

RAISING SAINTS



CHILDREN + FAMILY MINISTRY // WEEKLY GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

SUNDAY OF THE WORLD CHURCH – GREEN SUNDAY LEVEL 1: AGES 5 - 8

There are seven Sundays after Easter until the Feast of Pentecost. This Sunday is the third which is also called the Sunday of the World Church. This name helps us to remember the Upper Room where Jesus had the Last Supper with his disciples before he was arrested, tortured and crucified. In that Upper Room Jesus also did something special for his disciples, which we continue to do on Holy Thursday. To find out what Jesus did, place a check mark next to the correct choice.

- Told them stories
- Washed their feet
- Sang to them

Did you know that this Upper Room still exists in Jerusalem? It was the house of St. Mark, who wrote one of the Gospels. Today it is the Cathedral of the Assyrian Orthodox Church who are the caretakers of this holy place. Here is a picture of the entrance to the Cathedral.

This Cathedral of the Assyrian Orthodox Church is in the north-eastern corner of the Old City's Armenian Quarter, on Ararat Street which branches off St Mark's Street.

Remember that this is where Jesus had his Last Supper with his disciples. When he was seated at the table, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples and said, "Eat this, this is my body." Then he took the cup of wine, blessed it and gave it to his disciples and said, "Drink

of this, this is my blood. Do this always in remembrance of me." Each time that Our Church also calls this Green Sunday, because we are reminded that through Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross and his resurrection, we are given new life. The green color reminds us of new life because when a seed is planted green leaves grow, a new life begins. In the spring trees sprout new green leaves.

When you are present for the Divine Liturgy and you receive Holy Communion, you are doing what Jesus has asked us to do. This is how we are united to him as a Church.

Each time we gather in church to celebrate Badarak, we are doing what the very first Christians did in the Upper Room with Jesus. Make sure that you go to church with your parents and be part of celebrating Badarak and receiving Holy Communion.



LEVEL 2: AGES 9 - 12 & LEVEL 3: AGES 13 - 17

The Sundays which follow Easter are seven in number until the Feast of Pentecost. The third Sunday is also called the Sunday of the World Church pointing to the Upper Room where Jesus had the Last Supper with his disciples (Luke 22:7-12) The importance of this designation is not merely of the place, but what it has meant for all of Christendom.

1. We know from the Gospels that it is in the Upper Room where Jesus gave us the Holy Eucharist:

Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matthew 26:26-29).

2. After Jesus' crucifixion and burial, the fearful disciples gathered there. This is where the Oilbearing Women, Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James, Salome, Joanna, and Susanna came running after they had seen the empty tomb to tell Peter and all the other disciples that Jesus was raised from the dead! It is here that Jesus appeared to them after his resurrection, to reassure them that indeed he lived as we read in the Gospel of Luke.

Jesus himself stood among them. But they were startled and frightened, and supposed that they saw a spirit. And he said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do questionings rise in your hearts? See my

hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have. And while they still disbelieved for joy, and wondered, he said to them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate before them. (Luke 24:36-43)

3. Finally, it is in this Upper Room where Jesus' followers, along with Mary, the Holy Mother of God, and all the apostles gathered, waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit as they were instructed by the risen Lord Jesus Christ. This happened on Pentecost. They continued to meet there regularly to pray and break bread, just as Jesus had done at the Last Supper. In essence, this is where the beginnings of the Church community took place.

That is why we call this Sunday, the Sunday of the World Church, since the life of all Christian communities is connected to what happened in that Upper Room in Jerusalem. Today, that same Upper Room exists. It is the Cathedral of the Assyrian Orthodox Church in Jerusalem who are its caretakers. According to tradition, the Upper Room was the home of the evangelist Mark. This Cathedral of the Assyrian Orthodox Church is in the north-eastern corner of the Old City's Armenian Quarter, on Ararat Street which branches off St Mark's Street.

As you think about the events which happened in the Upper Room, how do you think they relate to your life as a member of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church? Does knowing all the events which happened there make a difference in your experience of church membership?

Read and compare the early Christians' experience in the Upper Room with that of yours as a member of the Armenian Church. Place the number of the item listed in the block marked **Upper Room** next to the item listed in the block marked **Your Church Experience** which is similar in meaning.

Upper Room

1. Jesus blessed the bread and the wine on this table.
2. Jesus' disciples received the news of the resurrection here.
3. Jesus appeared to them here and allowed them to touch him so they could believe.
4. The disciples, along with the Holy Mother of God, gathered here to pray and bless bread and wine as Jesus did at the Last Supper.
5. This is where the Holy Spirit came upon those gathered there on Pentecost, and the life of the Church began.

Your Church Experience

- I received the Holy Spirit at my Chrismation.
- The chalice and paten are on the altar.
- I go to church to pray and worship with the Church Community.
- When I hear the scriptures read, I receive the news of the Resurrection.
- When I receive Holy Communion, I feel Jesus' presence.

Let us remember always that we, as members of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church are part and parcel of all Churches who trace their beginnings to the Upper Room, Ash-khar-ha-ma-door, in Armenian Աշխարհամասոոր which we have come to know as the World Church. Our Church also calls this Green Sunday, because we are reminded that through Jesus' sacrifice on the Cross and his resurrection, we are given new life, just as green growth in the spring indicates a newness of life.

It is noteworthy that this year we are observing the 850th year of the eternal rest of St. Nersess the Graceful. He was an influential theologian and hymnographer of the Armenian Church. He has enriched our services with hymns and songs which redirect the Armenian people's focus onto Christ as the light of the world. A very familiar song which we sing

during the Night Service is Aravod Looso. As a theologian he worked diligently to strengthen bonds of understanding and unity with sister Churches. This year a joint committee of Holy Etchmiadzin and the Vatican will celebrate his untiring efforts to realize the Oneness of Jesus' Christ's Church.

Be faithful to our ancestors in faith and gather regularly to celebrate the Holy Eucharist, just as the early Christians did in the Upper Room, having the Holy Mother of God with them. She and all the saints are still with us as we remember them during Badarak.

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