that lights our way. Thank you for the Gospel writers who remembered all you did and wrote about it with the help of the Holy Spirit. †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Աստուածաշուք

Let's Talk



1. Some people told stories about Jesus. Some wrote them down. The written stories appear in the Bible. Why did they want to write their stories?
2. How many parts does the Bible have?
3. What is the Armenian name for the Bible?

(Look for the answers on the next page.)

Listen to This

Danny's father took him to church every Sunday before taking him to the Sunday School class. One Sunday, Danny noticed that the deacon was holding up a special book. It was covered with a velvet cloth and decorated with silver threads. The deacon held it high and walked around the altar. Danny wondered what kind of a book it was? "It must be very special," he thought.

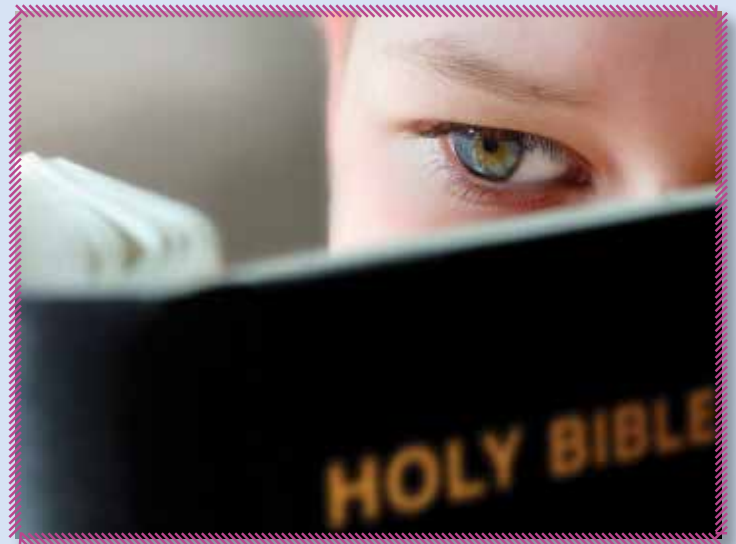


As they left church, Danny asked about this special book. His father replied, "That book is the Gospel Book. There are stories in it about Jesus' life, written by his followers who loved him."

Danny thought about the book with its silver threads. It is really special!

Here are the answers:

1. Jesus' followers wrote down their stories so the people would never forget about him.
2. The Bible has two major parts – the Old Testament and the New Testament.
3. The Armenian name for the Bible is Asdvadzashoonch. This word means "Breath of God."



God Speaks to Us

Follow God's commands closely. Love Him and obey Him and you will be strong in your faith and in your life. Nothing can ever stand in your way!

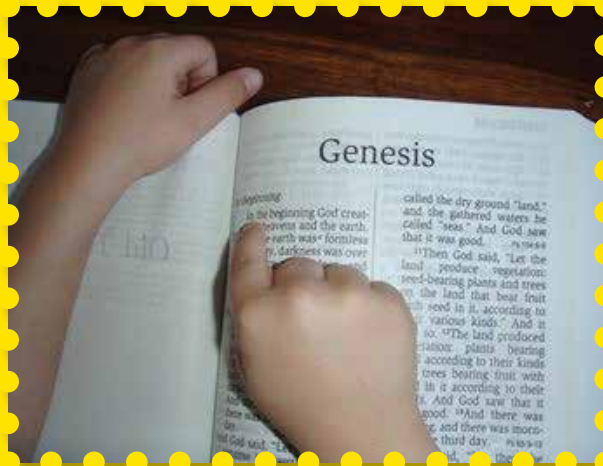
Deuteronomy 11: 22-25

We Learn About God

The Old Testament contains many books. The first book is called Genesis. It tells us how God created the universe. The last books in the Old Testament are called The Prophets. The prophets reminded the people of their duty to obey God. Isaiah was one of the great prophets.

God promised that he would send his son Jesus to remind us of his great love for us and to teach us to love one another. The New Testament is the story of Jesus. It begins with the Gospel of St. Matthew.

God speaks to us during the Divine Liturgy every Sunday through Bible passages from the Old and the New Testaments.



Our Armenian Way

Before the deacon reads from the Gospel, the choir and deacon remind the congregation

Deacon: Broskhoomeh People: Aseh Asdvadz.
(Pay attention) God is speaking

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, four of Jesus' followers, wrote about Jesus' life and teachings. These writings are called gospels. Gospel means "good news" or, in Armenian, "avedis." The gospels give us the good news about Jesus.

These four books are placed, as one collection, on the main altars of all Armenian churches.

When the deacon reads from the Gospel Book, he faces the congregation and holds the book high, covering his face. Do you wonder why?

This is so we listen to the words of the Gospel and not be distracted by the person doing the reading.

At the end of the Badarak, the congregation comes to kiss the Gospel Book. In this way, we leave church and go out into the world with God's word on our lips.



Hearts and Hands

Meet the writers of the gospels. They are called evangelists. Evangelists teach and spread the words of Jesus.



Matthew



Luke



Mark



John

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

The children have been learning about the sacred objects on the Holy Altar and, today, in particular, about the book called the Avedaran or Gospel Book. This book contains the four gospels, the most important books of the Bible. Every Sunday, the deacon reads to us from this book. We say in wonder and prayer: "God speaks!" (Aseh Asdvadz) Your child made a miniature Gospel book.

Living Our Faith

1. Encourage your child to share the brief biographies of the evangelists in their little Gospel book.
2. Review the responses made by the deacon and the choir before readings from the Holy Scriptures.
3. Encourage your child to share what he or she learned about the Bible today.

Unit Four The Church Family: Being Together

We Say What We Believe



We Speak to God

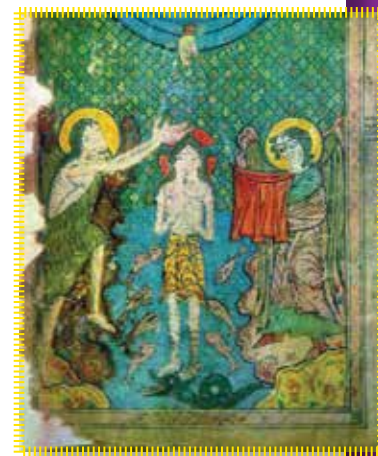
Dear God, we believe that you created the world for us to take care of and enjoy. We believe that the world is a good place, and that you are always there to help us know you and love one another. We believe that Jesus is our Savior and that the Holy Spirit is our loving guide. We believe. Help us to believe more! †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

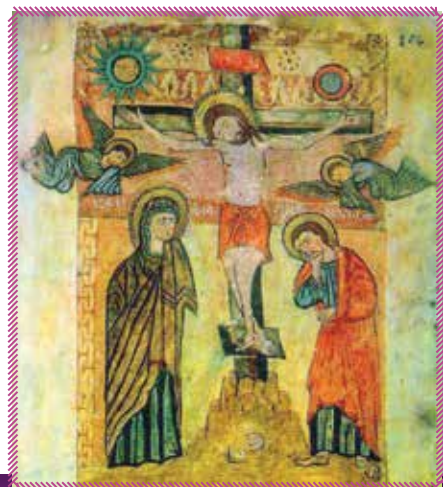
What do you believe about Jesus, the Son of God?



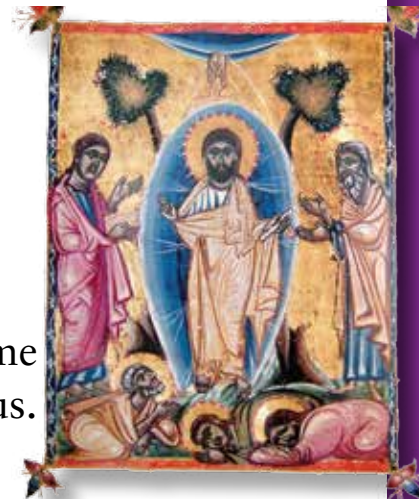
Jesus was born.
His mother was Mary.



Jesus was baptized
in the River Jordan.



Jesus was crucified
and buried and rose
on the third day.



Jesus will come
again to be with us.

God Speaks to Us

Jesus' disciples tried to heal a sick boy, but they could not. They asked Jesus, "Why couldn't we heal him?" Jesus answered, "This sickness can only be healed by prayer."

Mark 9:28-29

We Learn About God

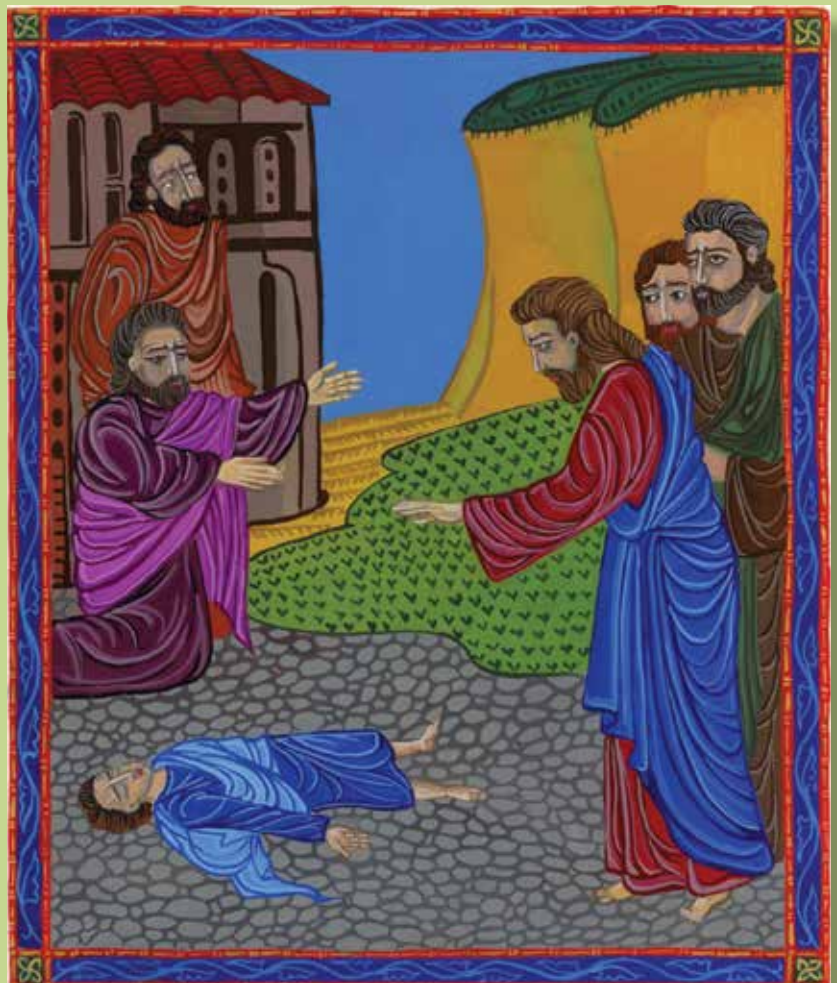
Jesus returned to his disciples after being away. He noticed that there was a large crowd gathered around them. He asked, "What is happening here?"

A man answered, "Master, I brought my son to you because he is sick with seizures. I asked your disciples to help him. They tried, but they could not. Have pity on us and help us."

"Bring your son to me," said Jesus. "Everything is possible for anyone who has faith."

The boy's father cried out, "I do have faith. I do believe. Help us believe more."

Jesus took the boy's hand and helped him up. He was healed!



Why do you think a crowd had gathered?

What did the man tell Jesus?

Why do you think the apostles could not help the man and his son?

What will you remember from this story?

Listen to This

The Havadamk (We Believe) was written a long time ago (325 A.D.). It is called the Nicene Creed because it was agreed upon at the Council of Nicaea. The church fathers met and created a statement of beliefs about God the Father, his son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. Ever since that time, the Armenian people have had faith in the beliefs stated in the Creed.



Our Armenian Way

When we pray, we express our faith in God. We mean, “Father, we believe in you. We know you will help us in whatever way you can.”

During the Badarak, we make a very special statement of faith. It is called the Nicene Creed, the Havadamk (*We Believe*). Everyone in church puts their palms together, right thumb over left thumb. Then they join in reciting the Havadamk. It states what the Armenian Church believes about God.

The Creed begins in this way, “We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.” (Havadamk ee mee Asdvadz ee Hayrun amenagal, harareechun yergnee yev yergree.)

It continues, “We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the son of God, born of the Virgin Mary.”

Hearts and Hands

Can you imagine? For hundreds and hundreds of years, the Armenian people have been reciting the Creed. Now, it is your turn.



We believe in one God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of things visible and invisible.

Havadamk ee mee Asdvadz,
ee Hayrn amenagal
harareechun yergnee yev yergree
yerevelyats yev anerevooteets.

Հաւատամք ի մի Աստուած՝
ի Հայրն ամենակալ,
յարարիչն երկնի եւ երկրի,
երեւելեաց եւ աներեւութից:

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

The message of the day was about belief and prayer. In keeping with this theme, the children learned a few lines from the Havadamk (We Believe), also known as the Nicene Creed. This is a statement of our beliefs about the Holy Trinity. It was created at the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D.

Living Our Faith

Review with your child:

1. Why we recite the Creed.
2. How we hold our hands when we recite the Creed.
3. The first three lines of the Creed.
4. The story of the father who brought his sick child to the disciples to be healed and the importance of prayer in helping our faith grow.

Unit Four The Church Family* Being Together Peace

Lesson

4



We Speak to God

Dear Lord, we pray for peace in our world, in the hearts of those who are troubled and sick, and in the hearts of our friends and loved ones.

Help us to be peacemakers †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

We are different from the rest of God's creatures. We can make choices, especially about what's right and wrong. Sometimes we make choices without thinking about them. But God wants us to think about the things we say and do.

God wants us to do what Jesus taught us:

Help others.

Share what we have with others.

Care about the way others feel.



Listen to This

Two brothers, Michael and Edward, were quarreling about whose turn it was to clean the fish tank. They argued most of the morning, each one blaming the other.

“It was not my turn.”

“It was your turn. You forgot on purpose.”

“I did not!” And they continued to argue.

As bedtime approached, their father came to them and said, “Boys, you have been arguing most of the day. I do not want you to go to bed angry. You must work together to solve your problem.”

Help the boys solve their problem. What can they do?



God Speaks to Us

Jesus wants us to have peace in our hearts.

If you come to church and you have anger in your heart, go and make peace first.

If you have said hurtful things to someone, make peace with that person before you come into my house.

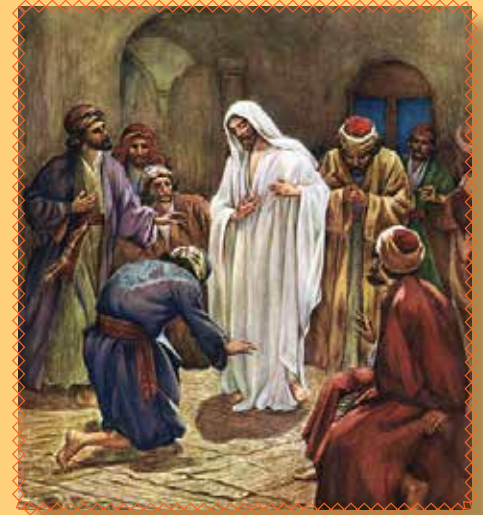


Matthew 5:23-24

We Learn About God

Imagine how the disciples must have felt. Jesus, their beloved friend, was put on trial and found guilty. Then he was crucified and was buried. The disciples wondered what they were going to do without him.

The disciples were gathered in a room after the crucifixion. They were confused and afraid. Jesus came to them and said, “Peace be with you.” (John 20:19)



*Why were the disciples confused and afraid?
Do you ever feel that way?
What do you think Jesus meant?
How did these words help the disciples?*

When your heart is at peace, then you can share this *peacefulness* with others in acts of faith, kindness and love.

Our Armenian Way

ԵՒ ըՆԴ ԻՌՈՂՈՅԻ քում:

In the Armenian Church, the priest turns to the people in church, makes the sign of the cross and says:

Khaghaghootyoon amenetsoon (peace to all).

In response, we bow our heads slightly and sign ourselves with the cross.

We hear the priest say these words several times during the Badarak. They are said usually during a prayer or before a reading from the scriptures. They are reminders from Jesus that he wants us to live in peace.

When the priest says, “Peace to all,” we answer, “Yev unt hokvooyt koom.” (And with your spirit.) By saying those words, we are returning the priest’s blessing.



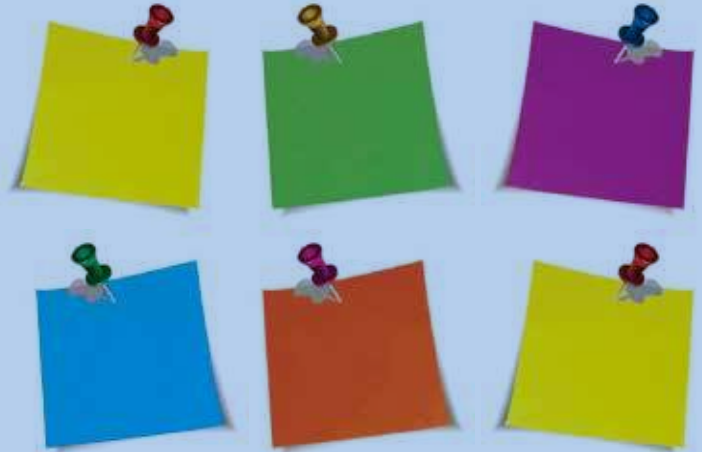
Hearts and Hands

Jesus enjoyed talking with people, sharing and teaching the words of God the Father. One day Jesus went up to a mountain. There he spoke to a group of people. He told them, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God.”

When you say and do kind things for others, you are a peacemaker.

When you get along with your friends, classmates and others, you are a peacemaker.

Peacemakers



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

The theme of our lesson was peace. We talked about the different ways the peace in our hearts translates into acts of goodness, kindness, and love.

“Peace to all.” (*Khaghaghootyoon amenetsoon.*) The priest says these words several times during the Badarak, and the choir and congregation respond, “And with your spirit.” (*Yev unt hokvooyt koom.*)

In several Bible passages, Jesus makes reference to peace in our hearts. The class contributed drawings for a class mural called “The Peacemakers.”

Living Our Faith

1. In today’s lesson, the children read a story about a quarrel between two brothers. Ask your child to tell you the story and how the students offered solutions to the problem.
2. Visit our class to see the mural called “The Peacemakers.” Add your own drawing to the mural!
3. Review with your child the response to the priest’s blessing, “*Khaghaghootyoon amenetsoon.*” “*Yev unt hokvooyt koom.*” (And with your spirit.)

Unit Four The Church Family* Being Together Our Gifts to God Become Jesus



We Speak to God

Dear Jesus, thank you for the chance each Sunday to share in your life through Holy Communion. Thank you for your precious gifts of love and forgiveness †Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Everything we have is a gift from God: love, faith, communion, forgiveness, hope, trust. These gifts never wear out. They are ours to keep forever.

In return, we can show God, through our acts of love, faith, kindness, and our prayers, that we are spiritually strong. What does that mean?

We are spiritually strong when our faith is part of everything we do.



Listen to This

Lisa was in church with her class. She remembered the lesson of the Last Supper. Her teacher had explained it the week before, and now the class waited and watched to hear Jesus' words spoken by the priest.



Lisa remembered what her teacher had said about Jesus. Lisa thought about him on that night. He was with his friends, yet he felt alone. He knew what was going to happen to him, and he wondered what his friends would do after he was gone. Then Lisa heard the priest say the words,

“Arek, gerek, ays eh marmeen eem...”

“Ays eh aryoon eem noro ookhdee...”

Lisa remembered what these words meant. She closed her eyes for a moment and imagined herself with Jesus and the disciples at the Last Supper. Jesus shared the bread and wine as a way of sharing his life with everyone.

God Speaks to Us

Jesus was with his friends the night before he died. They were together to celebrate the Feast of Passover. While they were eating the special meal, Jesus took some plain bread. He blessed and broke it. Then he gave it to his disciples. “Eat this and remember me. This is my body.”



Next, Jesus took a cup of wine. He gave it to his disciples saying, “Drink this and remember me. This is my blood.”

Luke 22:14-20

We Learn About God

When After the Passover meal, Jesus and his apostles went to the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus spoke to the disciple Peter. “I have prayed that you will be strong. Be ready to help the others.”

Peter answered, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to jail and even to die with you.”

Jesus replied, “I tell you that before a rooster crows tomorrow morning, you will say three times that you don’t know me.”

Jesus walked on a little way to pray. “Father, please do not make me suffer. But do what you want and not what I want.”

The soldiers came to the Garden. Jesus was arrested and led away to the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance; and when a servant girl saw him, she said, “This man was with Jesus.”

“Woman, I don’t even know that man!”

A little while later, a woman said, “You are one of them.”

“No, I am not!”

About an hour later, another man insisted, “This man must have been with Jesus. They both came from Galilee.”

“I don’t know what you are talking about!”

Right then, while Peter was answering the man, a rooster crows. Peter remembered Jesus’ words and sat down and cried.

Why did Peter say that he did not know Jesus?

As Christ had predicted, Peter denied him three times. Peter felt sorry almost immediately for what he had done. He spent the rest of his life traveling to many lands, preaching Jesus’ message and converting people to Christianity. He became what Jesus wanted him to be – strong in his faith.



Hearts and Hands

It was the custom, and it still is, to take home the nushkhar given to you by the priest and to place it in a container of flour, rice, lentils or other such grains. It is felt that the nushkhar is a gift from Jesus and placing it in one of the containers of grain will keep it plentiful and the persons eating it healthy.



Our Armenian Way



To make the nushkhar (the wafer) used during Holy Communion, the priest mixes flour and water to make dough. With something that looks like a wooden cookie cutter, the priest stamps the dough with an imprint of a cross and presses the nushkhar into its round shape. Then the newly-prepared nushkhars are baked.

At the time of Holy Communion, the priest will break pieces of the wafer into the wine and give it to the members of the congregation who are prepared to receive Holy Communion.

For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today's lesson was about the Last Supper and how every Sunday in Holy Communion we receive the gifts of the bread and wine Jesus shared with his apostles. The priest reminds us of Jesus' own words when he says "*Arek, gerek*", "Take. Eat." The bread and wine becomes Christ's Body and Blood through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We spoke about being spiritually strong. The children were told the story of the disciple Peter and his lack of courage to stand fast in his faith. When the Lord said, "You will deny me three times," Peter firmly replied that he would not. But he did indeed end up denying Jesus three times. And yet later, he was one of the great champions of the faith.

Living Our Faith

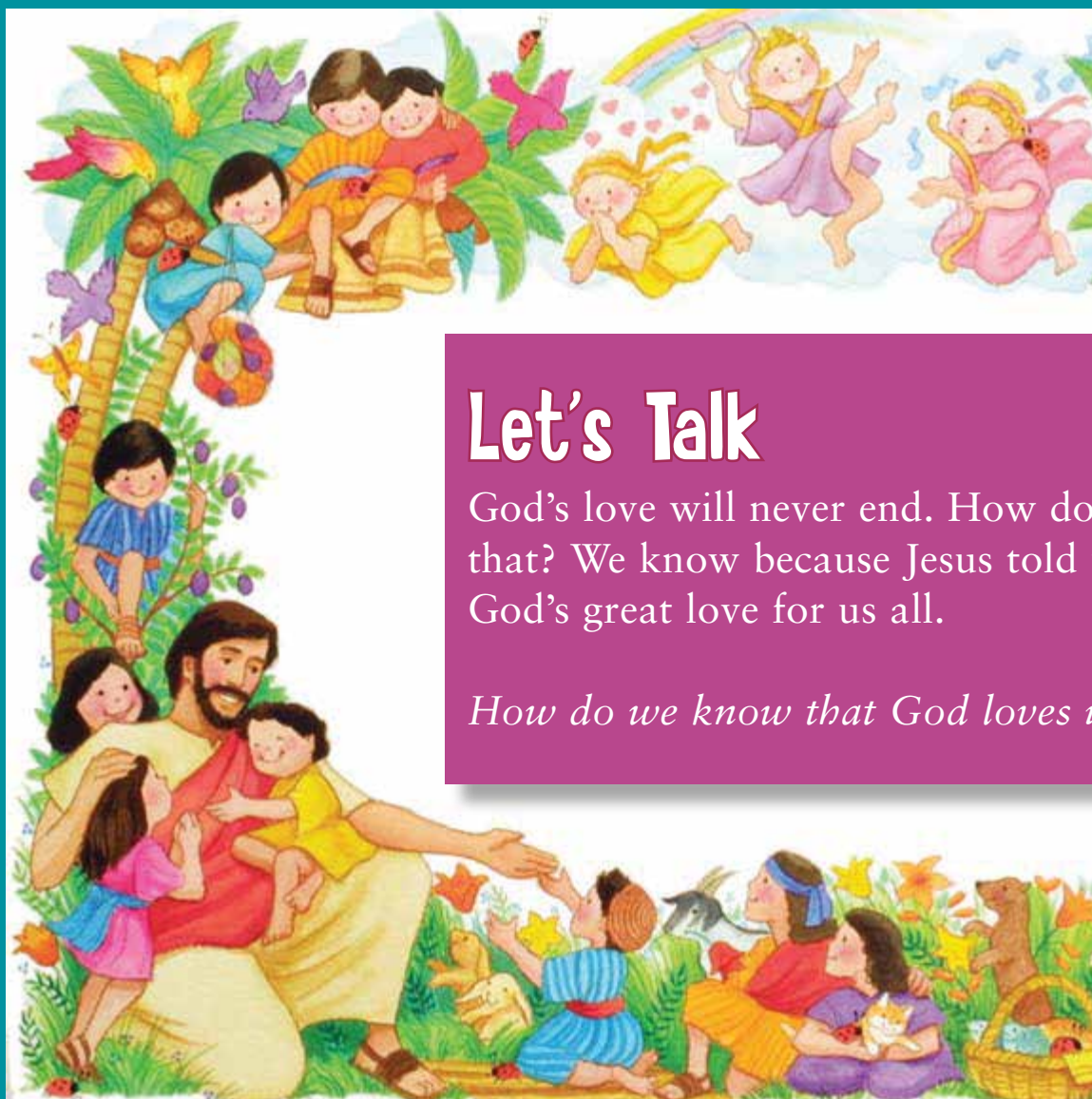
1. Attend church as a family to receive Holy Communion.
2. After the hymn *Soorp, Soorp* (Holy, Holy), listen for the words spoken by Jesus Christ, "*Arek, gerek, ays eh marmeen eem...*" (Take, eat, this is my body...)
3. Encourage your child to tell you about the disciple Peter.
4. Display your child's nushkhar coloring page and ask what was learned about the nushkhar (wafer) in class.

Unit Four The Church Family* Being Together The Church Forgives Us in God's Name



We Speak to God

Dear Jesus, help us open our hearts so that we may forgive others as you taught us to do. †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.



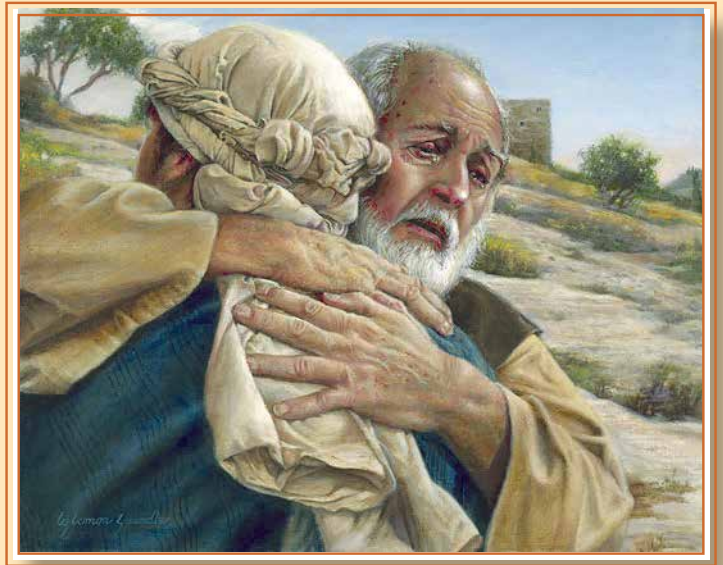
Let's Talk

God's love will never end. How do we know that? We know because Jesus told us of God's great love for us all.

How do we know that God loves us?

We Learn About God

Jesus loved to tell stories, and he told this one. A loving father had two sons. The younger son asked his father for money. The father gave him his share. He took it and left home. He spent all his money in foolish ways, and soon he had no place to stay and nothing to eat. He knew this would hurt his father. He wanted to go home to tell him how sorry he was.



When the young man was near his home, his father ran out to meet him. He gave his son a big hug. The son told his father he was sorry. The father said, “Let us celebrate with a feast, my son. I am so glad you have come home.”

(Luke 15:11-31)

God is like the father in this story, loving and ready to forgive.

God Speaks to Us

Jesus Christ says, “If you forgive others for the wrongs they do to you, your Father in heaven will forgive you. But if you don’t forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.”

Matthew 6:14-15



Listen to This

Elizabeth was in bed reading a book. She was waiting for her mother to come in to kiss her goodnight. She came in, after tucking in Elizabeth's baby brother. She sat at the edge of the bed and said, "Before saying your prayer, I want you to think about your day. Did you say or do anything that might have hurt your friends or your classmates?"

Elizabeth looked down. She was feeling sad, and she knew why. Between sobs, she told her mother the story. Her friend Lori played with someone else at recess. Elizabeth was upset. She wanted Lori to play with only her. So she pushed Lori and walked away. Lori told their teacher, and Elizabeth had to spend some of her recess at her desk. She felt so badly that she acted in anger.



Hearts and Hands



Her mother hugged her and asked, "What will you do when you see Lori tomorrow?"

"I will tell her how sorry I am that I got angry and pushed her."

Her mother answered, "Lori will forgive you because she is a kind and caring friend."

Our Armenian Way

The Sacrament of Penance is the way we can receive and celebrate God's forgiveness.

- **How do we prepare for Holy Communion?**

We think about what we have said and done. Is there something we said that we are sorry for? Is there something we did that we are sorry for because it was hurtful?

We listen to the deacon read the Prayer of Confession, and we say "Megha Asdoodzo" (I have sinned before God) several times during the prayer. The priest replies, "May God forgive you."

- **What do we say before the priest places the Communion on our tongues?**

We approach the priest, cross ourselves, and say again, "Megha Asdoodzo." We put our tongues out just a little bit. The priest places the Communion on the tongue, and we swallow it.

- **What do we do after we receive Holy Communion?**

We make the sign of the cross again and move to one side to wait for the priest's blessing.



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Megha Asdoodzo. These are the words spoken by those who wish to receive Holy Communion. It is a moving response to the Prayer of Confession.

Today, the children prepared an invitation inviting you and other family members to receive Holy Communion together. We hope you will join us.

Living Our Faith

1. Join your child and his/her classmates to receive Holy Communion together.
2. Encourage your child to tell you the story about the man who had two sons. (The Prodigal Son, Luke 15: 11-31)
3. Review with your child by asking: "What do we say before the priest places the Communion on our tongues?"

Unit Four *Let's Celebrate Our Happy Year Together!*



We Speak to God

Dear Jesus, thank you for a great year with our First Grade friends, our teachers, our priest and everyone in our parish. Without you to open our minds and hearts, we would never have gotten to know you as we did. What a wonderful world you have gifted us – what amazing people and living things in it! Thank you, God, for everything. †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Congratulations! You have reached the last day of First Grade at Sunday School. It's time to celebrate by

1. Receiving communion with your family.
2. Having a promotion party.
3. Playing some games to see what you have have learned.



Listen to This

You Name It

God created the world in how many days?

What does **anoonovut dzeranas** mean?

Name the two gifts the deacon brings to the priest during Badarak.

In church, how do we share our love for God and for our church family?

Name one thing the family provides for the Home Blessing?

Who created the Armenian alphabet?

What is the Armenian word for the Bible?

What happens when we take Holy Communion?

What do we celebrate on Easter Sunday?

Why did God send his son Jesus to us?

What does “Hayr Mer” mean in English?

Who taught the Hayr Mer prayer to the disciples?



You Find It

When you are in church, find these. Check them off when you do:

- Priest
- Deacon
- Pourvar
- Candle
- Bible
- Cross
- Someone praying
- Someone singing
- A stained glass window
- A saint's picture
- A picture of St. Mary and the baby Jesus

