

Kindergarten
We Believe
Student Lessons



Havadamk • Հավատաւորք

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It's a Beautiful World



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Father in Heaven, you are always with us. You watch over us. You are like a light in our lives. Help us to be like you. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Did you ever wake up in the middle of the night? Did you call out for your mom or dad?

The light in your room comes on, and you see a smiling face. That beautiful smile makes you feel safe and good all over. That smile is like a light in your life.

A smile is a sign of love and happiness. Where have you seen happy and smiling faces?



GOD'S WORD TO US

In the beginning there was deep darkness everywhere. Then God began to make the world. "Let there be light," God said. And out of the light, God made the day. Out of the darkness, God made the night. Now please remember if you would, *God saw that it was good and he smiled.*

Next God made the sky. Now please remember if you would, *God saw that it was good and he smiled.*

After that, God said, "Let dry land appear." And so it was! The dry land was called earth, and the waters were called oceans. Now please remember if you would, *God saw that it was good and he smiled.*

And then he said, "Let there be lights in the sky." The bigger light is the sun. It gives light to the day. The smaller light is the moon. It brightens up the night. God also made the stars. Now please remember if you would, *God saw that it was good and he smiled.*

Based on Genesis 1



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Just like your mom or dad loves you, God loves you.

He makes the world bright during the day. We call that light the sun.

When you go to bed, God's other lights come on in the sky. We call them the moon and the stars.

The sun, the moon and the stars help us to enjoy our lives. On a sunny day, we can run and play outdoors with our friends. With our families, we can go to the seashore for a swim. And at night, we can look up to see the moon and stars shining brightly in the sky. God made all these for you and me.



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

There is a song we sing in church to welcome the beautiful sunrise. It is called Aravod Looso (Morning of Light).

The song was written hundreds of years ago by St. Nersess Shnorhali (St. Nersess the Grace-filled), an Armenian priest.



WE CELEBRATE

Aravod looso.
Arekagn artar.
Arees looys dzakia.

The sun greets me at dawn.
It shines upon the earth.
Light is everywhere.

ARAVOD LOOSO



A - ra - vod loo - so, a - re - kagn ar - tar



ar ees looys dza - kya.



FAMILY PAGE

Welcome to the Family Page. This will be a feature of each lesson. *Sharing Our Faith* relates the theme of the day's lesson. *Living Our Faith* outlines suggested activities that pertain to the lesson's theme; choose one (or more) to do as a family.

Every Sunday, at snack time, your child will recite the Prayer Before Meals (*Jashagestzook*) in English and listen to it being said in Armenian. Encourage your child to say this prayer at home as well. We would like you to help your child memorize the prayer in English. While we do not expect your child to memorize the prayer in Armenian at this time, we want him/her to be familiar with it.

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today's lesson was about Creation. Your child learned that the world is a beautiful gift from God.

God created light, and He remains a light in our lives. In the Armenian Church, there is a hymn called *Aravod Looso* (Morning of Light). The children learned one verse of the hymn in English and the words *Aravod Looso* in Armenian, and they presented it as a beautiful dance-like movement activity.



LIVING OUR FAITH

The world is a gift from God. Introduce your child to the wonders of God's creations. Choose an activity to do with your child:

1. Each night and each morning show him/her how to thank God for His precious gifts through prayer.
2. As a family, gather around a candle. As you light it, thank God for giving us the gift of light. Sing or say in English the first verse of the hymn *Aravod Looso* which has been paraphrased.
3. Pray before meals together:

Ja-sha-ges-tzook kha-gha-ghoo-tyamp uz-ge-ra-goo-rus vor ba-dras-dyal eh mez ee Dyar-neh.

Orh-nyal eh Der ee bar-keh-vus yoor, amen.

Let us in peace eat this meal which has been prepared for us by the Lord.

Blessed is the Lord in His gifts, amen.

Come to My Garden



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Father in Heaven, you made the trees, the flowers and the plants. Help us to care for them and our planet Earth. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

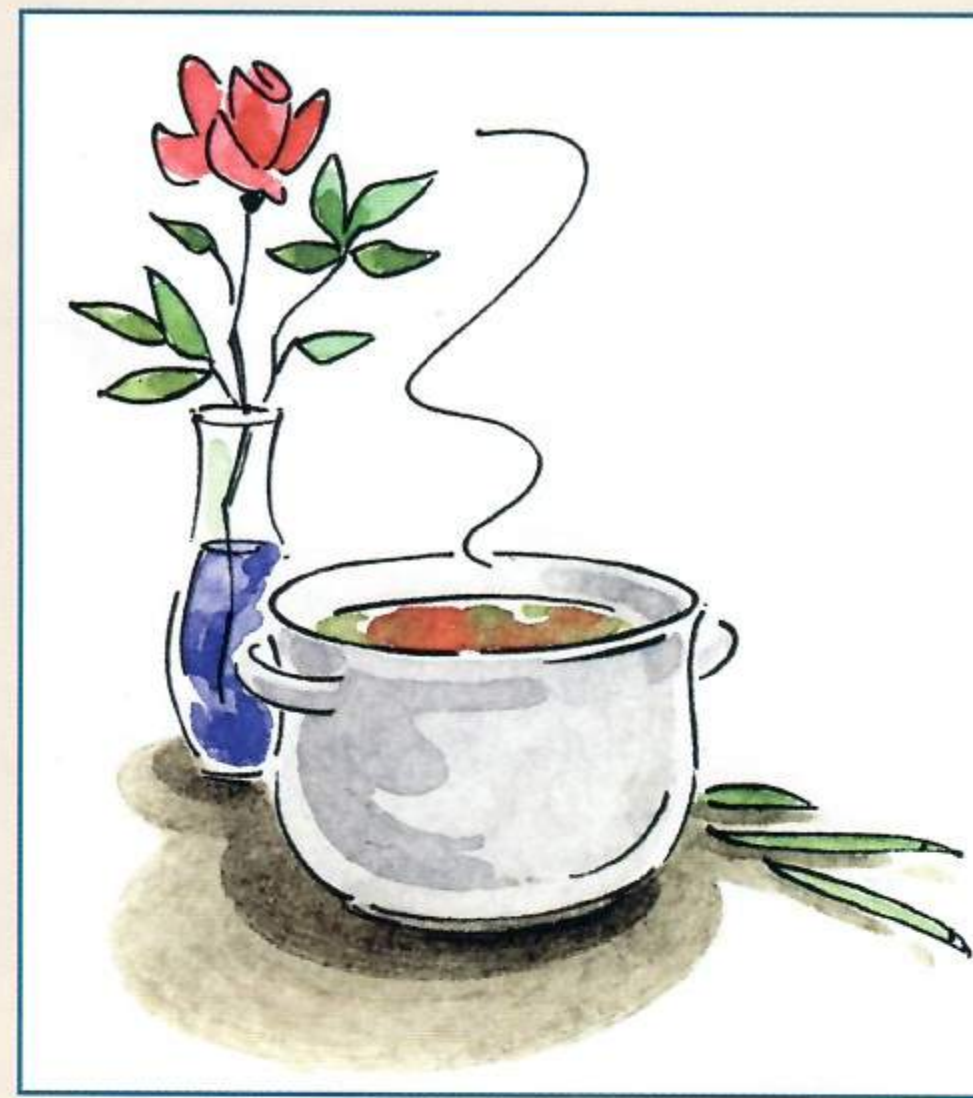
Ani's grandmother loved the flowers in her garden, especially the sweet-smelling red rose which she called the Angel's Kiss. In her garden, grandmother also planted vegetables. On one of her daily walks, she noticed that the green beans were almost ready to be picked. She thought to herself, "I will make a tasty stew with the beans and invite my friends to join me."

Grandma's friends came the very next day. They could smell the perfume of the rose. They also noticed another delicious smell coming from the kitchen. It was the green bean stew!

When the meal was ready, grandmother and her friends sat down to enjoy it together.

They said the prayer before meals. In her heart, Grandma thanked God for his gifts — her friends, the beautiful rose and the green beans from her garden.

This was a special meal. What made it special?



GOD'S WORD TO US

God said, "Let the earth grow plants and flowers, grass and trees." And so it was. God saw that it was good and he smiled."

Genesis 1:10-11

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Close your eyes and imagine how many trees and plants and flowers there are on earth. God made them in different colors, sizes and shapes. These are his gifts to us. He would like us to take care of them.

What are some things we can do to keep the earth beautiful?



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Blessing of the Fields Antasdan

The Armenian Church has a beautiful blessing service called *Antasdan*. Many years ago, the priest and the people actually went out to the fields.

The priest blessed the four corners of the land, and they prayed for rain to make the plants healthy and plentiful.

The priest also prayed for the people, the villages, the churches, the priests, the Catholicos, and the country of Armenia.

WE CELEBRATE



Now, instead of doing the Antasdan service out in the fields, the priest blesses the four corners of the world in church.

One special Sunday when that happens is called the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. On that feast day, the priest holds up a large cross decorated with basil and flowers.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today the children learned that trees, flowers and plants are gifts from God and that we are his caretakers on earth. It is our responsibility to make sure that the trees and plants grow and the flowers bloom. Each in its own way brightens and nourishes our lives.

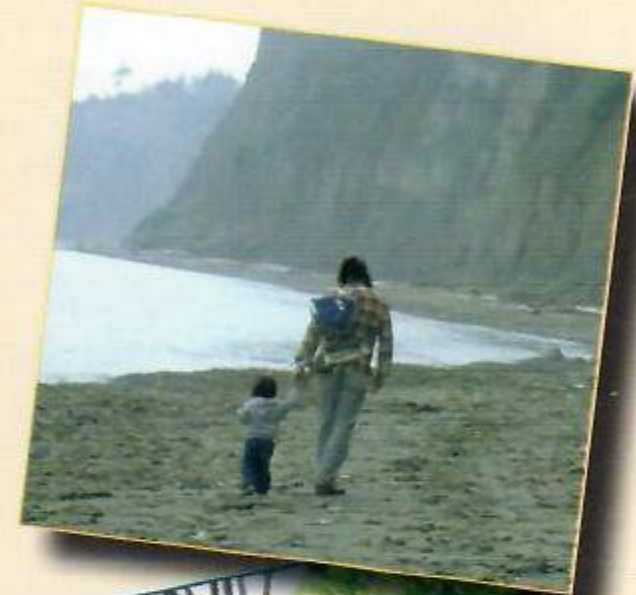
The children also learned about a special service in the Armenian Church called Antasdan, the blessing of the fields.

LIVING OUR FAITH

With your child, become caretakers of the earth. Encourage your child to share with you some of the discussions we had about caring for the earth and the Antasdan service.

From the following, choose an activity to do with your child:

1. Take a nature walk to enjoy the beauty that surrounds us in our daily lives. The Antasdan service was originally done outside, in the fields. Your walk together can be symbolic of that old Armenian tradition.
2. Plant and care for a flower and/or vegetable garden, remembering especially to plant basil.
3. Plan and plant a butterfly garden. Certain flowers and bushes are known to attract butterflies.
4. Feed the birds. Take out books from the library to identify birds that come to your garden. Make a birdbath available. Build a nesting box.
5. Pray before and after meals to thank God for his many gifts.



Bless This Table



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear God, we are thankful to you for giving us families who love us and for the food to help our bodies grow. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

In our prayers, we thank God for the many wonderful things he has given us.

What special gifts has God given to you?

Mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins are all members of your family. They love each other and you, especially! Two very special times to be together is when someone in the family has a birthday or at the baptism of a new-born baby.

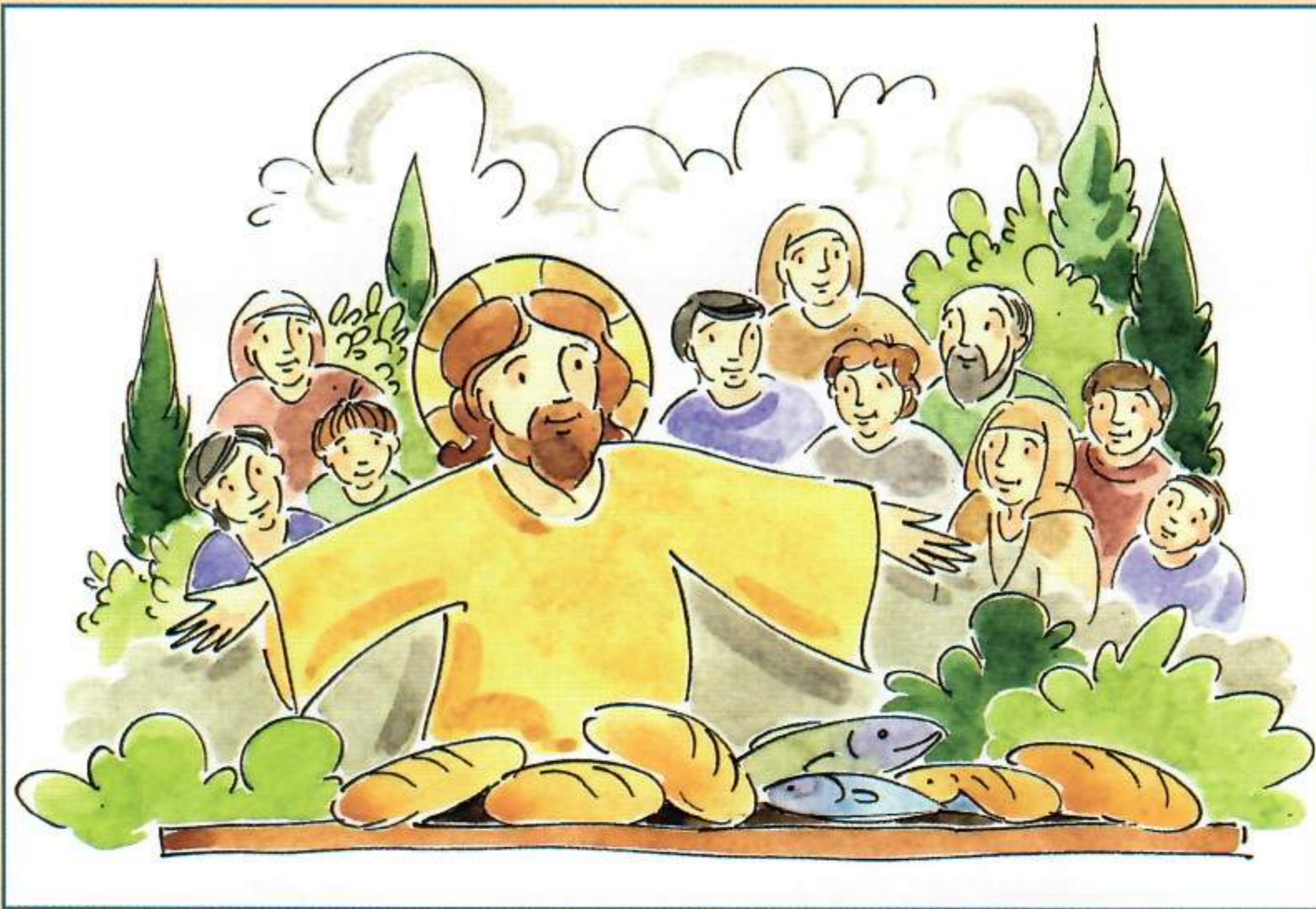
When is your birthday? How do you celebrate it?

When your family is together, say a prayer of thanks to God for giving you a loving family and food to eat.



GOD'S WORD TO US

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One day, the disciples came to Jesus and said, "It is getting late. The people who came to hear you should go to find a place to sleep and get some food to eat."

Jesus answered, "Please find something for them to eat."

The disciples replied, "But we only have five loaves of

bread and two fish." There were at least five thousand people in the crowd!

Jesus took the five loaves of bread and the two fish. He looked up toward heaven and blessed the food. Then he took the bread and the fish and gave them to his disciples to give to the people.

Everyone ate all they wanted, and there was food left over.

Luke 9:10-17

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

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In our lives every day, we are reminded of the kindness of Jesus. There are many 'gifts' that he gives us, and we can say thank you to him. What 'gifts' does Jesus give to *you*? How can you thank him?

Can you say thank you in your evening prayer as you go to bed?

Can you light a candle in church to say thank you?

Can you ask someone at home to help you write a prayer of thanks?

Can you stop wherever you are and say quietly, "Thank you, God, for all you do for me?"



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

In August, when we celebrate the Feast of the Assumption, the priest blesses grapes. At the end of the Badarak, these blessed grapes are given to the people.

The Feast of the Assumption is a special feast day to honor St. Mary, the mother of Jesus.



WE CELEBRATE



Today, you are going to make a place mat to remind you of the miracle of the loaves and the fish.

What can you draw on your place mat to remind you of this miracle?

The place mat will also remind you of the feast day to honor St. Mary, the mother of Jesus.

What can you draw on the place mat to remind you of this feast day?

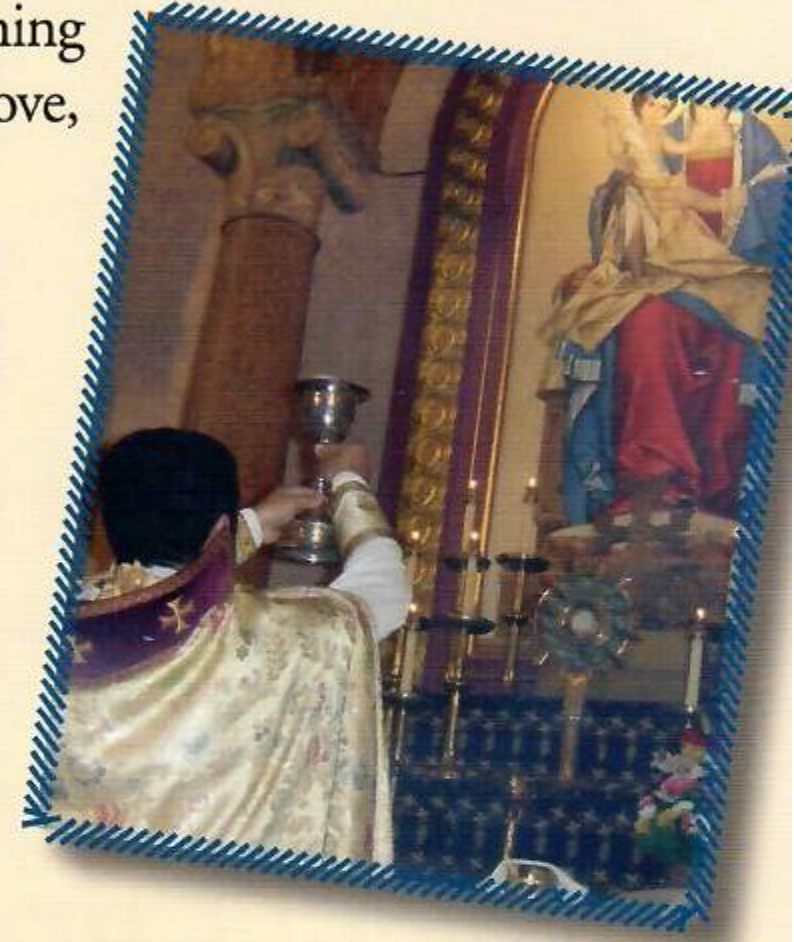


FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today our theme was giving thanks. We talked about families coming together at various times of the year to share the bonds of family love, to share food, and to give thanks to God for all his gifts.

The children heard two stories about giving thanks. One was the miracle of the loaves and the fish. Jesus blessed the food before giving it to the people. The other was the blessing of the grapes which takes place in August on the Feast of the Assumption (one of the five major feast days of the church). At that time, the priest blesses the grapes before giving them to the congregation.



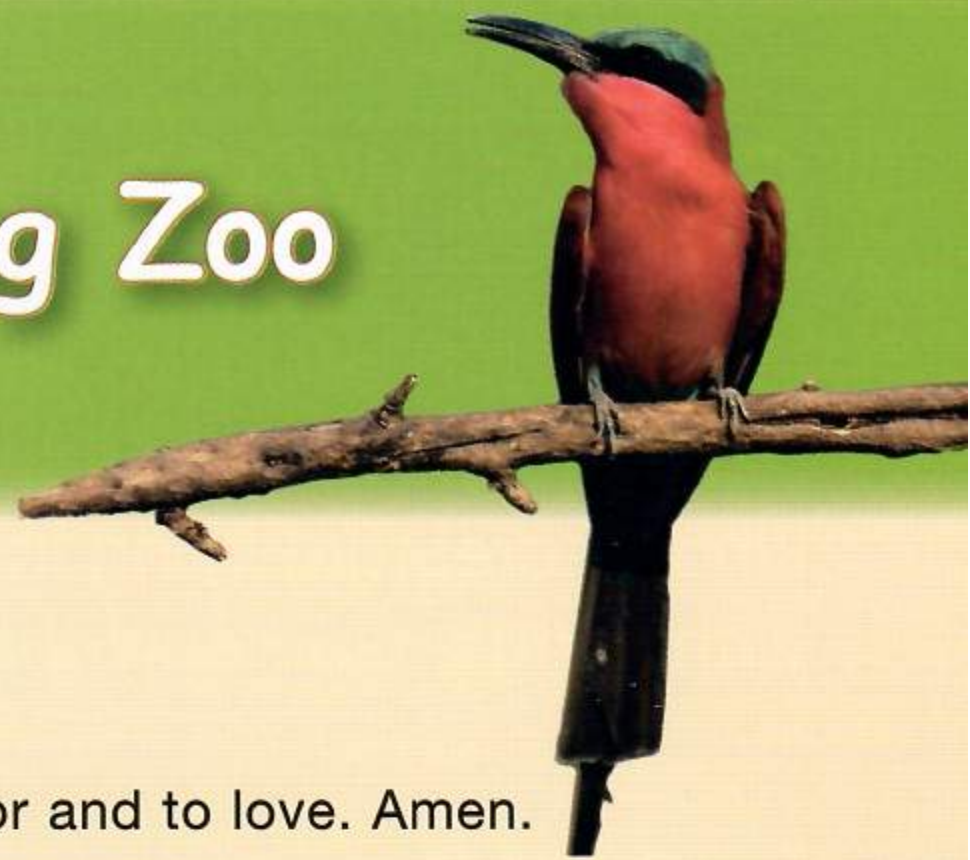
LIVING OUR FAITH

Give thanks to God for his many gifts, the gifts of family, friends and food.

Choose an activity to do with your child:

1. Ask your child to share with you the story of the miracle of the loaves and fish, using the place mat he/she has made.
2. Recite the *Jashagestzook* prayer together before eating a meal to remember God and his gifts.
3. Help your child make a place mat for each member of your family.
4. For your next family event, help your child make a place card with a cross and the name of each guest on it.
5. Help your child write a prayer of thanks. Display it and say it as a family.
6. Help your child light a candle in church to thank God for his many gifts.

God's Amazing Zoo



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.
Thank you, God, for making animals for us to care for and to love. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Animals live in many places on this planet Earth. They live in jungles. They live at the North Pole. They live in the oceans and lakes. They live on farms. They live in our homes.

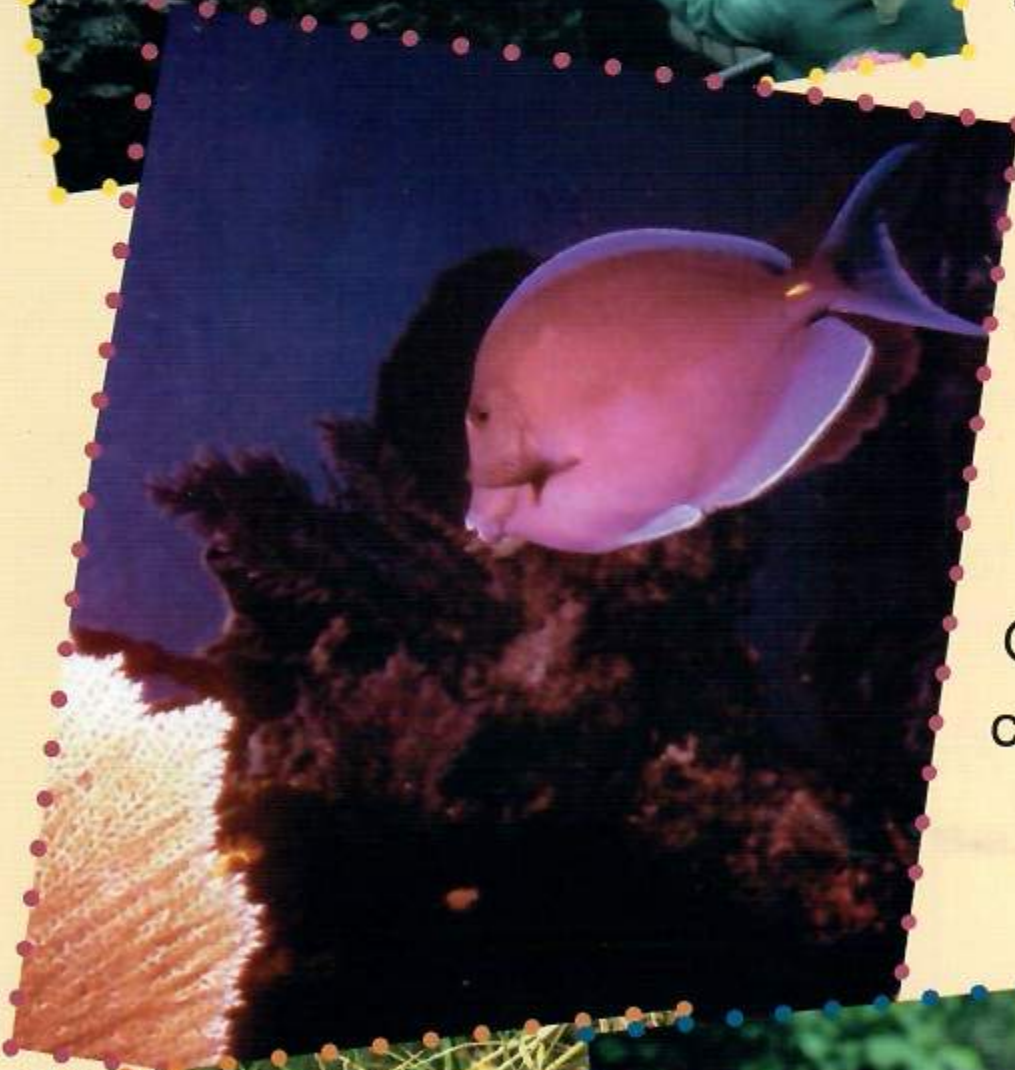
Let us take a pretend visit to some of these places. Here we are at a zoo. What kinds of animals can we see here?

Now let us go to the ocean. What kinds of animals can we find here?

Next let us go to a farm. What kinds of animals can we see here?

Last let us visit a home. What do we see here?

God created the animals. He wants us to take care of them.



GOD'S WORD TO US

God said, "Let the waters be filled with living creatures and let birds fly above the earth." And so it was. God created every kind of creature living in the water and every kind of creature with wings. God saw that it was good and he smiled.

God said, "Let there be every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles and every kind of wild beast." And so it was. God saw that it was good and he smiled.

Genesis 1:20-25

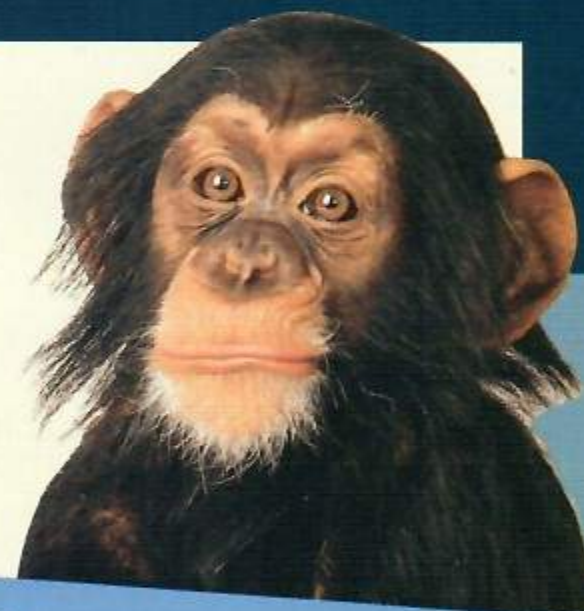
WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

God created the animals. Each one is special.

Watch a bird fly. See a horse gallop. Listen to the roar of a lion. Laugh as a monkey swings on a branch. Enjoy the gentle kisses of a puppy and listen to the happy sounds a kitten makes.

Thank God for all these amazing animals! From the lowly worm that wiggles in the wet grass to the gigantic whale swimming in the ocean – each tells us about God. God has given us the animals and asks us to take care of them. We should always treat them kindly and never hurt them.

What is your favorite animal?



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

A very long time ago in Armenia, artists decorated pages in books with drawings from nature, such as fish, leaves, plants, animals and birds. Even letters of the Armenian alphabet were made to look like birds. These were called *turchnakeer* (bird letters).



WE CELEBRATE

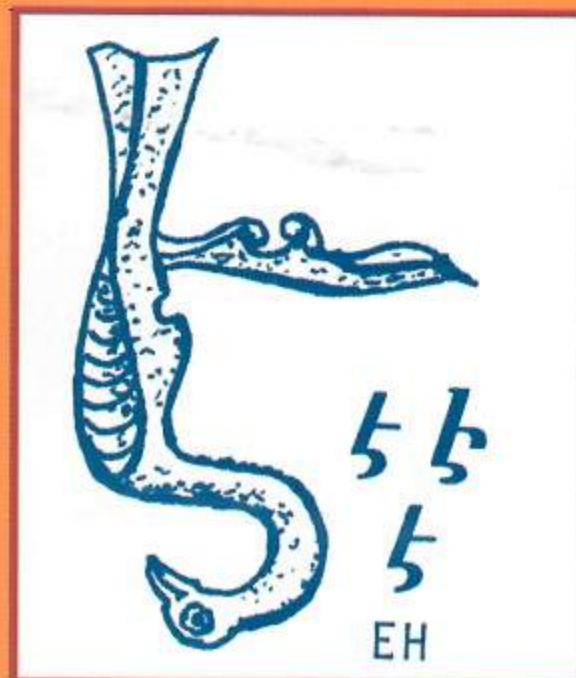
Here are some bird letters.

This is the first letter of the Armenian alphabet.



This letter can be found in Armenian churches.

It means that God is always with us.





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH



Today, in our lesson, the children learned that God created the animals for us, and it was his wish that we care for them. It says in Scripture that he created them and then he blessed them.

The animals remind us of God's wondrous work – the Creation.

LIVING OUR FAITH



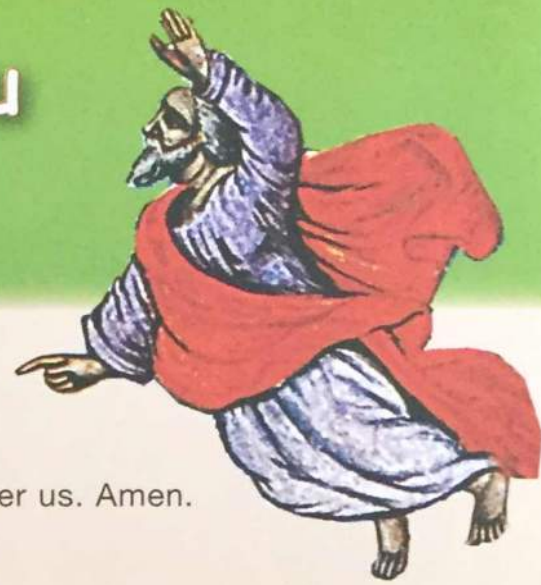
Whether or not there is a pet in your household, you can teach your child the importance of caring for domestic animals or pets and treating them with kindness.

With your child, plan to do one of the following:

1. Visit the local library to take out picture books and non-fiction books about animals.
2. Plan a visit to a zoo with your family. God, the Giver of all life, created these wild creatures as well. He has given us the gifts of creation – the earth, the sky, the water, stars, the sun and the moon and, especially the animals.
3. Bird Letters (*turchnakeer*) and other drawings from nature have decorated ancient Armenian manuscripts since early times. Bird Letters flourished in the 12th-14th centuries. In class, the children were each given a Bird Letter to correspond to the first letter of their names. Ask your child to tell you about it.



God Made You and Me



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear God, you love us all and made us to be like you. Watch over us. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



The beach was crowded with lots of people.

Near the edge of the water, Lucy and Ara were digging tunnels in the sand.

When it was lunchtime, their mothers called to them and told them that lunch was ready.

But Lucy and Ara did not move.

"Your tunnel is bumping into mine," Ara said to Lucy.

Lucy answered, "I was here first."

Then...

Imagine you are Ara or Lucy. What would God want you to do or to say to the other person?

What would make Lucy and Ara happy to be together?

GOD'S WORD TO US

God said, "I will make a man and a woman. I will make them to be like me. They will be masters of the fish in the sea, the birds, the cattle, the wild beasts and the reptiles that crawl upon the earth."



And so God created man and woman, and he blessed them. God was pleased and he smiled.

Genesis 1:26-27

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Look around you. God created each one of us as a sign of his love. Whenever you say kind words or do kind acts to someone, you are spreading God's love to everybody.

What about Ara and Lucy in the story?



At first, they did not think about each other's feelings. Thanks to your help, we ended the story with Lucy and Ara sharing the sand and a new friendship.

God's love for us keeps growing because we are thoughtful and helpful to others.

The Bible tells us that *God is love*. That means that he loves us, all of us. When you go home today, tell your parents and grandparents about God's love. Show them that you love them as God loves you.


OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Here is my name in English letters.


Here is my name in Armenian letters.





WE CELEBRATE



God made each one of us with love. Although we are the same in many ways, we are different, too. Look at your friend sitting next to you. Look at his or her hair. Is it the same as yours? Look at his or her eyes. Are they the same as yours?



We are all made by God, but we are not all the same.



Take a moment to think about the children all over the world. Here is a prayer you can say for them and for you.

I pray for all the children of the world.
I pray for those who are sick.
I pray for those who are hungry.



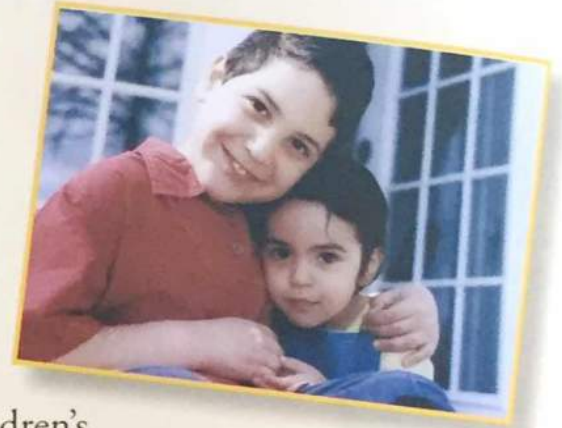
FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

“Love one another as I have loved you,” Jesus said.

The theme of today’s lesson was love. God’s love for us began in Creation, in a perfect time and place the Bible describes as “The Garden of Paradise.” The story of that love does not end in that garden. It continues in the gardens we call “home.”

With the psalmist we pray that we may “live to see our children’s children” in a world of peace and love.



(Psalm 128:6)

LIVING OUR FAITH

We can model and teach tolerance and compassion for others as a family, in our homes. By loving others, Scripture tells us, paradise comes alive again in our hearts.

1. From the library, take out books about children from different countries.
2. Learn to say “hello” in different languages.

Հարկա

Armenian

Hola

Spanish

Hallo

German

Γεια σου

Greek

Ciao

Italian

Moi

Finnish

Salut

French

Olá

Portuguese

Здравствуйτε

Russian

God is Love

WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear God in heaven, you fill our world with love. Help us to be friends with each another and to live in peace. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Imagine yourself on a merry-go-round like the ones you see on this page.

Are you having fun?

Are you holding tight so you do not fall off?

Are you laughing?

Are you feeling dizzy as the merry-go-round goes round and round?

Who is with you on the ride?

When the ride stops spinning, you might squeal, "Can we go around again?" A person starts the big motor, and the merry-go-round begins to turn once more.

The world is like a giant merry-go-round. It can be a happy place, filled with the laughter of children, with families sharing together and living in peace and love. Love is what makes our world such a special place.





GOD'S WORD TO US

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Jesus said,
“My children,
love one another.
Just as I love
you, you also
must love one
another.”

John 13:34

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

.....

Like our fathers and mothers love us, God loves us too. God shows us his love by giving us the gifts of this world to enjoy. He gives us love through our parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, teachers and friends. What God wants in return is for us to share this love with others.

How do your parents show their love for you? How do you share God's love with your family and your friends?



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Our God is a loving God. He is a caring God. He is a forgiving God.
God loves us, and so we say God is love. Asdvadz ser eh..

Աստուած սէր է:

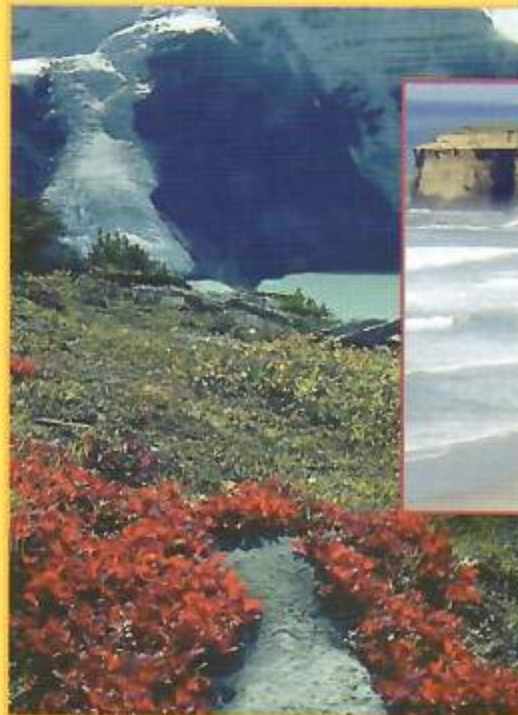
WE CELEBRATE

We celebrate God's love for us by chanting
Love One Another:

God made the land
And God made the sea.
God made the animals
And he made me.

God put the stars up in the sky.
And when he was done,
He did sigh.

Love one another.
Love one another.
Love one another.
As I love you.





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

In John 13:34, we read that Jesus tells us “just as I have loved you, you also must love one another.” This week your child has learned what that means – that through our families, we share in God’s love. God wants us to share this love with others.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Your loving presence in your child’s life makes love real. The family circle is a sanctuary of faith and love, a place from which each child can count on mom or dad, grandma, grandpa, uncle, aunt, brother or sister to embrace him or her in love.

When you first looked into your child’s eyes, you were “recruited.” From that moment on, a bond of unbreakable love was created.

Choose an activity to do with your child:

1. Asdvadz ser eh (God is love). Ask your child to join you in saying these words. When you hold your child, say the words, “I love you. God loves you. Asdvadz ser eh.”
2. Help your child make get-well cards and birthday cards to send to family members.
3. Make a phone call to grandparents to say “I love you. Asdvadz ser eh.”
4. With your child chant God is love and share its message with your family.



Noah and a New World



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the new life you gave us through Noah and his family. Thank you for the promise in your rainbow! Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

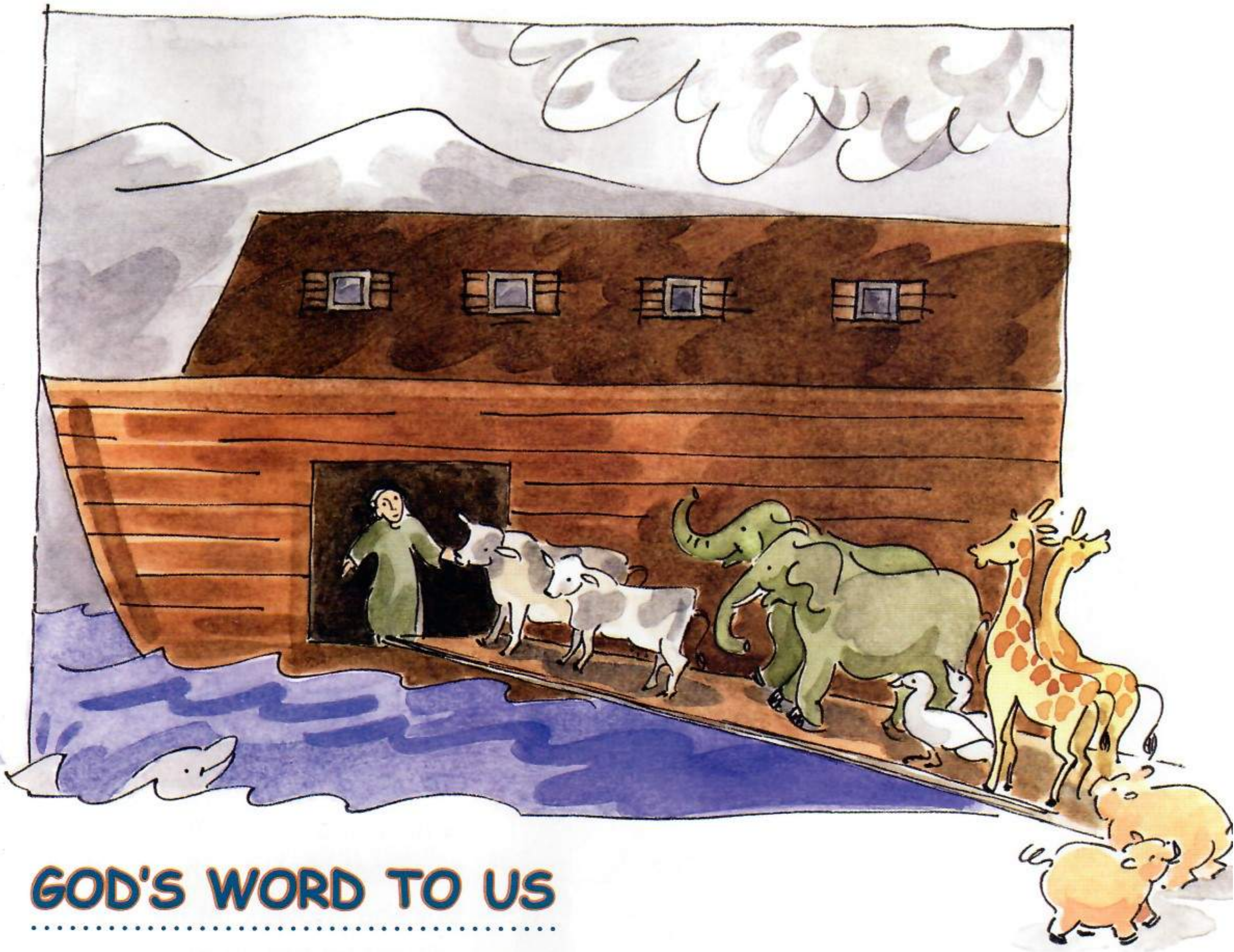
“A rainy day,” Ani sighs. The rain is pounding against her bedroom window. She can see large puddles everywhere. She would like to go outside to splash through the puddles, but she knows that her mother will not let her go out on such a rainy day.

She continues to look out of the window. Where are the birds? Where are they hiding? Are they using the tree as a giant umbrella?

Ani tries to coax the dog to go outside. Even *he* does not want to go out on this wet day; instead he hides behind the sofa.

Today no one seems to be outside.

It is raining even harder now. Ani can barely see the house of her friend, Sonia, who lives across the street. “When will the rain stop?” Ani sighs again.



GOD'S WORD TO US

God was pleased with Noah because he was a kind and honest man. Noah did not forget God. However, there were many people who did forget him, and God was not happy with them. "Make an ark out of wood," God said to Noah. Take two of every kind of animal with you." Without asking why, Noah did what God told him to do.

God made it rain for forty days and forty nights. When the rain stopped, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat in Armenia. Noah sent a dove to search for dry land. The dove flew back with an olive branch. Noah was certain that the waters were beginning to go down.

When the earth was completely dry, God told Noah to leave the ark. "This will be your new home," He said. And a rainbow appeared in the sky to remind Noah that God loved him. *Genesis 6-9*

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Have you ever taken a walk after a spring rain shower and noticed a beautiful rainbow in the sky?

Did you ever see a worm, after a rainstorm, poking its head out of the dirt to get some air?

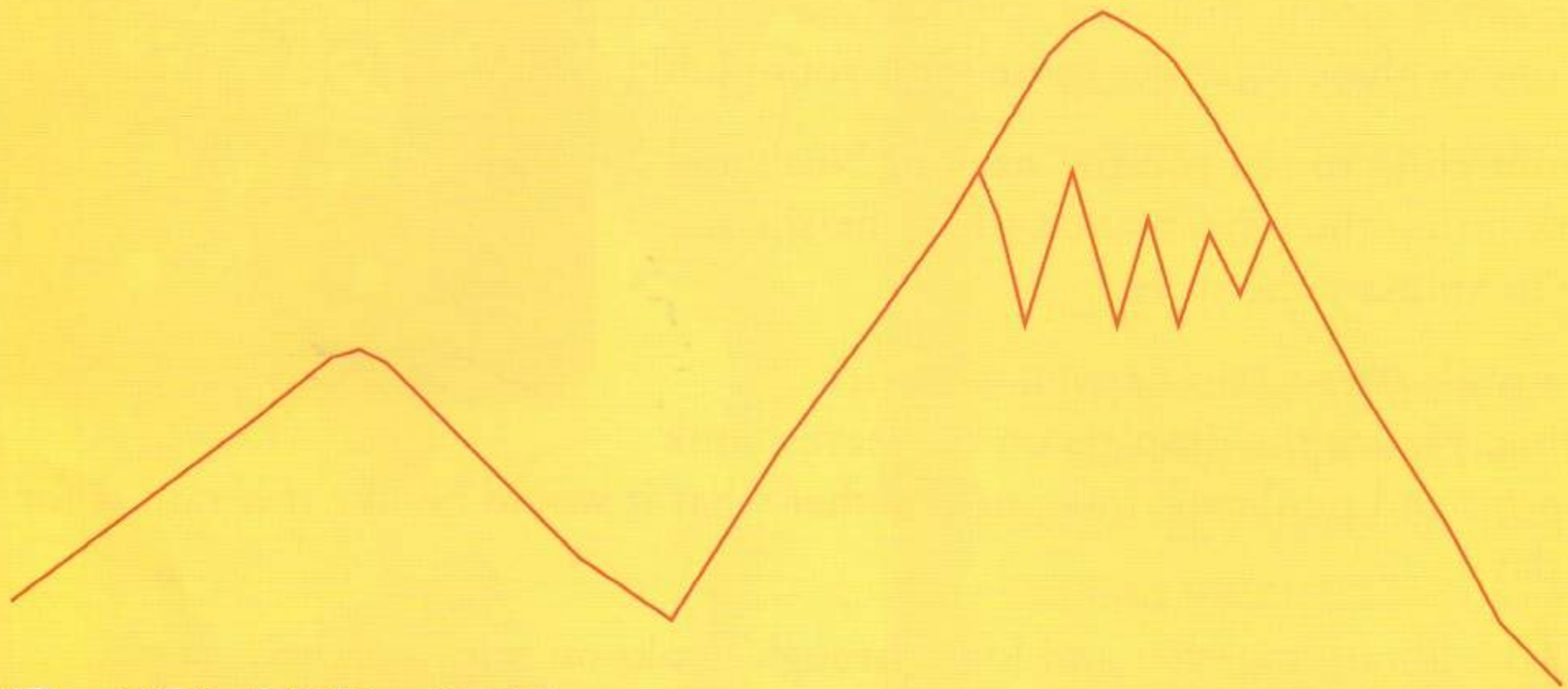
Did you ever hear the twittering of birds as they dip into puddles and shake their wings?

Let all these things remind you of Noah who obeyed God without asking why.



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Mt. Ararat, where Noah's ark landed, has two peaks. Both peaks are always snow-covered. Many people have tried to climb to the top of the mountain to see if they can find Noah's ark. Some people think they found it!



WE CELEBRATE



Once more the gentle dove is the messenger of God. Noah sent the dove to search for dry land. If it returned with a branch, it would be a sign that the waters were going down. Noah and his family would be able to leave the ark and begin to make a new home, and the animals would populate the earth.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

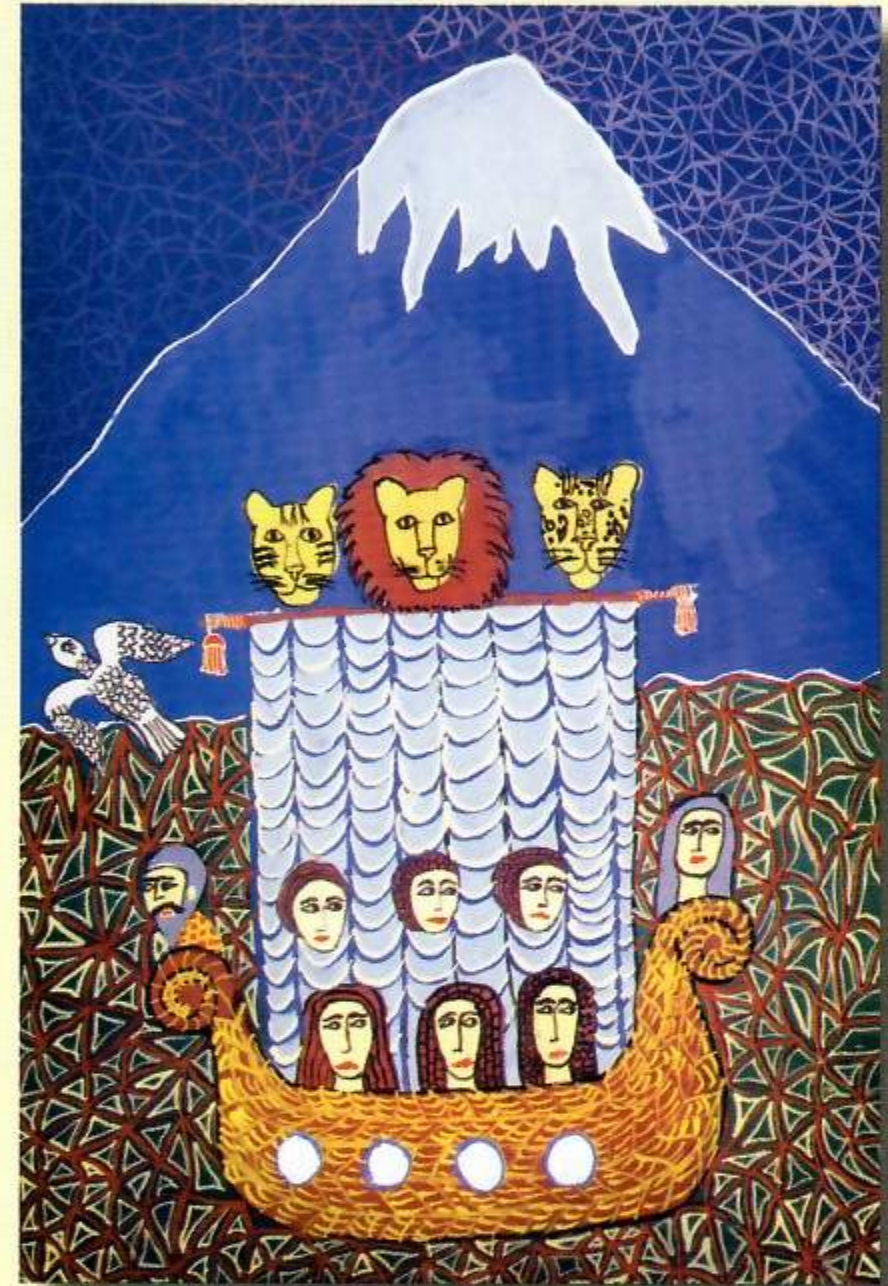
Today's lesson was about Noah, his goodness and his devotion to God. God instructed Noah to build an ark for himself and his family and two of every kind of animal. They survived forty days and nights of rain, coming to rest on Mt. Ararat.

LIVING OUR FAITH

God put a rainbow in the sky. It was his final message to Noah and to mankind that he would never destroy everything again.

Choose one of these activities to do with your child:

1. Ask your child to tell you the story of Noah and the ark, using the olive branch which he/she has made to animate the story.
2. Take a walk after a rain or even when it's drizzling. Notice the droplets on the leaves; look for worms and rainbows. Imagine together what it would be like if it rained for forty days!
3. Go to the library together and look through books on rain, weather, water.



Mary the Mother of Jesus



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyv Srpo.

Dear God, we thank you for your Son, Jesus. You sent your angel, Gabriel, to announce the news to Mary. She was chosen to be the Mother of Jesus. We thank you also for our mothers, aunts, grandmothers and godmothers who love us and care for us. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

A woman named Mother Theresa of Calcutta was called Mother by thousands of people. She cared for very sick people in India. She never had children of her own. Yet she loved the children she took care of as if they were her own. When Mother Theresa was asked how she could keep taking care of the sick day after day, she would smile and say, "I am doing something beautiful for God."

Another woman to know is Tsuveeg. She was the daughter of an Armenian

prince. Although she had children of her own, she took care of other children who needed her attention and love as if they were her very own. She and other Armenian women made certain that these children went to school and were raised having faith in God. These children grew up remembering Tsuveeg and the other women who loved them and cared for them. Tsuveeg also did something beautiful for God.

What is something beautiful *you* can do for God?



GOD'S WORD TO US

God sent the angel Gabriel to the town of Nazareth with a message for a young girl named Mary. "Do not be afraid. God has sent me to tell you that he is pleased with you. You will have a son and his name will be Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of God."

Through the words of the angel, God spoke to Mary. She trusted every word the angel spoke. She said, "I will obey the Lord."

And then the angel left her. *Luke 1:26-38*



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

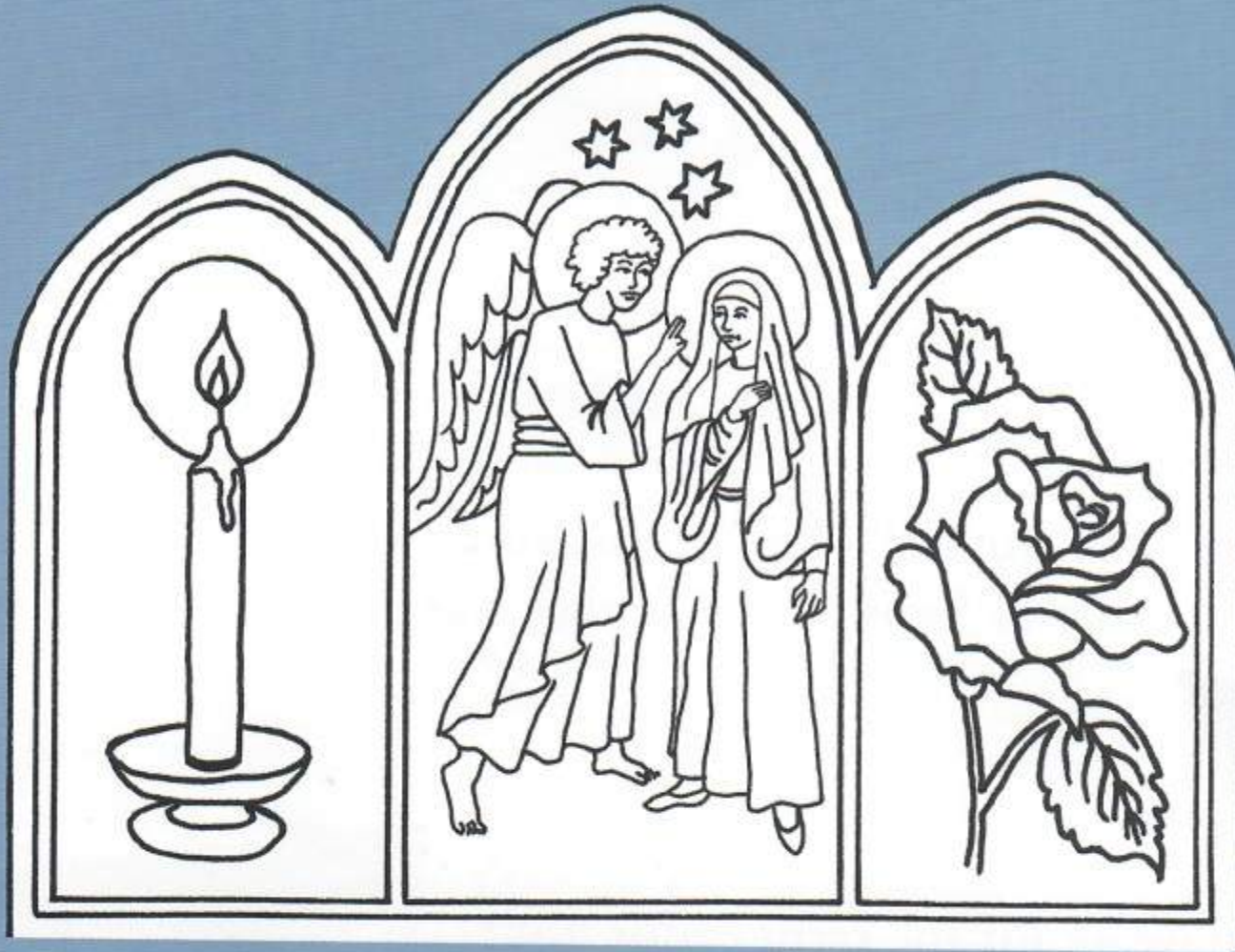


Jesus loved and respected his mother. She also loved him very much and was often at his side during difficult times.

Think about the people who love you, especially your mother. Like Mary, she is there to watch over you and to care for you. When you are sick or disappointed, she is there. When you are tired or hungry, she is there. When you need a special hug, she is there.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

A triptych is a group of three pictures that tell a story.



WE CELEBRATE

Ma-ree-am=Mary
Soorp=holy
may-reeg=mother



MARY'S SONG

3

You are ble - sed Ma - ree - am,
soorp may - reeg soorp Ma - ree - am.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

In today's lesson, the children heard the story of The Annunciation, when the angel Gabriel told Mary that she would be the mother of Jesus. Jesus' mother was very special to Jesus as you are special to your child.

LIVING OUR FAITH

A kiss, a smile, a hug, another drawing for the refrigerator door – all of these show how much you mean to your child. These simple acts and your loving response to them mean so much to the child who loves you.

Choose one of the activities to do with your child.

1. Using the triptych, encourage your child to retell the story of The Annunciation.
2. Place the triptych in a special place in your home.
3. Join with your child to sing or to say Mary's Song.
4. Let your child honor his or her grandmothers by drawing pictures, by talking to them on the telephone and by singing Mary's Song to them.
5. Let him or her help you in small ways around the house.



Jesus is the Light of the World



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Jesus, you are the light of the whole world. You came to show us the way. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Do you have a cousin or a close friend? Do you look forward to seeing them at Sunday School or at family gatherings? Do you have play dates? When you are together, do you play without hurting each other's feelings? Do you share games and toys with each other? Do you help each other?

Your teacher will write your friend's name or cousin's name here. _____



Did you know that Jesus had a cousin? His name was John. Jesus and John were cousins as well as good friends. When they grew older, John visited many towns to tell the people about Jesus. "Jesus has come to help you," he said. "He is the Son of God. Listen to him. He reminds us of God's love. God will forgive you if you are truly sorry for any wrong-doing."

GOD'S WORD TO US



Jesus was with us from the beginning of time. He was with God the Father when he created the stars and the sun and the people and the animals of the world.

His cousin John told the people that Jesus was so full of love for the world that he was like a bright light, like a light that shines in the darkness.

Some people did not understand how important Jesus was, and so they stayed at home. But those who followed him became

God's special children. Everyone has a mother or a father, but God became the Father to everyone who believed in his Son. *John 1:1-13, 8:12*

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

God sent his only Son, Jesus, to remind us that God loves us. Jesus came to make the world a better place. Jesus' birth is good news to everyone.

Think about a person who loves you and helps you and forgives you. Draw a picture of that person in this space.



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Jrakalooztz is a service that occurs the Saturday evening before Christmas and the Saturday evening before Easter. People go to church to celebrate the coming of these two great feasts. As part of the celebration, all of the candles and lanterns in the church are lit.



These Saturday night services are called Jrakalooztz. In Armenian the word for lantern is jrak, and looytz comes from the word "to light."

WE CELEBRATE

Lanterns in the church,
flickering and bright,
Celebrate the feast.

LANTERNS IN THE CHURCH



Lan - terns in the church, fli - cker - ing and bright,



ce - le - brate the feast.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today we talked about many things — the special relationship between two friends, the kind of friend who is there to help and to support, to share and to give. Such was the relationship between Jesus and his cousin John the Baptist.

The children learned that John's mission was to prepare the people for Jesus' coming.

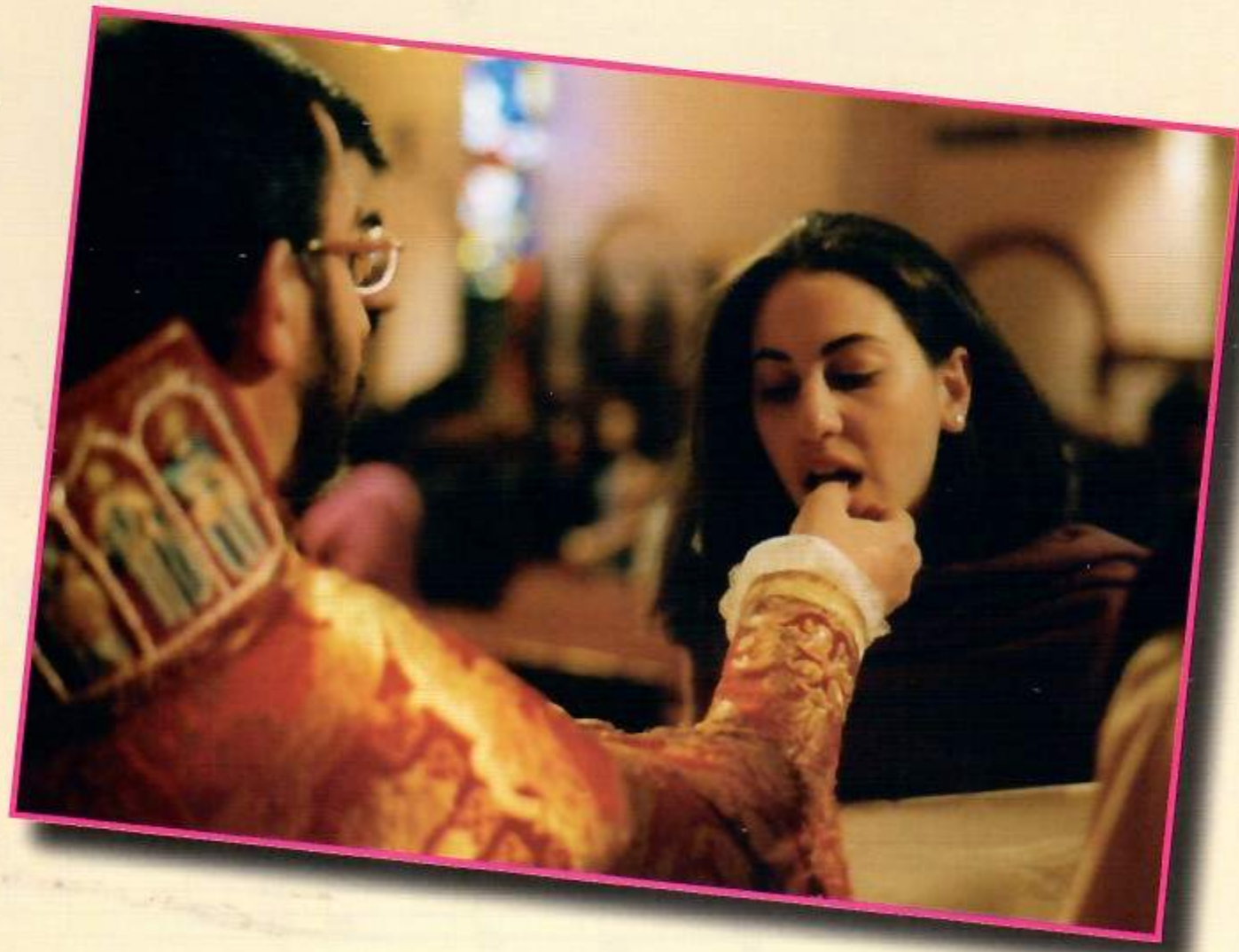
The Jrakalooytz service is held on the night before the two great feasts of Christmas and Easter. The children made lanterns to symbolize all of the lights and candles that are lit at this evening service.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Why did God send Jesus? Through Jesus, God's message of love and forgiveness would be shared throughout the land, and it would resound forever and ever.

Choose an activity to share with your child.

1. Share the message of love. Send cards to loved ones.
2. As a family partake in the sacrament of Holy Communion.
3. Attend the Jrakalooytz service the evening before Armenian Christmas.



A Holy Family



WE PRAY TOGETHER



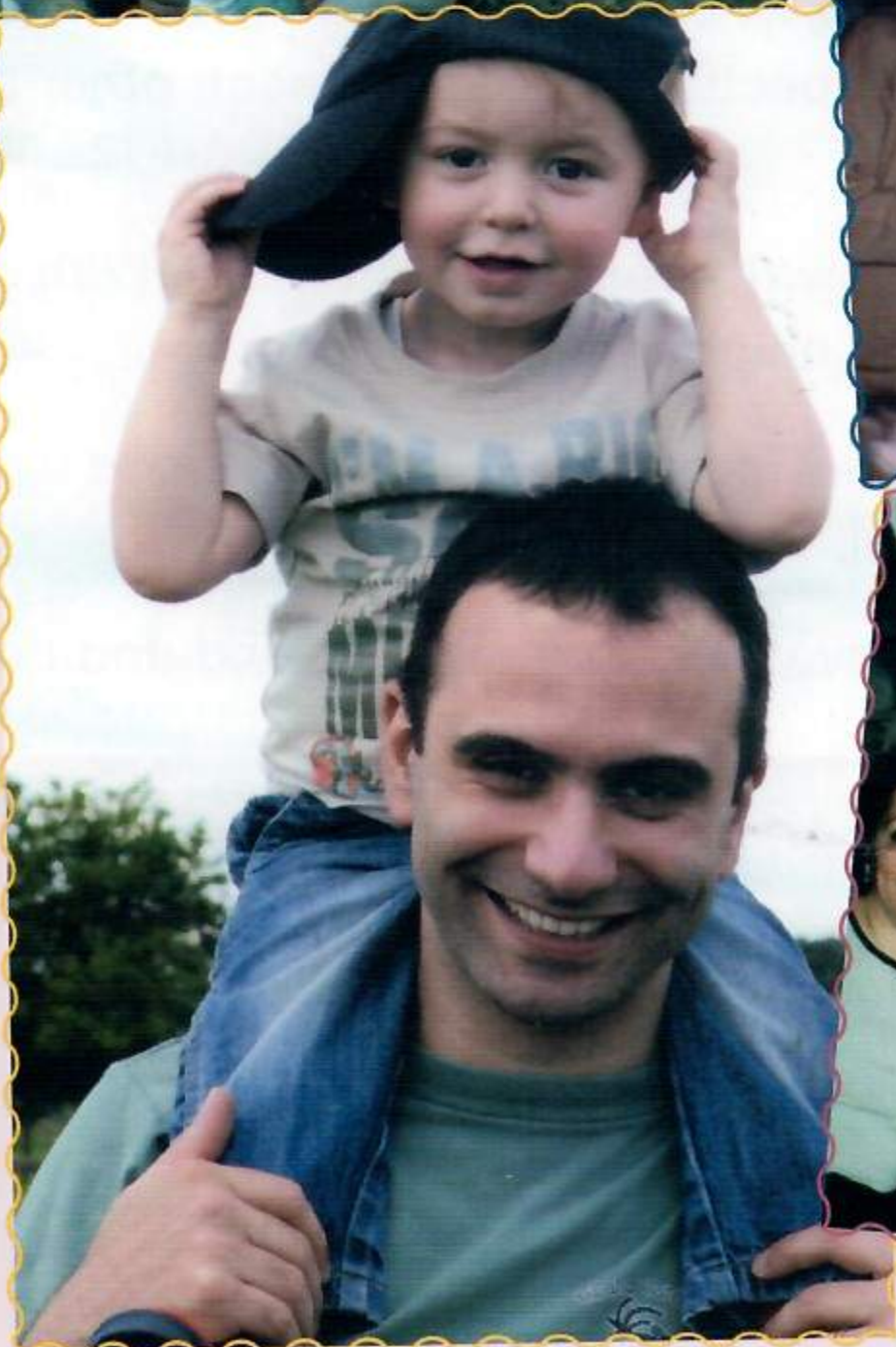
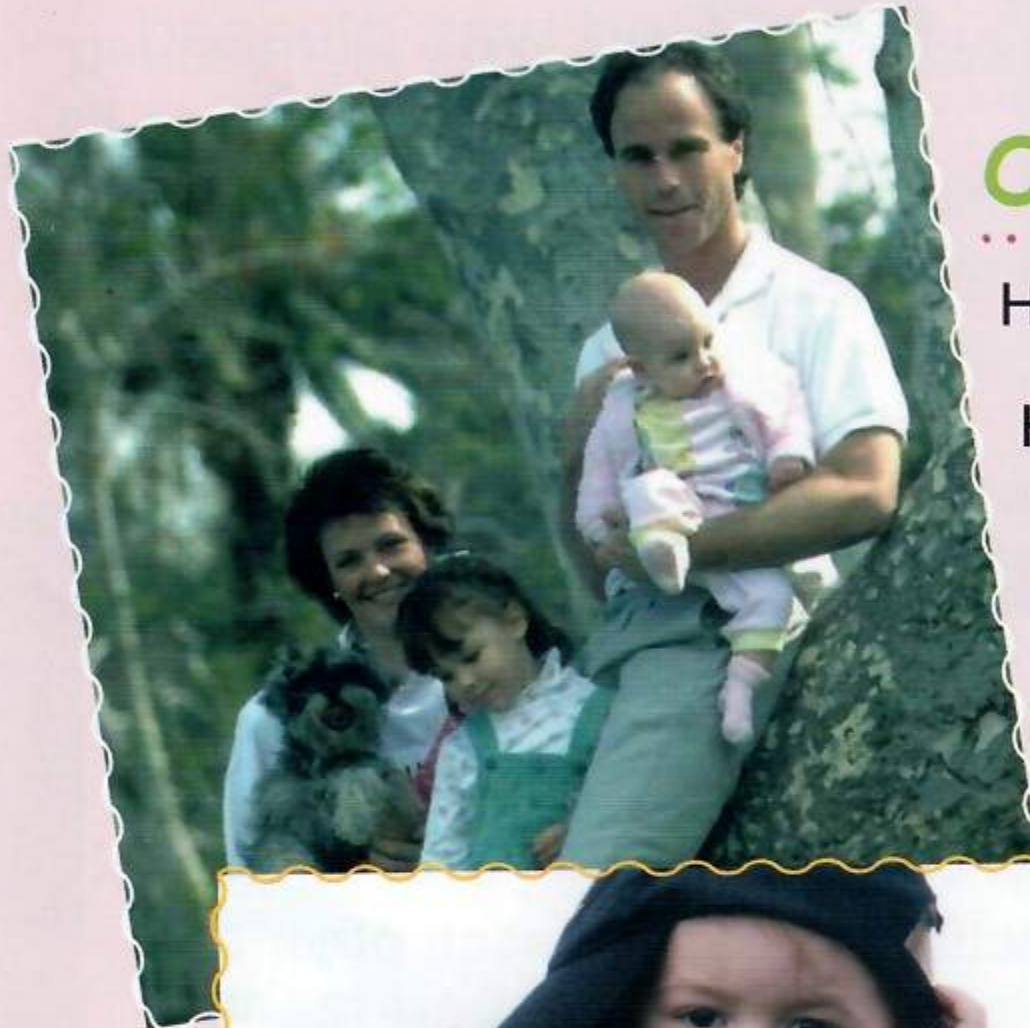
Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooy'n Srpo.

Dear God, we pray for our families and families all over the world. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

How many families do you see?

How do we know these families are happy?
What are they doing that shows us they are happy?



GOD'S WORD TO US



Jesus and his parents went back to their home in Nazareth. The years passed, and Jesus grew strong and wise. He loved his parents and obeyed them. God was pleased with him.

Luke 2:51-52

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Jesus, Mary and Joseph were a loving family. They showed their love for God and for one another by being thoughtful, respectful and kind to each other and to their neighbors in the village.

Joseph was a carpenter. He taught Jesus how to be a carpenter, too. With Jesus' help, Joseph made furniture for their neighbors and friends.

Our families are like this holy family. We love God, and we share his love with others by being thoughtful, kind and helpful.

What are some ways we can share God's love? How can we be kind and helpful to others?

The Litany for Families

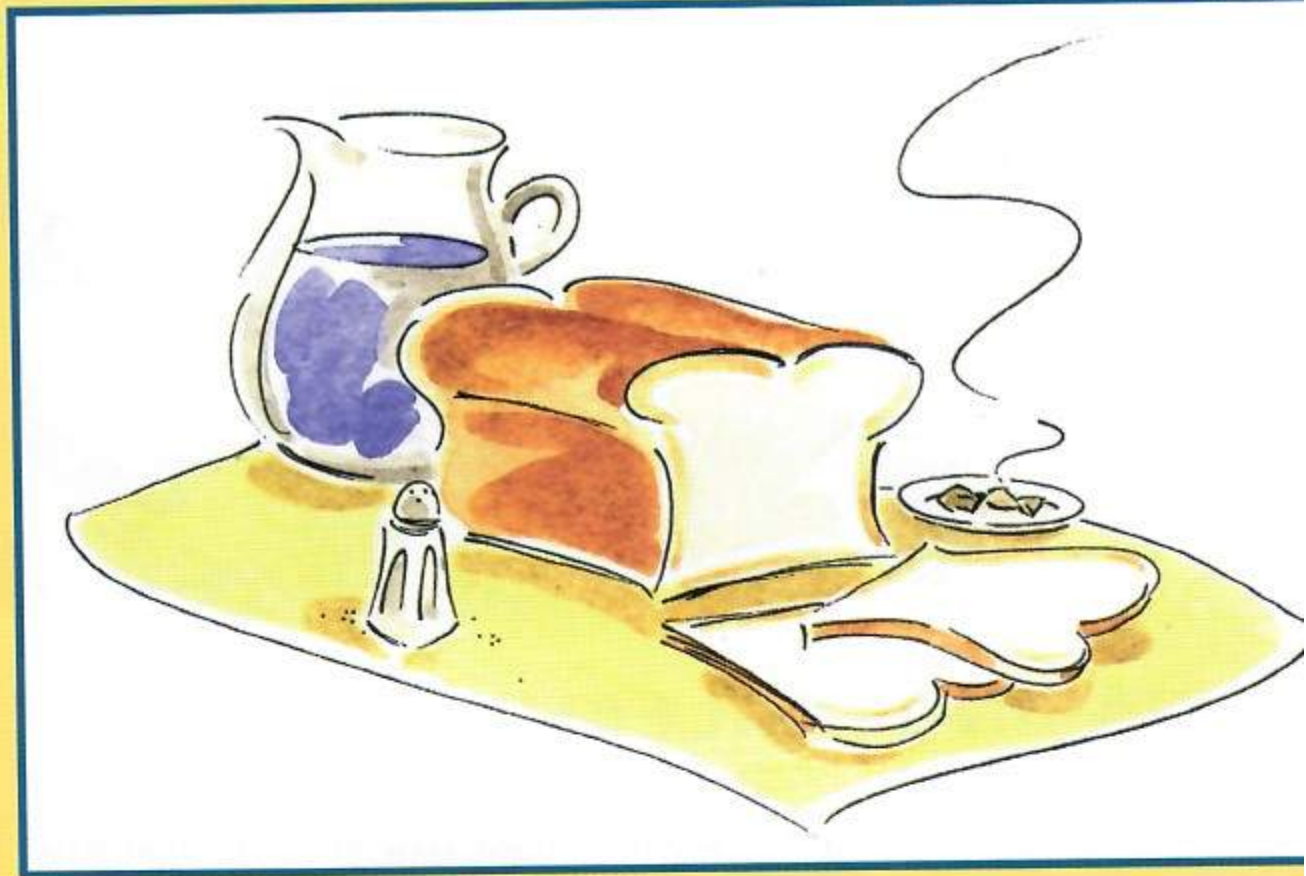
God bless everyone of us,
You and you and me.
All of us belong
to God's holy family.



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

.....

In the Armenian Church, there is a beautiful service called the “Blessing of the Home” (D’norhnek). God’s blessing brings peace, faith and love to the family.



Homes are usually blessed during the Christmas and Easter seasons. On the day when the priest comes to the home for the D’norhnek, the following things are given by the family to the priest for blessing:

Bread (Hahtz). We eat bread every day. It is an important part of our diet.

Water (Choor). We need water to live! Water should also remind us of our baptism.

Salt (Agh). Salt gives flavor to food. It also reminds us to live a God-pleasing life.

The priest brings with him:

Incense (Khoong). The smoke of the burning incense rising upward reminds us of prayers rising to heaven, and it is a reminder that we must pray.

WE CELEBRATE

.....

“All of the families of the earth shall be blessed.” Acts 3:25

The priest offers this prayer: “May this house and all its gifts be blessed and this family be protected by the sign of the Holy Cross and the Holy Gospel.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit now and always and for ever.” Amen.





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

The theme of today's lesson was the wholeness and holiness of families. Jesus, Mary and Joseph were a very special and holy family. You and your child(ren) are a holy family, too. Ask your child to tell you about the Holy Family and their early life in Nazareth.

The children learned that holiness and happiness begin right in their own homes, through the many loving acts of *sharing, hugging, smiling, giving* and *helping*, initiated and shared by you or another member of your family.

The Home Blessing (D'norhnek) service is another way that we can become a part of God's kingdom. God's blessing brings peace, unity, harmony, faith and, above all, love.

“And in your posterity shall all the families of the earth be blessed.” (Acts 3:25)

LIVING OUR FAITH

The key to holiness in your family is *you*. The way you live your daily life will be an example for your children to follow. Our example is the Holy Family who shared in God's love and who expressed this love for each other and to others through loving kindness and respect.

With your child, choose one or more of the following activities:

1. Arrange to have your house blessed.
2. Check in on an elderly neighbor just to say hello.
3. Go shopping for an elderly or ill neighbor.
4. Bake cookies for a neighbor who is homebound.
5. Draw cheerful pictures to bring to a lonely neighbor.
6. Recite “The Litany for Families” for grandparents.



This is My Son



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyv Srpo.

Dear God, your Son Jesus always made you happy. Help us to be like him in all we say and do. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Vahan was eight years old. His brother Alex was five. Vahan, Alex, their parents, cousins and friends were in church for the baptism of Vahan's and Alex's baby sister. Everyone came except Grammy, Medz Mama. She was not able to travel.

Later that afternoon, Vahan's father said, "Why don't you write a letter to Medz Mama and tell her about Araxie's baptism? That will make her very happy. I will help you."

"I want to tell Grammy all about it," and he began to write ...

Dear Grammy,

We went to church this morning for Araxie's baptism. I was sad you could not be with us. Araxie cried a lot when Uncle Kevork handed her to Der Hayr. Der Hayr said some prayers and put her in something like a tub. When she was dried off, the priest put Holy Oil on her body. Then Auntie Susan dressed Araxie in white clothes. Der Hayr carried her to the Altar to give her Holy Communion. Daddy helped me spell that word. Araxie did not cry for that part. Mommy said that Araxie is part of God's family now.

We will come to see you soon and will bring some pictures of the baptism.

Love,

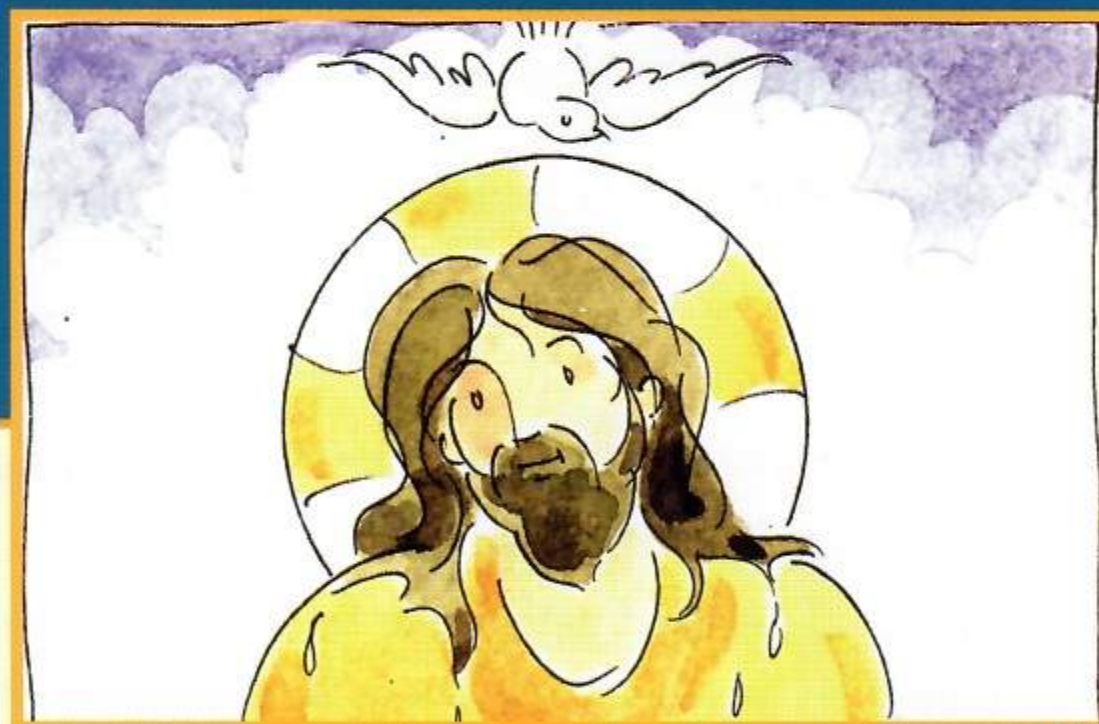
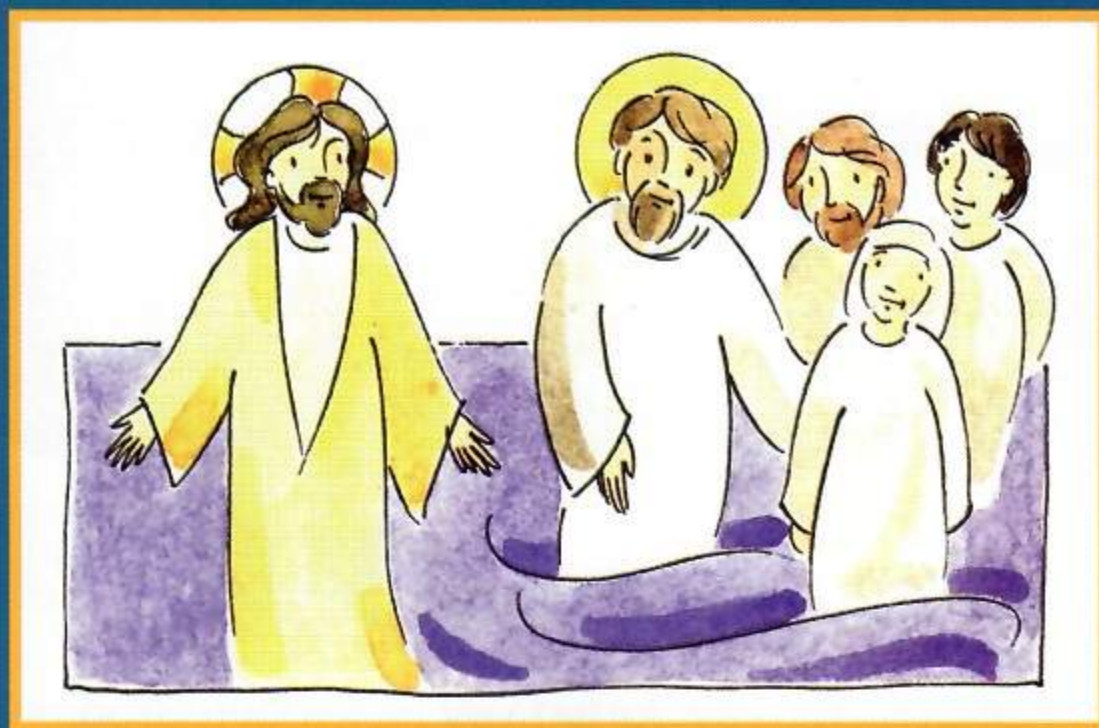
Vahan



GOD'S WORD TO US

Jesus left Galilee and went to the River Jordan because he heard that his cousin, John, was baptizing people there. Jesus wanted John to baptize him. John was happy to see Jesus, and he asked, "Why have you come to me? You should baptize me."

Jesus answered, "For now, this is how God wants it to be." John baptized Jesus. As soon as Jesus came out of the water, a dove, sent by God, came down from the sky and a voice from heaven said, "This is my dear Son, and I am pleased with him." *Matthew 3:13-16*



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD



God the Father and God the Holy Spirit were always with Jesus, the Son of God. At Jesus' baptism, the Father and the Holy Spirit were there. The dove appeared as the Holy Spirit, and God the Father uttered the beautiful words from the heavens, "This is my beloved Son." The people heard the words of God, saw the beautiful white dove and knew that Jesus was the Son of God.

Following the example of Jesus, babies are baptized, too. In this way, they become a part of God's family.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

All of the people who attend a baptism are special. But there are two very special people – the godfather and the godmother. At Araxie’s baptism, Uncle Kevork was the godfather and Auntie Susan was the godmother.

The godfather and the godmother have special duties. The godfather speaks for and presents the baby. The godmother brings the white clothing for the baby’s baptism. The godfather and the godmother both have another very important duty. They promise that when the baby gets a little older, they, along with the parents, will bring the child to church and to Sunday School.



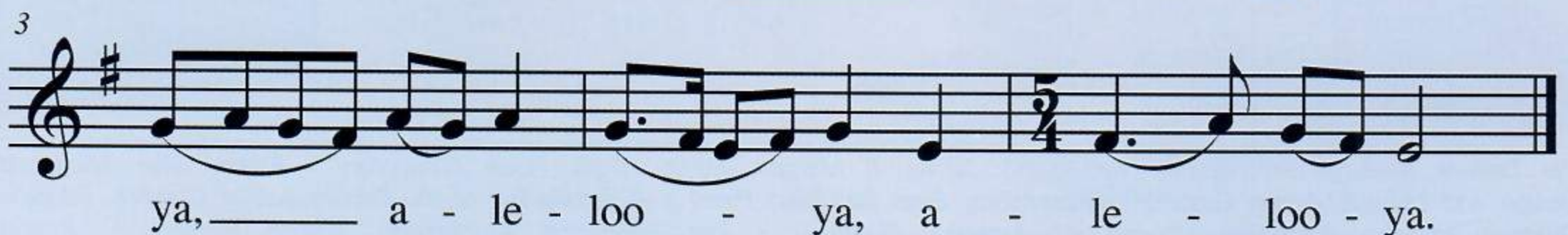
My godfather is _____.

My godmother is _____.

WE CELEBRATE

At the time of Jesus’ baptism, God sent a dove down from heaven, and God’s voice was heard saying, “This is my Son. I am so pleased with him.”

AMEN ALELOOYA





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today, the focus of our lesson was baptism. The children listened to a story about the baptism of a baby in the Armenian Church. They also heard the story of the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan. God the Father sent the Holy Spirit down in the form of a dove to seal the love and communion between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. At this holy event, a message was communicated to all of us about God's abiding love.

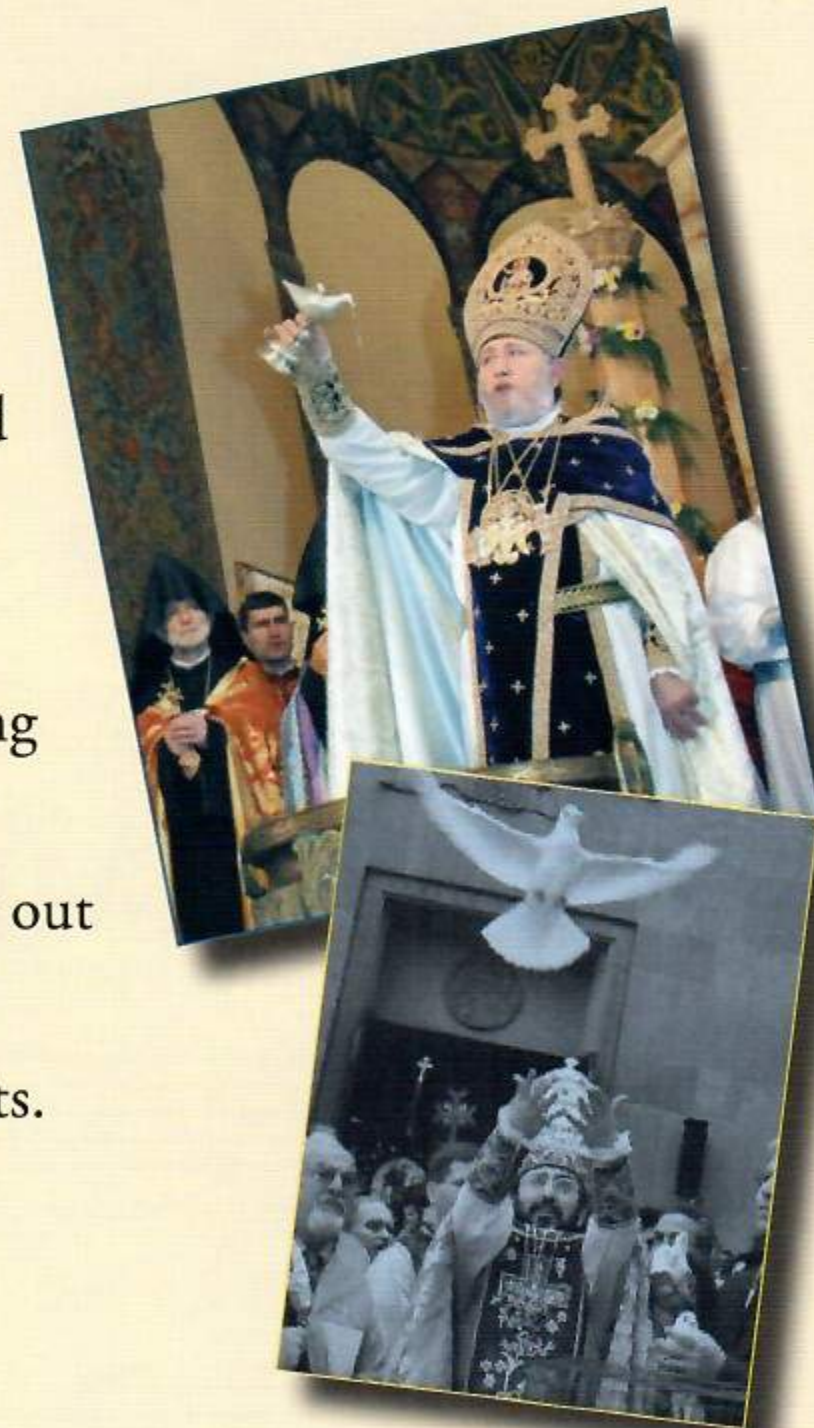
We talked about the importance of family and, in particular, the important roles of the godfather and the godmother. The children made paper doves to symbolize the Holy Spirit who was present at the baptism of Jesus. They "flew" the doves as they sang the hymn, "Amen Allelooya."

LIVING OUR FAITH

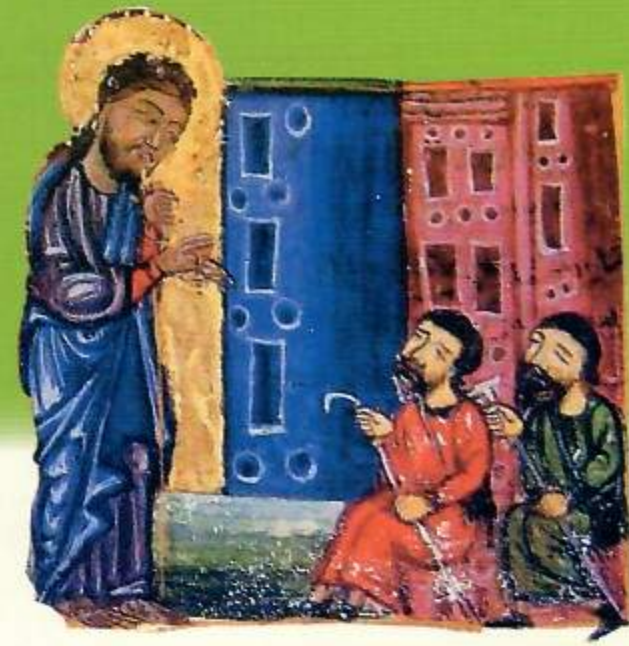
God the Father loved his Son. Your children are precious and loved by you. With each hug, each kiss and each prayer, the bond that exists between you and your child and God grows stronger.

Choose one activity to do with your child:

1. Ask your child to explain the significance of the dove; sing "Amen Allelooya" together.
2. Share with your child his/her baptismal photos, pointing out your child's godparents.
3. Suggest that your child write a letter to his/her godparents.



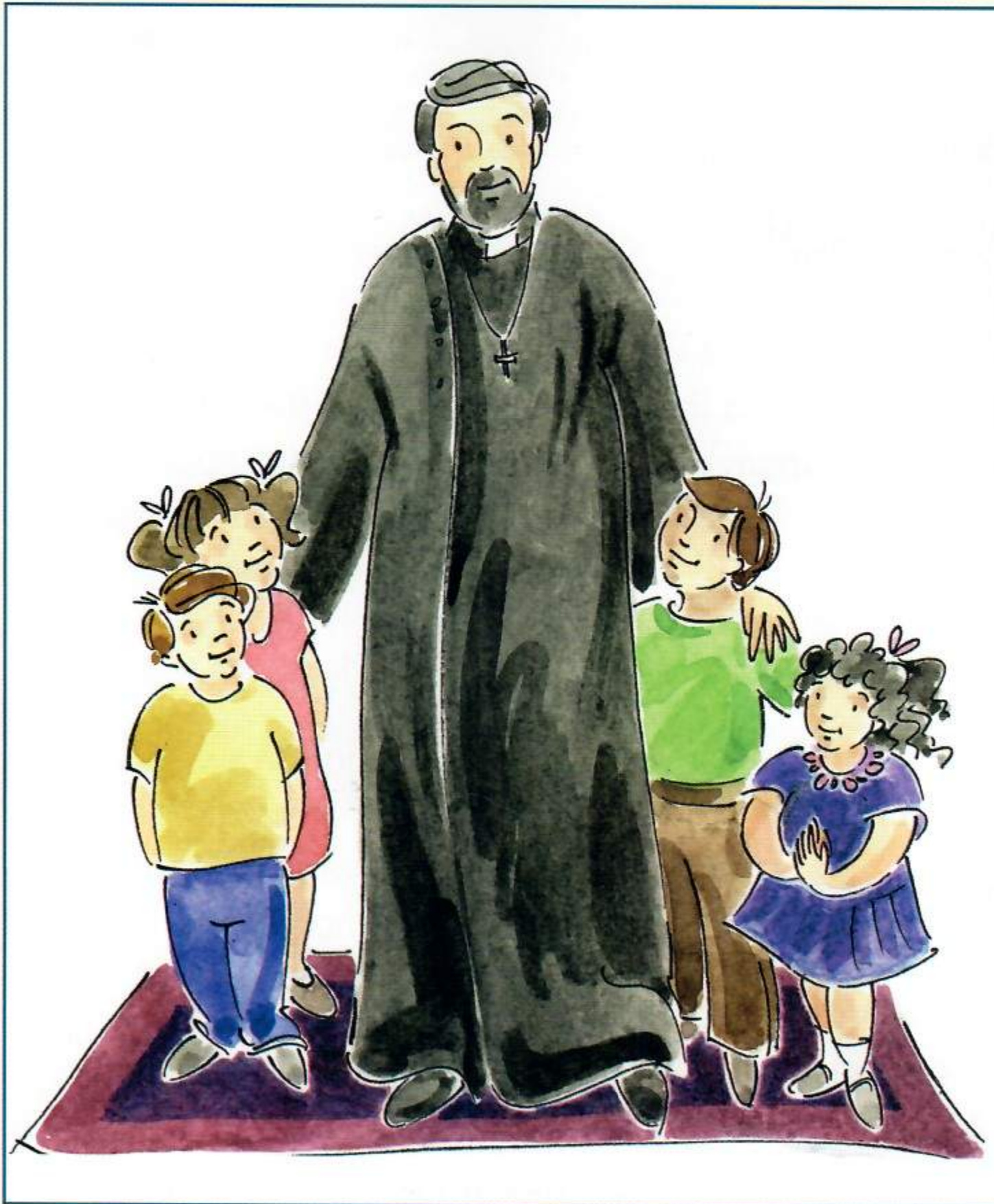
Jesus Loves Us



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.
Jesus, we love you, and we know that you love us. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

“Today Der Hayr is coming to visit the Sunday School,” Mrs. Krikorian, the kindergarten teacher, told the children. They were excited. “When is he coming? Will he visit us?”

Mrs. Krikorian answered, “He will be coming in a few minutes, and he will visit our classroom.” A few minutes went by, and the children began to ask again. “When is he coming, Mrs. Krikorian?” Mrs. Krikorian decided to call them over to the story corner to read a story. It was a story about how much Jesus loved children.

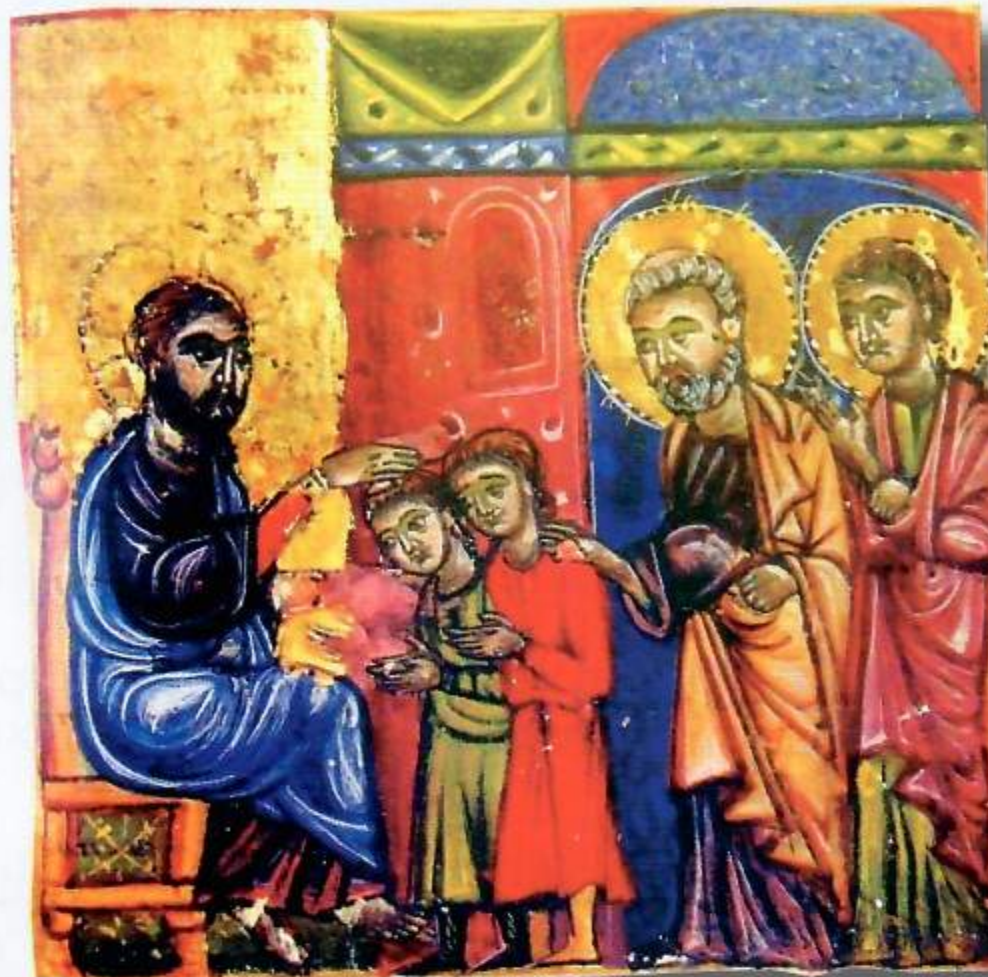
The children were having a snack when Der Hayr walked into the classroom. The children ran over to him and hugged him. “Der Hayr, Der Hayr,” they shouted. “We love you.”

Der Hayr said, “And I love you. God bless you. I am so happy to be here.”

GOD'S WORD TO US

Many mothers and fathers brought their children to Jesus so he could bless them. One day, the disciples told the families who were waiting that Jesus was tired and that they should let him rest. When Jesus heard this, he said, "Let the children come to me; do not stop them."

Matthew 19:13-14



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Jesus loved to tell stories. Each story would be about something different, like forgiveness, kindness and love. He wanted the people, especially the children, to come to him. Why? He wanted to tell them something very important about God

the Father. He wanted them to know that God loved them all very much and that he would always welcome them.

When you go for a visit, you run into the arms of your dear grandpa. Your mom or dad is waiting to give you a big hug when you get home from school. You feel welcomed and loved. That is how God wants you to feel about him. He loves you. He welcomes you and listens to you through your prayers.



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

This is a prayer called "Jesus, Wisdom of the Father." In this prayer, we ask Jesus to help us behave in ways that would make him proud of us.

Jesus Wisdom of the Father

Oh, Jesus,
Grant me wisdom.
Help me to be the kind of person you want me to be.
Save me from evil thoughts, words, and deeds.
And have mercy upon me. Amen. *St. Nersess Shnorhali*

WE CELEBRATE

Jesus told this story.

A shepherd took his sheep to the hills every morning so they could find grass to eat. One day he noticed that the littlest lamb was not with the rest. "Can I leave the rest of the sheep alone while I go to look for the lost one?"

He thought very carefully and decided to leave the sheep grazing on the hillside while he went to look for his lamb. He looked everywhere and finally found it stuck between two huge rocks. He climbed up very carefully, picked up the lamb and carried it back to the flock. He put it down gently and watched it find his way to his mother.

When the shepherd returned to his home, he told his neighbors to come for a celebration. He was so happy that he had found his lost sheep!

This is a parable. Jesus is teaching us that he will always take care of us just like the shepherd cared for his sheep and the lost lamb.

TENDER SHEPHERD

Voice

Ten - der shep - herd, Ten - der shep - herd, watch - es o - ver
all his sheep. One, in the mea - dow, two, in the gar - den,
three, in the nur - se - ry fast a - sleep.

The musical notation consists of three staves of music in a treble clef with a common time signature (C). The melody is simple and repetitive, with lyrics written below the notes. The first staff covers the first line of lyrics, the second staff covers the second line, and the third staff covers the third line. The music ends with a double bar line.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

We welcome our children into the world. We open our hearts to them, and they change our lives forever. This week your child discovered how much Jesus loved children. He welcomed them despite the interference of his own disciples. He made it a point to say that the Kingdom of God belonged to the children and those like them.

Another of Jesus' missions was to carry God's message to the people. By welcoming and listening to those who came to him, he taught that God also welcomes them and hears them through their prayers.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Jesus often told stories (parables) to share an important message with the people. The Parable of the Lost Sheep is a favorite of children. Today we heard the story and discussed the great joy the shepherd felt when the baby lamb was found. God, like the shepherd, loves us and welcomes us back to his fold.

Choose one of the activities to do with your child:

1. Help your child retell the story of the Lost Sheep, using the props that he or she has brought home.
2. Sing the song "*Tender Shepherd*" together and often.
3. Recite with your child the prayer, "Jesus Wisdom of the Father," by St. Nersess Shnorhali. The prayer is a reminder to be the person God wants us to be.



We Prepare for Christmas



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

God, Father of all, we remember the story of the first Christmas and welcome your Son into our lives every day. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Christmas was coming! Lorig and her brother George were very excited. They remembered that grandma and grandpa were coming for their annual Christmas visit. Grandma, Lorig and George always made Christmas cookies together. Grandpa and the children always went to the local farm to choose a Christmas tree. Then everybody would help to decorate it. The children looked forward to doing this every year. It was part of their family preparations for Christmas.

One evening, their mother took out an advent calendar. She said, "Every night after dinner, you can take turns opening one of the windows of the advent calendar. The advent calendar helps us to prepare for Christmas. Each window we open will remind us of the story of Christmas."

The children wanted Christmas to come soon. Their father explained, "Be patient. We have a lot of things to do to prepare for Christmas. I want you to be thinking about gifts for your grandparents, and don't forget to save some of your allowance to send to the children's center in Armenia.

So the children began making a list of things they had to do to prepare for Christmas.

GOD'S WORD TO US

When Mary knew she was going to be the mother of Jesus, she hurried to share the news with her cousin Elizabeth who lived in the next village.

Mary was filled with happiness and she hugged her cousin the minute she stepped into her home.

Elizabeth said, "God has blessed you more than any other woman, and he has blessed your child."

Mary answered, "You are blessed because you believe in the Lord."

Elizabeth was happy, too. She knew that she was also going to have a baby. After her visit, Mary returned to her home to prepare for the coming of the baby.

Luke 1:39-45



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

When the people heard that a baby was to be born who would be named Jesus, they prepared themselves by praying!

How do you and your family prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birth?

Do you

- decorate your house with lights?
- have a wreath on the door?
- help to make Christmas cookies?
- put up a Christmas tree?
- open the windows of an advent calendar?
- have a manger where figures of Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus are placed?
- go to church to share in the joy of the birth of Jesus?



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

The Armenian Church gets ready for Christmas for fifty days. Fifty! This is a special period of time that everyone calls Advent. Advent means “something’s coming.” In Armenian, we call this time of waiting for Christmas, “Heesnag.” It’s a word that comes from “fifty” or “Hee-soon.” During that time, we try to pray more, read the Bible and be as good as we can be!

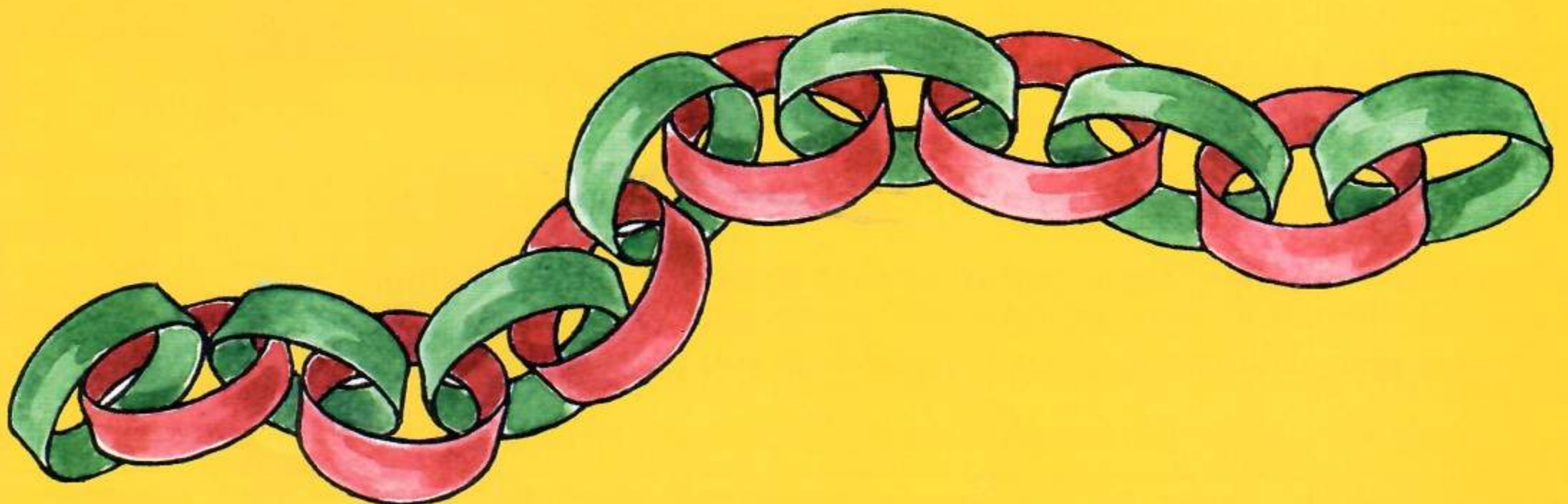
Some Armenians eat nothing that comes from an animal for the first, middle, and last weeks of Heesnag. Name some foods and drink that come from an animal.

The Armenian Church gets ready for Christmas just like you do.



WE CELEBRATE

Fifty days we wait to say
Welcome, Lord, on Christmas Day!





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

The theme of this week's lesson was how to get ready for the birth of Jesus. As they begin to hear ways to prepare for Christmas, the children will begin to make a connection between the lessons learned in Sunday School and their application at home, where their faith was born.

In the Armenian Church, there is a fifty day preparation period before Christmas. It is called *Heesnag*. The children made a heesnag chain and will participate in a count-down to Christmas.

LIVING OUR FAITH

As part of the preparation for Christmas, choose one of the following:

1. Set aside a special time, when the family is together, to open each window of an advent calendar.
2. Create a good-deeds calendar where you and your children do a kind act for a neighbor, friend or relative at least once a week.
3. Encourage your family to save money to send to a children's center in Armenia.
4. With your children, share traditions that you celebrated as a child.
5. Involve your children as much as possible as you prepare for the feast of Christ's coming.



Jesus is Born!



WE PRAY TOGETHER

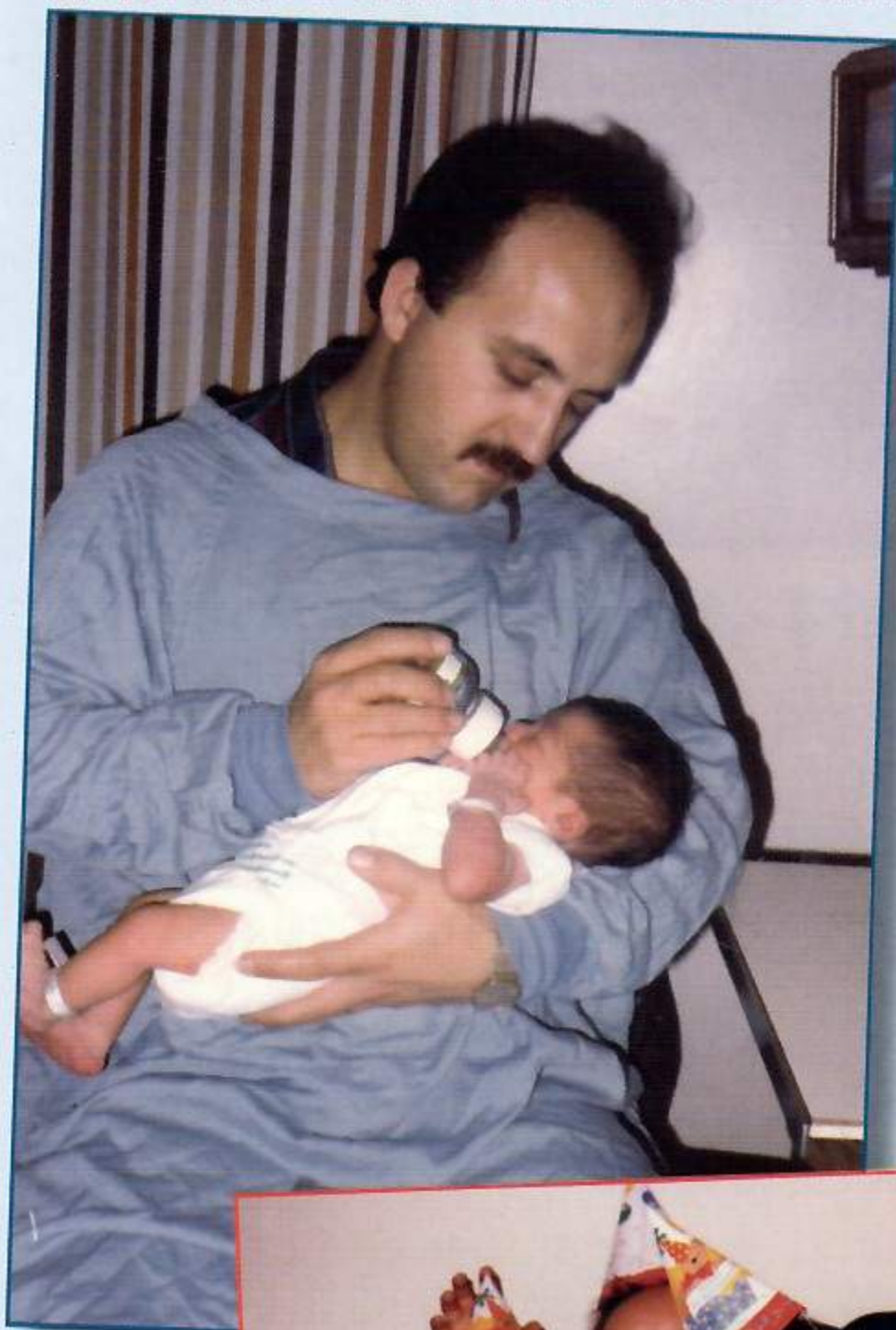


Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.
Dear heavenly Father, we thank you for sending your Son Jesus to us. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

A few years ago, there was a special gift delivered to your family, and it was YOU. You were that special gift of love! Everyone wanted to hold you and hug you.

Because of their great love for you, your family gathers on your "Birth Day" to celebrate with gifts and candles, a birthday cake and a Happy Birthday song.



GOD'S WORD TO US

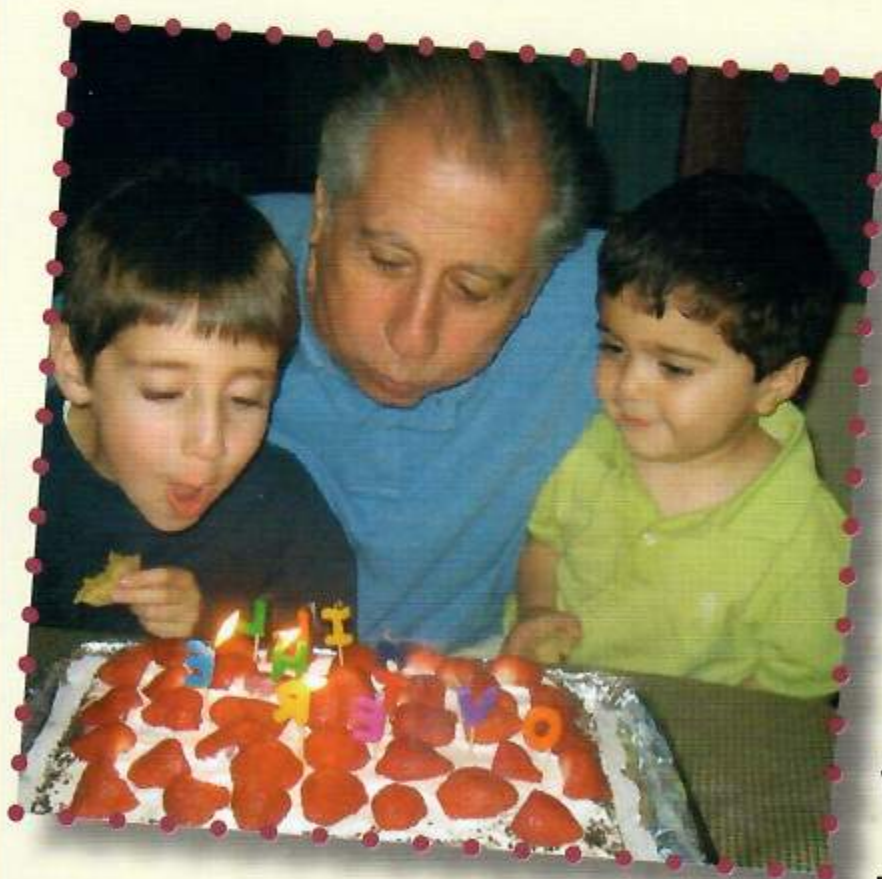
Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem when the baby Jesus was born. The town was very crowded! There was no room anywhere. Mary and Joseph stayed in a stable. When Jesus was born, Mary wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a bed of hay.



That night, shepherds were watching their sheep on a hillside. An angel sent by God, came to them. "Do not be afraid. I have good news! Avedis! On this day a baby was born in Bethlehem. He is called Jesus. You will find him in a stable lying on a bed of hay."

The shepherds went to Bethlehem and knelt down when they saw the baby Jesus. They would always remember this holy night when Jesus was born!

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD



God's greatest gift to us is Jesus. Jesus is the Son of God and the Son of Mary. When Jesus was born, the angels sang out the good news. "Avedis!"

You are a gift of love to your family. Each year, your family celebrates the day you were born. Each year in church, we remember and celebrate the wonderful day when Jesus was born.

How does your family celebrate your birthday?

How does the Armenian Church family celebrate Jesus' birthday?

Armenian families go to church together. Your mother or grandmother may prepare special Armenian foods like *anoush aboor* (a dried fruit pudding) made especially for New Year and Christmas.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Once, when the disciples asked Jesus who the greatest people were in God's eyes, he said, "the children, and they all have an angel in heaven." In Armenian, the word angel is "hreshdag."



St. Gregory of Nareg was an Armenian monk who lived many hundreds of years ago. He wrote a beautiful prayer about guardian angels. Here is a simple prayer based on his words.

Dear God,

Hear the prayers of our guardian angels
Who are mighty
and pure
and fast as the blink of an eye.

They help us
Do good things
Be strong in faith
Get to know you better.

Through the prayers of my guardian angel, help me turn to your light!

WE CELEBRATE

The angels brought news of the baby Jesus. "Avedis," they sang to the shepherds. "Avedis. We bring you good news. We bring you news which will give you great joy."

Avedis

The angels sang.

Avedis

The shepherds sang.

Avedis

The people sang.

Avedis

Jesus is born.

Avedis





FAMILY PAGE

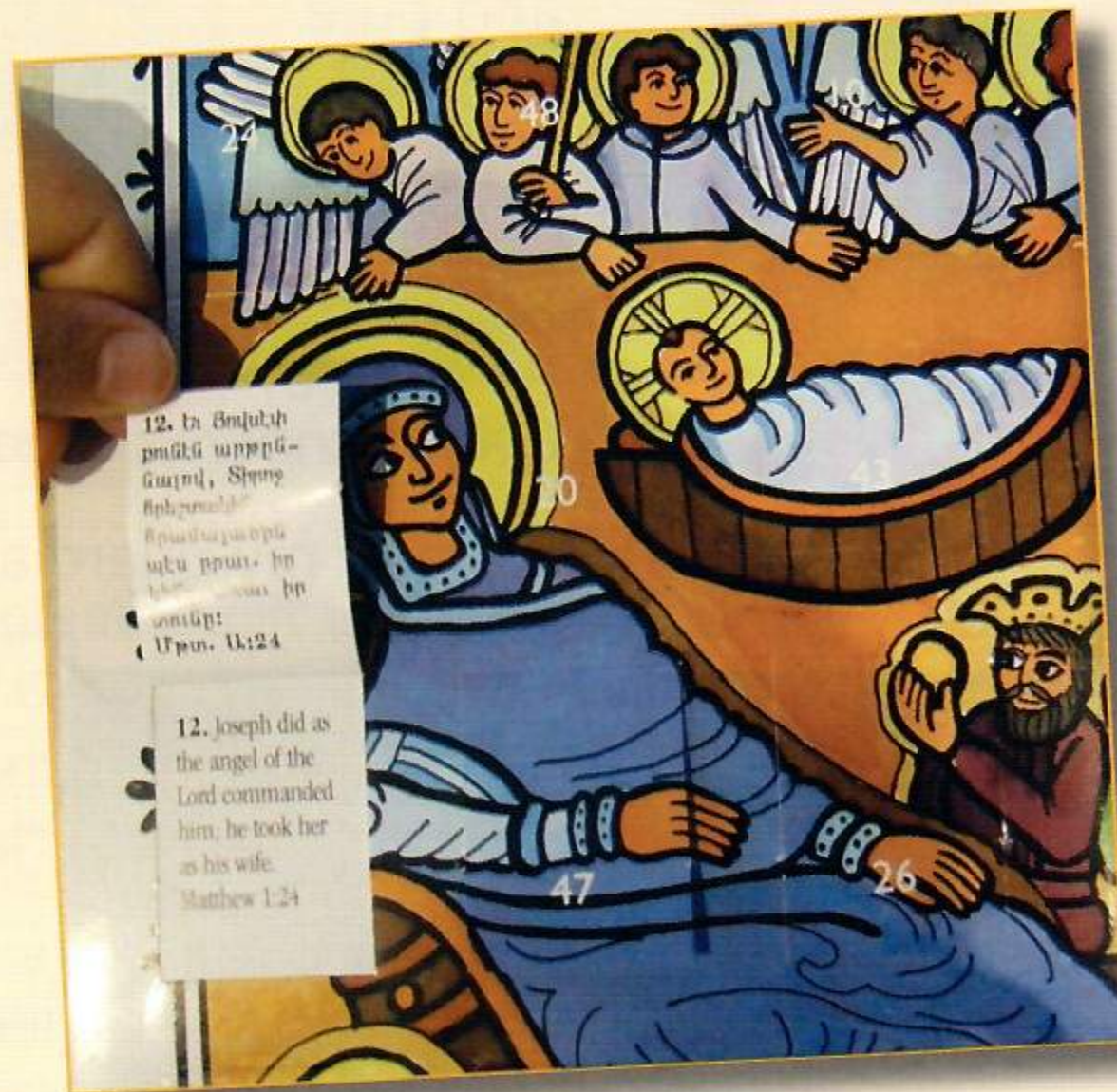
SHARING OUR FAITH

The birth of your child changed your small world. This week the children learned about the birth of Jesus and how it changed the whole world forever. Your child learned that just as friends and family celebrate his or her birthday, the birthday of Jesus is celebrated by the church family. In the Armenian Church, the birth of Jesus and his baptism are celebrated on the same day, January 6.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Make this holy season special and meaningful for your child. Choose one of the activities below:

1. If you have special foods and customs to celebrate this holy day, share them with your child.
2. Each day open the window of an advent calendar. Read and discuss the passage.
3. For your child(ren), set up his/her own nativity scene.
4. Bring toys to a collection site; visit a nursing home; take gifts to a shelter.
5. Recite the Avedis chant together as a family.



Jesus Called the Disciples



WE PRAY TOGETHER



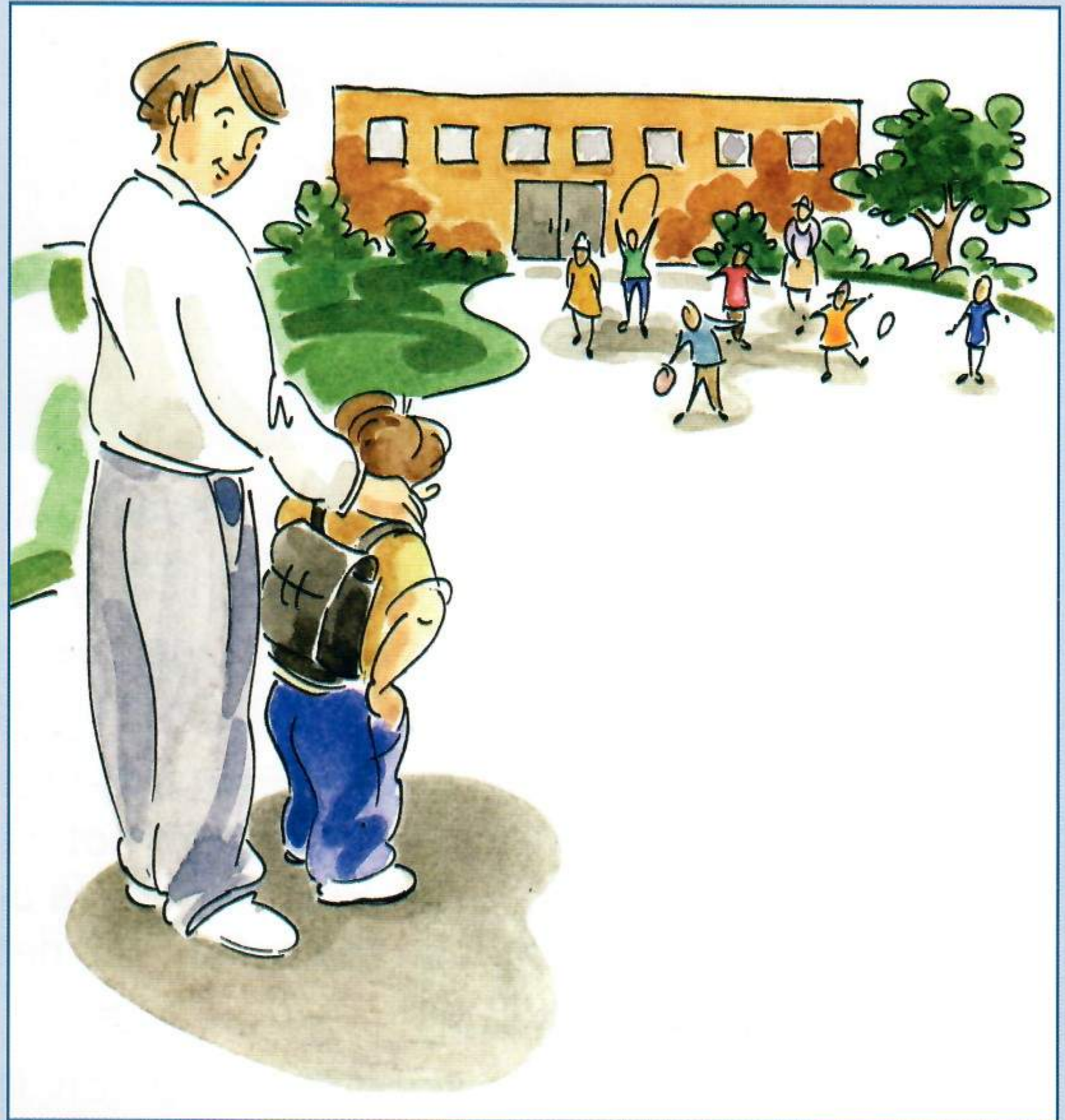
Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Jesus, I want to thank you for giving me friends to play with. It is so nice spending time with them. What a wonderful gift a friend is! Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

It was Ara's first day at a new school. Ara's dad walked with him to school and waited with him on the playground until the bell sounded. Ara held tightly to his dad's hand.

Ara was worried. He watched them play ball and go down the slide. He watched them on the swings. Would one of them come over to talk to him? He watched, and he waited.



Then he noticed a woman coming from the school building. She walked over to Ara and his dad and, with a smile, asked "Are you Ara? How are you? We have been expecting you. I am Mrs. Noble. I will be your teacher this year. Come with me, and I will introduce you to some new friends."



Ara smiled and let go of his father's hand. He gently put his hand in Mrs. Noble's hand as they walked toward the group of children waiting for her. She said, "Children, this is Ara. He is going to be in our class. I know you will help him to feel welcome." Then she winked at Ara. He liked Mrs. Noble. She knew how to make him feel good inside.

GOD'S WORD TO US



One day, Jesus sat in Peter's boat and said to him: "Row out to the deep water and let your nets down to catch some fish."

"My brother Andrew and I have been fishing all night, and we have not caught any fish," said Peter. But they did as Jesus said. They caught so many fish, the nets began to tear apart!

Jesus said: "From now on, instead of fishing for fish, you will fish for people."

Peter and Andrew, and their friends, James and John, left their boats and followed Jesus. Eight others joined them. These first followers were called the Twelve Disciples.

Luke 5:1-11

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

A disciple is a person who hears God's words and obeys them. Jesus called upon twelve men to help him spread the word of God. These men were his disciples and close friends.

Here are some questions. Put a smiling face on the line each time you say, "Yes."

- _____ Do I attend Sunday School?
- _____ Do I listen carefully to the lessons taught in Sunday School?
- _____ Do I remember to bring in my offering?
- _____ Do I help a friend who needs me?
- _____ Am I fair?
- _____ Am I patient?

If you answered 'yes' to some of the questions, you are a disciple of Jesus. You listen to his words, and you try to please him.



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Two of Jesus' disciples, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, were sent all the way to Armenia to spread his words of love and forgiveness. The people in Armenia listened very carefully, and they believed all they heard about Jesus. The Armenian people wanted to become Christians, the name given to those who believe in and follow Jesus Christ. And Armenia became the first Christian nation.



WE CELEBRATE

Friends share.
Friends care.
Friends are there for you.

Friends are faithful.
Friends are kind.
Friends are there for you.

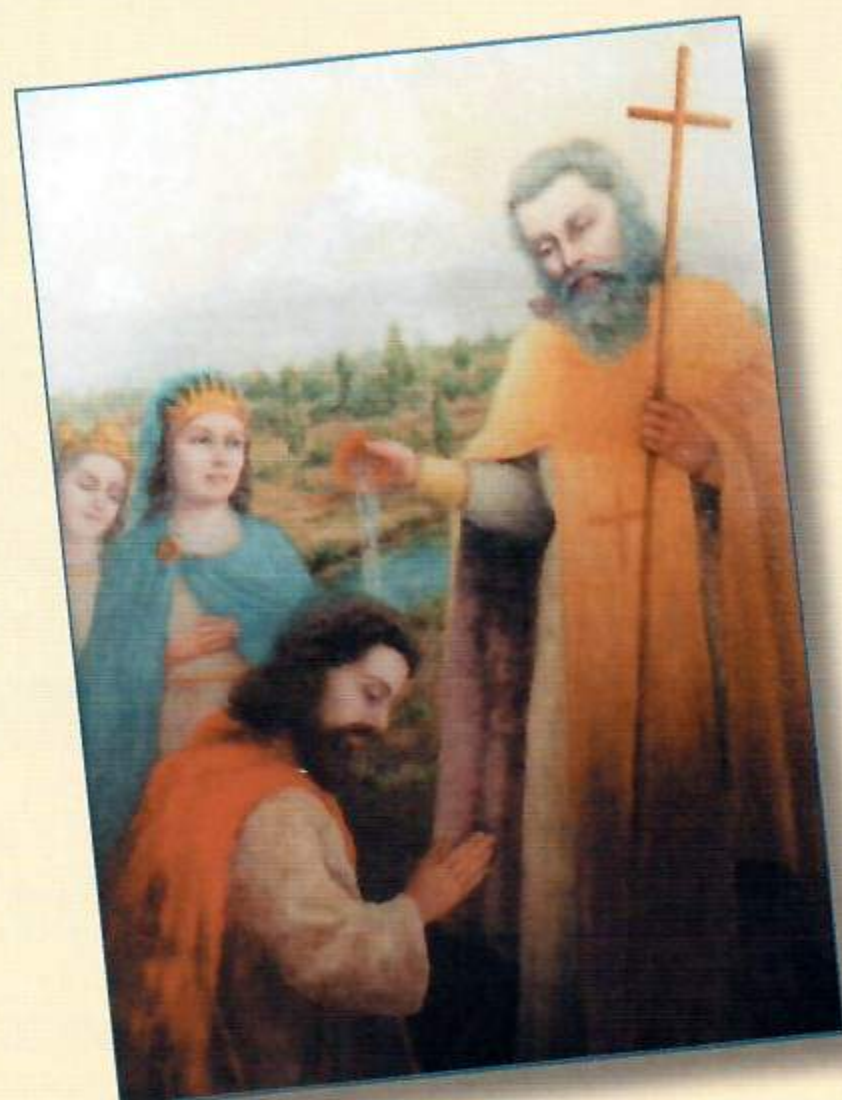


FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

In our lesson today, Jesus chose his disciples. He told Peter, a fisherman, that now he and the others would become “fishers of people.” And the mission of the disciples began.

Two of the disciples, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, were sent to Armenia. This was an historic trip since they planted the seed of a dream fulfilled by St. Gregory when he converted the entire Armenian nation to Christianity in 301 AD.



LIVING OUR FAITH

The children created a friendship tree, showing the disciples of the early church. They also helped to create a list of traits that form the foundation of a valued friendship.

With your child we suggest doing the following activity:

Create your own *family* tree. Use a branch of a tree that is placed in a pot of dirt. Cut out large green leaves. Your child can draw pictures of the family. (This can include grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.) You can label the pictures. With yarn, attach the leaves to the tree branch.

Jesus Taught Us How to Live



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Jesus, many years ago, people came to be near you and to listen to you teach about our Father in heaven. We also listen to you and try to live according to your word. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Peter was biking through the supermarket parking lot on his way to T-ball practice. He saw his neighbor Mrs. Banosian carrying two heavy bundles. She saw him and smiled sweetly.

He thought, "I should help her. I could drop her bundles off and then go on to practice. But if I am late, the coach will be angry." Then he decided, "No, it's not my problem," and went on his way.

As Miriam and her mother were leaving the market, Miriam saw

tiny Mrs. Banosian, too. She thought, "If I tell my mother, she will want to take her home, and I want to go clothes shopping." She did not tell her mother.

Michael and his dad were on their way to a cub scout meeting. "Baba (Daddy), it's Mrs. Banosian! She is carrying two heavy bundles. Can we give her a ride?" Baba said: "Of course!" Michael ran over to Mrs. Banosian. "Good morning! *Paree looys!* May I help you carry your bundles? My father will drive you home."

Mrs. Banosian was so happy!



GOD'S WORD TO US

Listen to a story that Jesus told us about what it means to be a good

neighbor. Your teacher will read

it to you from the Bible.

Luke 10:25-37

1. _____



2. _____



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Jesus' story is called the Parable of the Good Samaritan, and to this day whenever anyone does something kind for another person, he or she is called a good samaritan. Every day we have many opportunities to help and be kind to others. When Jesus used the word neighbor, he meant anyone who needs our help.

Who is a good neighbor? Look at all four drawings carefully. If you see a good samaritan, a good neighbor, put a smiley face next to the picture. For the last drawing, you have to decide what the boy should do to be a good neighbor.

4. _____



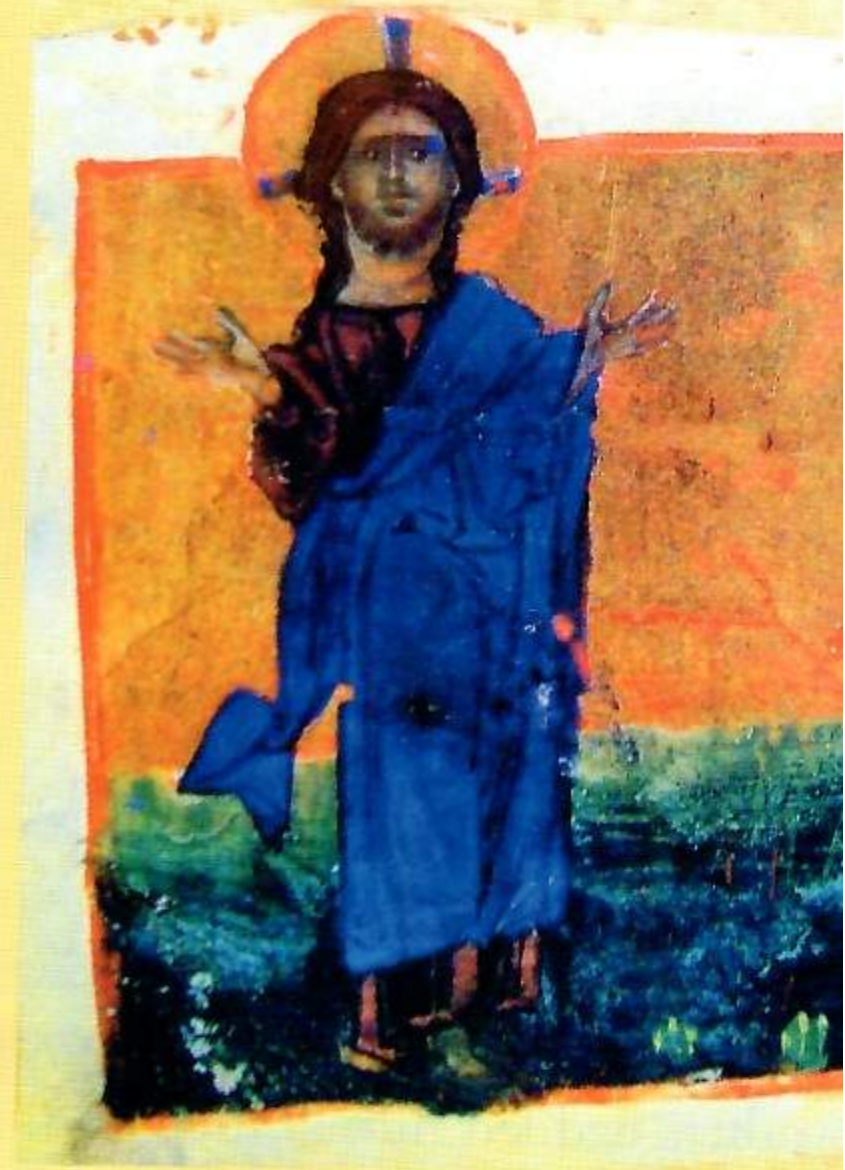
3. _____



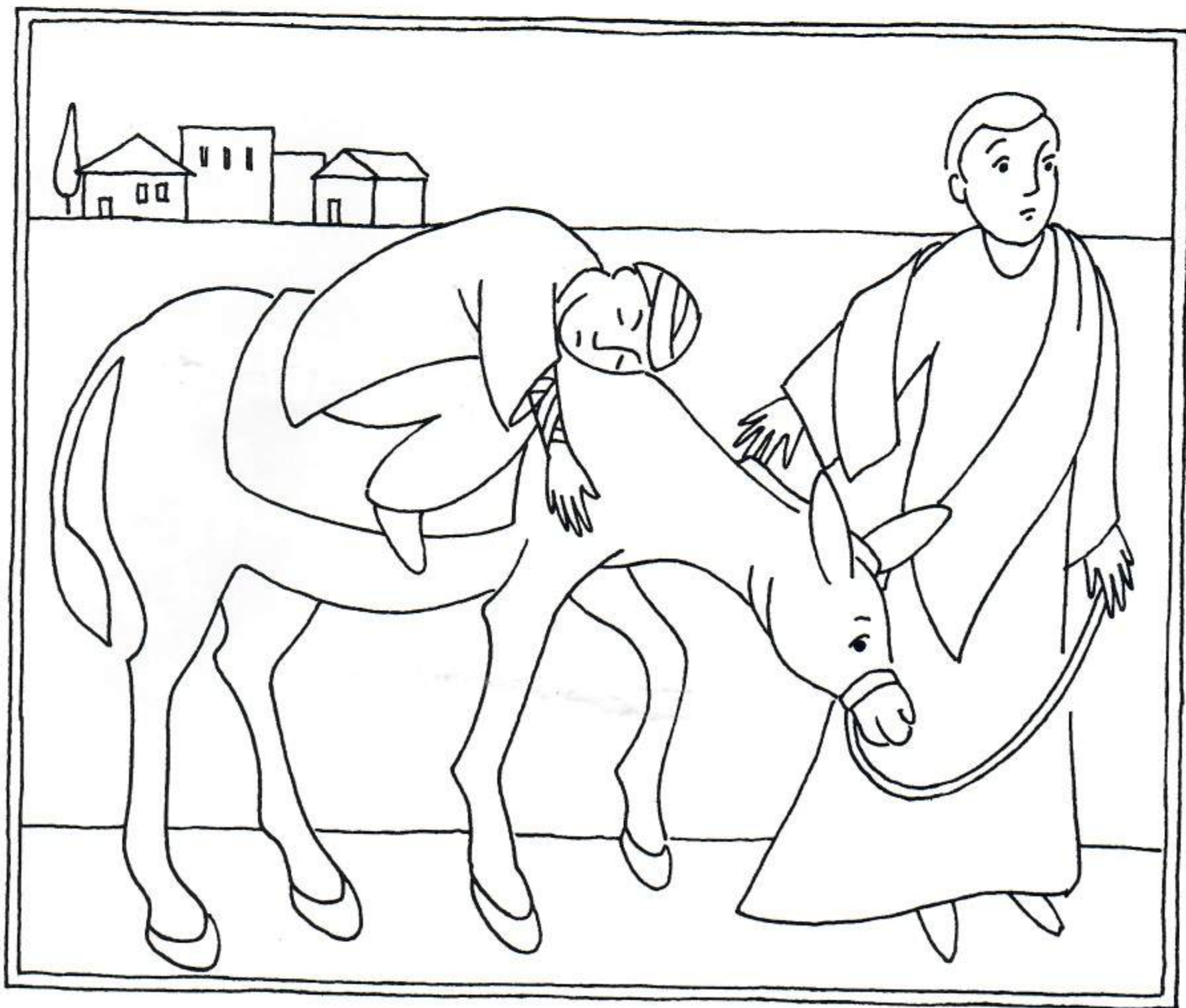
OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Many hundreds of years ago, the people of Armenia could not read. Armenian priests, called *apeghas* or monks, spent much of their time drawing pictures to illustrate the life of Jesus and the stories that he told. It took a very long time to finish one page, and they often had to decorate an entire book!

These fancy designs and drawings are called Armenian miniatures.



WE CELEBRATE





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

.....

The teaching point of today's lesson is to reach out to others. The children heard two stories – one about an elderly woman who needed help carrying her bundles home and the other, the parable of the Good Samaritan who stopped to help a wounded man after others had left him injured on the side of the road.



LIVING OUR FAITH

.....

“Who is my neighbor?” asked the man. And the Lord answered, “Anyone who needs your help.”

Choose one of the following to do with your child:

1. Gather used toys and books for needy children. You can make it a neighborhood event.
2. Participate in a food drive at church.
3. Donate food to a food pantry.
4. Check in on elderly neighbors.
5. Participate in Diocesan appeals to help the children of Armenia.



The important thing to remember are these words — “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and soul and mind and love your neighbor as much as yourself.”

Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus Taught Us How to Pray



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyv Srpo.

Dear God in heaven, every day we remember you. Through our prayers, we talk to you, and you listen. Amen.

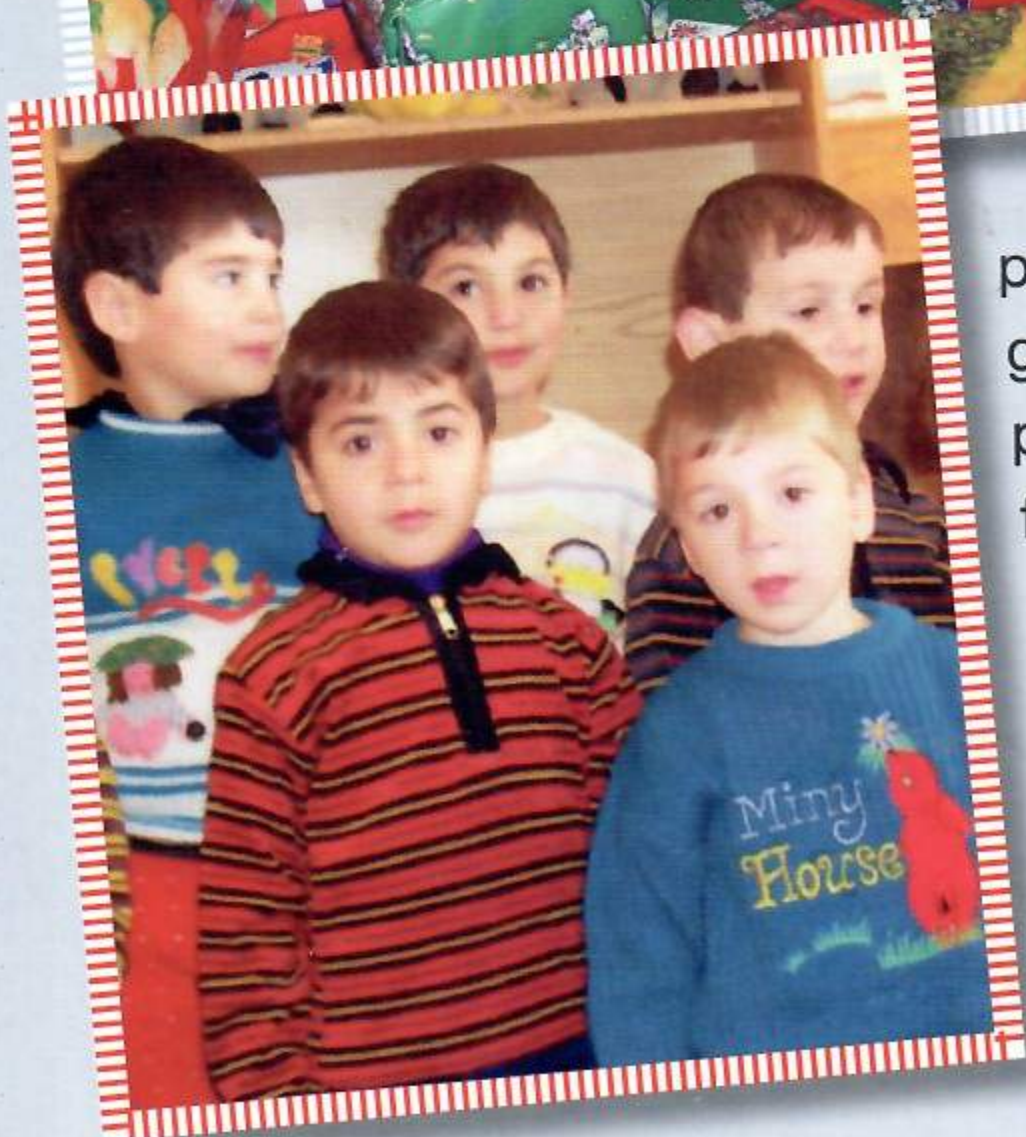
OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Every Christmas, the Sunday School collected money to send to needy children. Mrs. Ashjian said to her class, "There are children in the world who are very poor and will not have a package to open this Christmas!"

"So this year, for our Christmas project, we will collect money to buy school supplies for children in Armenia. They will be so happy to receive pencils, pen, and markers to use in school. A note will go home to your parents today to explain the project. Think about ways you can earn money for these children."

There were so many questions. They could hardly wait for dismissal time to talk with their parents about the project. This year they were going to share their Christmas with a child in Armenia!



GOD'S WORD TO US

The crowds had gathered on a mountainside to hear Jesus' words. He spoke to them about many things: loving one another, keeping promises, doing kind things for others, and prayer. Prayer is a way of talking with God.



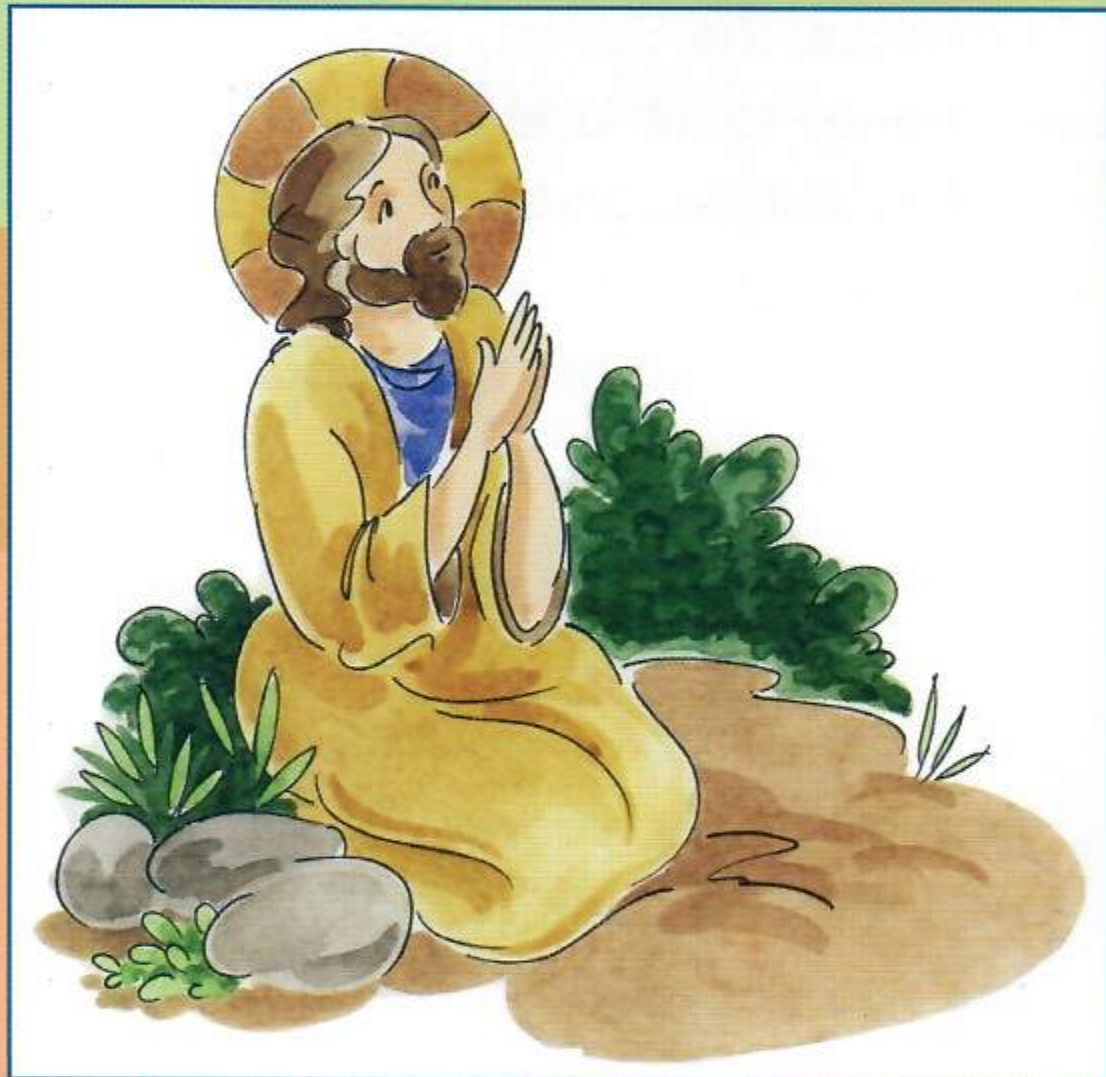
Jesus said, "You should pray like this:

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. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen."

Matthew 6:5-15



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Jesus prayed to God. Whenever he felt lonely or sad, he would talk with God in heaven. Jesus taught his disciples the same prayer that we say in church every Sunday. It is called the Hayr Mer or the Lord's Prayer. In Armenian, *Hayr* means "father" and *Mer* means "our."

There are many kinds of prayer:

There is a prayer we can say before we begin to work.

There is a prayer we can say before going to bed.

There is a prayer we can say before a meeting.

There is a prayer we can say before a trip.

There is a prayer we can say before we eat, and there is a prayer we say when we finish our meal.

There is a prayer when we get up in the morning.

And, of course, there is the Lord's prayer, *Hayr Mer*.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

This is the way the Hayr Mer prayer begins:

Hayr Mer	Our Father,
vor hergins yes	who art in heaven
soorp yeghitzi	hallowed be
anoon ko.	thy name.

This means, God in heaven, we love you. We will always think of you and say your name with respect.



WE CELEBRATE

Jesus taught us to pray to our loving Father in heaven. Our Hayr Mer mobile will help us learn the prayer!





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

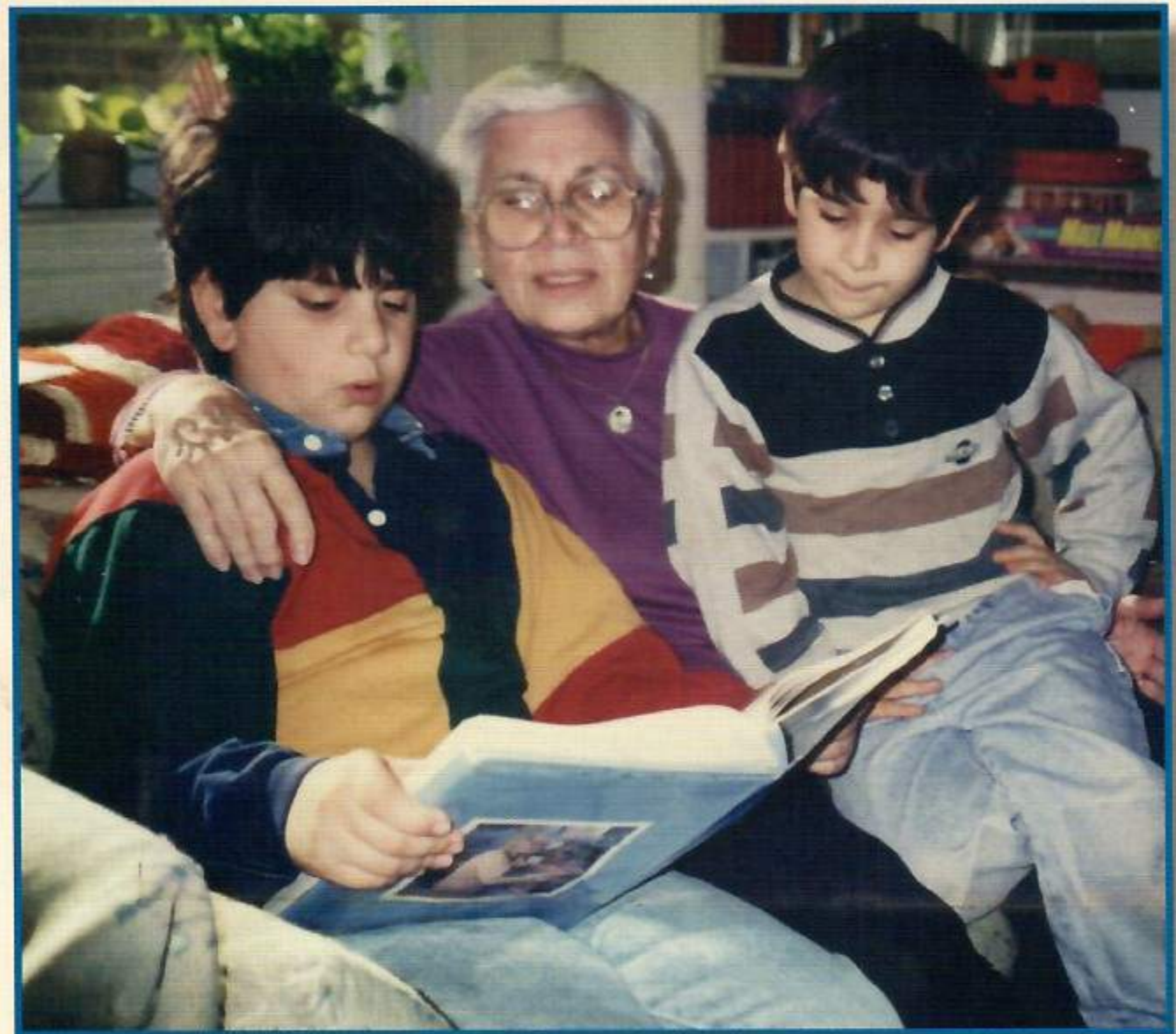
The Lord's Prayer (*Hayr Mer*) was the focus of today's lesson. From the Bible passage, the children learned how Jesus taught the disciples to pray the Lord's Prayer. This prayer teaches us many things – to be thankful, forgive, make good choices, live according to the word of God.

LIVING OUR FAITH

As you help your children learn to make decisions and choices in their daily lives, recite the Lord's Prayer as a family and remember the commitment you are making to God the Father.

With your child, select one of these activities that you can do together:

1. Hang the Hayr Mer mobile in your child's room.
2. Recite the first four lines of the Lord's Prayer together every evening.
3. At the end of your child's evening prayer, encourage him/her to mention individuals or groups who need to be remembered in prayer.



Jesus Taught Us Who He Was



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for always being with us -- when we are happy, when we are sad, when we are frightened and even when we have done something to make you unhappy. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

The weather forecaster said there would be heavy rains some time in the afternoon.

It was almost 3:00 o'clock and time for school dismissal. "Walkers are dismissed." Jack put on his jacket

and his backpack and left school to walk home. Dark clouds appeared in the sky. The winds began to blow. The rain fell heavily from the sky. Jack got wetter and wetter. How he wished he was already home!

At the end of the path, he saw someone walking towards him. As the person approached, he recognized his mother! He ran towards her. She held him close as they walked home together under the umbrella.

GOD'S WORD TO US

.....

One evening, Jesus and his friends were sailing across the Sea of Galilee. Jesus was so tired that he went to the back of the boat and fell asleep.

Suddenly, the wind began to blow fiercely. The waves began to rise, and water filled the boat. The disciples were so frightened that they woke Jesus. "Master, wake up! We are frightened!" Jesus said to the stormy sea: "Quiet! Be calm!" And the wind and sea grew still.



Jesus turned to his disciples. "Don't you know I am with you? You do not have to be afraid!" The disciples wondered, "Who is this that even the wind and the waves obey him?" *Mark 4:35-41*

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

.....

Think about the story of the storm. Why were the disciples frightened? What did Jesus tell them?

The disciples were afraid in the storm. They were afraid that their boat would sink. What would happen to them? They forgot, for a moment, that Jesus was with them. They were not alone.

Have you heard the sound of the wind as it blows around your house in a storm?

Have you heard the trees rustling outside your family room window?

Have you heard the loud claps of thunder during a rainstorm?

Perhaps you, like the disciples, looked for someone to comfort you.

From the story of the storm, Jesus helps you to understand that he is always with you. He is saying, "Do not be afraid. I am with you."



OUR ARMENIAN WAY



People gathered to watch John the Baptist baptize Jesus in the River Jordan. They heard a voice saying, "This is my Son. I am very pleased with him." It was God's voice. At that very moment, a white dove appeared above Jesus. The people heard the words of God, saw the beautiful dove and knew that Jesus was the Son of God.

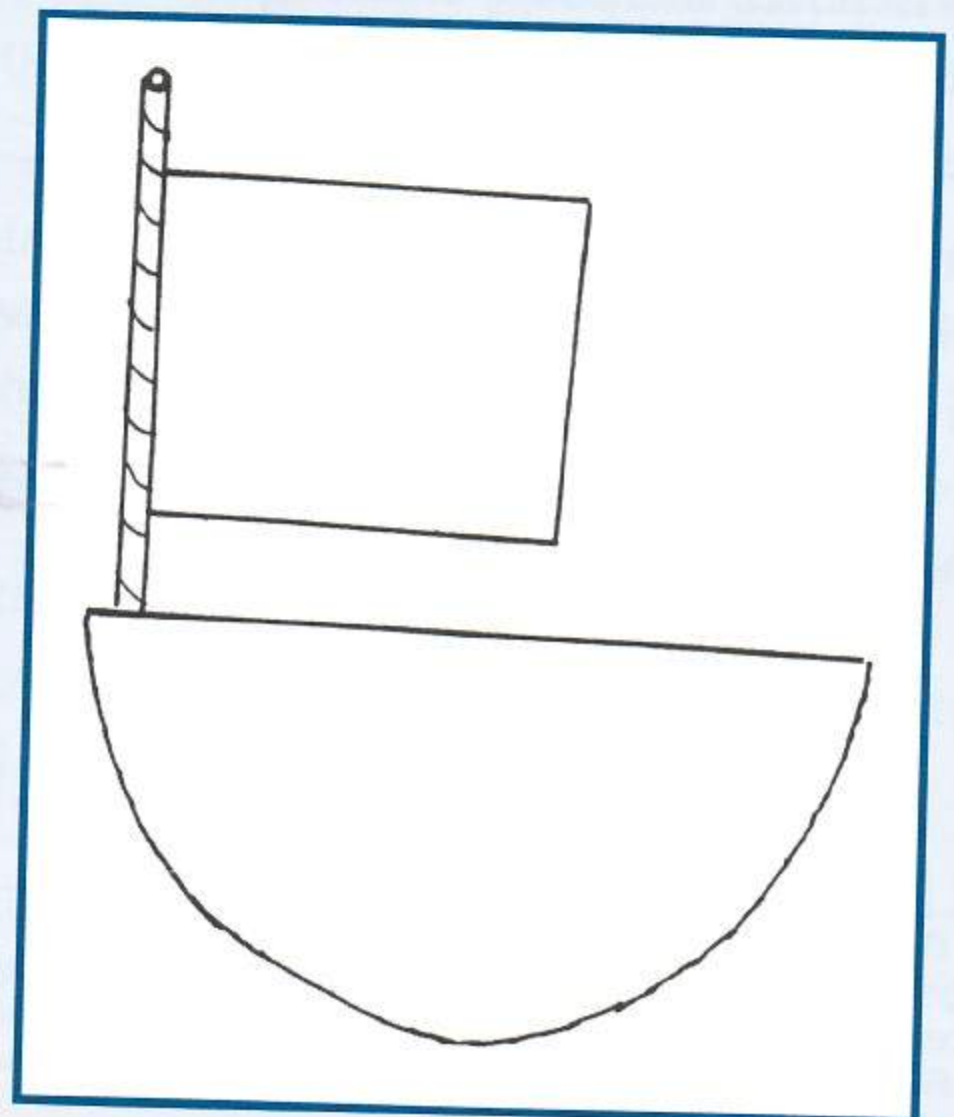


There is a feast day in the Armenian Church called the Feast of Theophany. It is celebrated on January 6. It is the day on which both the birth and baptism of Jesus are remembered. The priest uses a bowl filled with water to remind us of the river in which Jesus was baptized, a cross to remind us of Jesus and a dove to remind us of God and the Holy Spirit.

After the priest blesses the water, the people in church take some holy water home in small containers to keep or to give to someone who is sick. The blessing of the water is called Churorhnek.

WE CELEBRATE

"Do not be afraid. I am with you."





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Having faith in God was the theme of today's lesson. Jesus' disciples fear for their lives when a storm suddenly arises. They awaken Jesus who calms them and the sea. "Don't you know I am with you? You do not have to be afraid."

LIVING OUR FAITH

By your words and deeds, you are also saying to your child – "Don't worry. I am here with you." Think of how many times you have calmed anxious moments, stopped tears, answered questions and volunteered to help. In all things, you have supported and strengthened your child.

Choose an activity to do together.

1. Together, with your child, tell the story of the storm. One of you can be the storyteller and the other can manipulate the boat.
2. Whenever there is a 'challenge' in the life of your child, remember, together, the story of the storm and the words of Jesus.
3. A rainstorm can be frightening. But think together with your child of all the beautiful gifts water gives us: life (we need it to live), the beauty of oceans and lakes, transportation on rivers, pleasure in swimming, the pleasure of a cool glass of water on a hot day, etc.



Jesus Made People Feel Better



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear God, we pray today for the people in the world who are sick or lonely. We feel your love and know that we are never alone. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Mrs. Kaloustian was in a nursing home. Her children lived far away. They could not come to visit her often. Many times you would find her sitting by herself. Sometimes she would get up and look at the family pictures in her room — pictures when she was a young girl, pictures of her wedding, pictures of her children. She was filled with memories, but she was lonely.

Sunday was the day when people came to entertain the residents at the home. One Sunday, children came to visit from a nearby Sunday School. They sang songs, danced and talked to the residents of the home. While they sang, someone noticed that Mrs. Kaloustian sang too. When they danced, Mrs. Kaloustian clapped her hands. And, when some small children went to talk with Mrs. Kaloustian, she hugged them. Mrs. Kaloustian was truly happy. She did not feel alone.

GOD'S WORD TO US

Take your pencil. Put a dot in this box. That dot is about the size of a mustard seed.



One day a man came to Jesus and knelt in front of him. He came to tell Jesus about his son who was very sick. "Help my son," he begged. "Your disciples could not help him."

Jesus prayed for the boy, and gradually he got well. His disciples asked him, "Why couldn't we make the boy feel better?"

Jesus answered, "You could not make the boy feel better because you did not have enough faith. Faith is trusting me and believing what I have taught you. If you have faith, even if it is no larger than a mustard seed, I will always be with you."

Matthew 17:14-21

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

When Jesus' disciples wanted to know why they couldn't help the sick boy, he explained the answer. Jesus knew that they didn't yet really believe in him and trust him. "Even if you have faith no larger than a mustard seed, I'll always be with you," Jesus said.



At night, when you go to bed, you say your prayers. What do you say to Jesus? Do you pray for your family? Can you think of others who need your prayers? Can you pray for a neighbor or classmate who may be sick? Can you pray for the children in the world who feel lonely? Can you pray for elderly people like Mrs. Kaloustian who may feel that nobody cares about them?

Jesus hears your prayers because you believe in him. You have faith.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

.....

This is an Armenian prayer said for someone who is sick.



O Lord

Let the power of your cross
Take away pain and heal the sick
For You are life itself!
You know what each of us needs
Save us and have mercy.

WE CELEBRATE

.....

*Even if you have faith no larger than a mustard seed,
I will always be with you.*



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Our lesson today was about having faith. Jesus healed a little boy. When his disciples asked why they were not able to help him, Jesus answered, “You do not have enough faith. If you have faith no larger than a mustard seed, I will always be with you.”

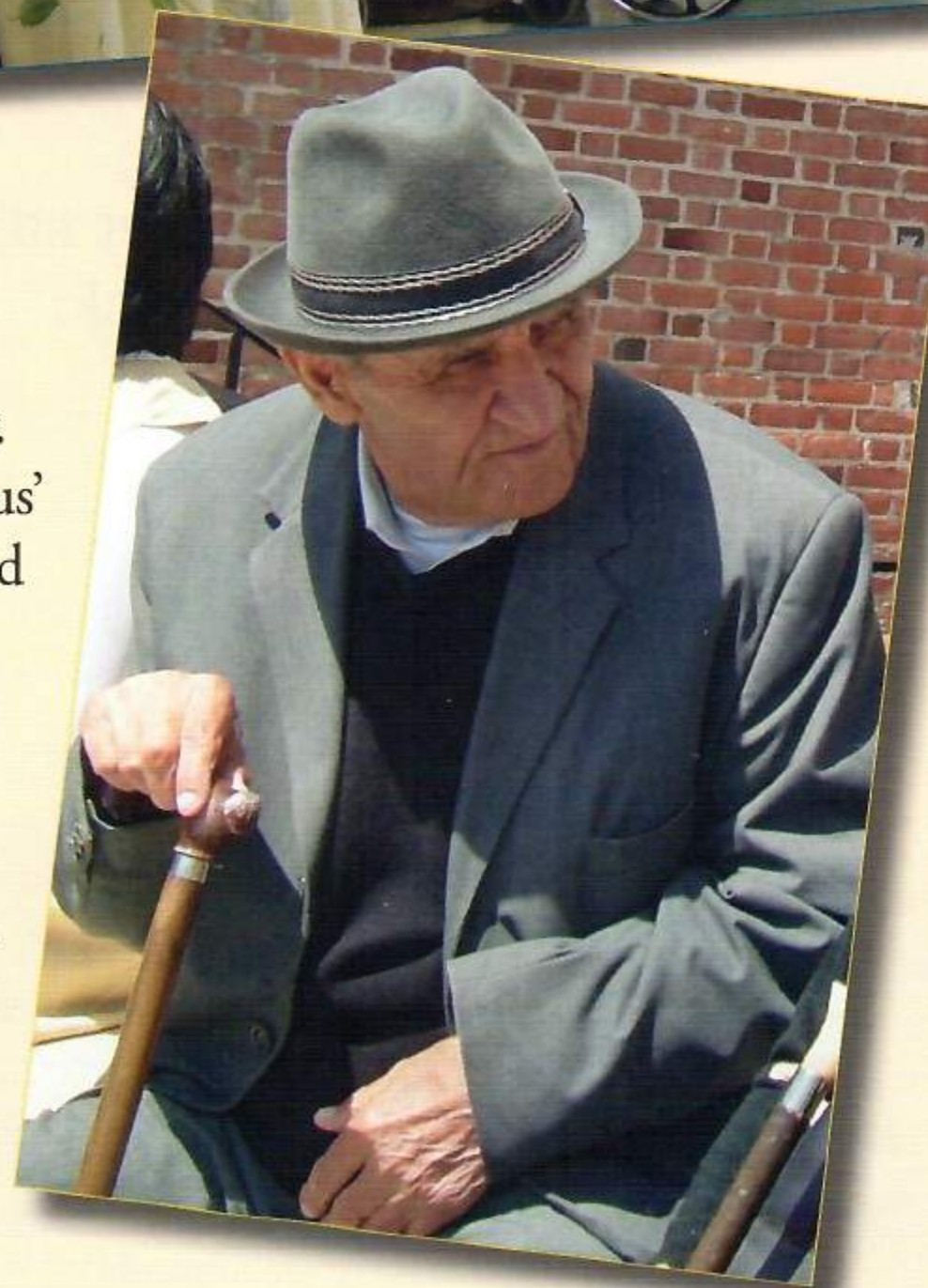
The lesson was also reaching out to those who feel they are alone. An example was given of a group of Sunday School children who visited a local nursing home. A woman, who was alone with her memories, was able to interact with the children, bringing joy to them and to herself.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Each child made a card for someone who is ill or lonely. On the cover, they glued a mustard seed and inside, Jesus’ words – “Even if you have faith no larger than a mustard seed, I will always be with you.”

From the following, choose one you will do with your child.

1. Talk with your child about remembering others in their prayers.
2. Encourage your child to make cards – for someone who is lonely, for someone who is sick, for a happy birthday, for a baptism, for a wedding.



Jesus Taught Us How to be Together



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Father in heaven, we are here in Sunday School with our friends to learn to love you and be the church together. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



It was that time of year. The snow was falling and piling up in Sarah's back yard. She was having fun making a snowman when her dad asked, "Sarah, can you help me shovel the snow?" She answered, "Yes, daddy," and began the job.

Soon, Sarah heard her friend Nick,

from next door, shouting, "Sarah, what are you doing? Do you want me to help you?"

Sarah was happy to see Nick. "Yes, thanks." Together, Sarah and Nick had fun shoveling and playing in the snow. The job was done – thanks to the help of a friend.

GOD'S WORD TO US

Jesus said, "You cannot live in this world thinking only about yourselves. All of you belong to the family of God, and you must take care of each other. And whenever a few of you come together, create a holy place for the Lord."

Ephesians 2:19

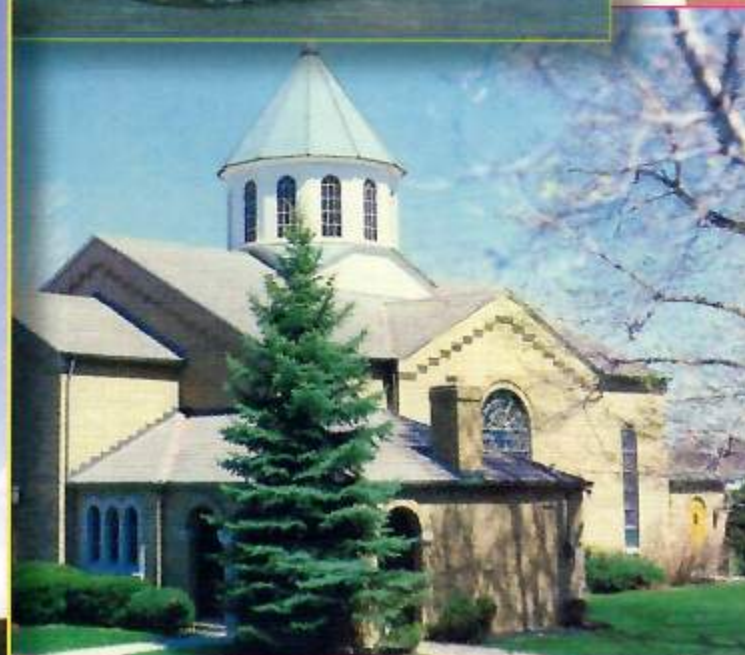
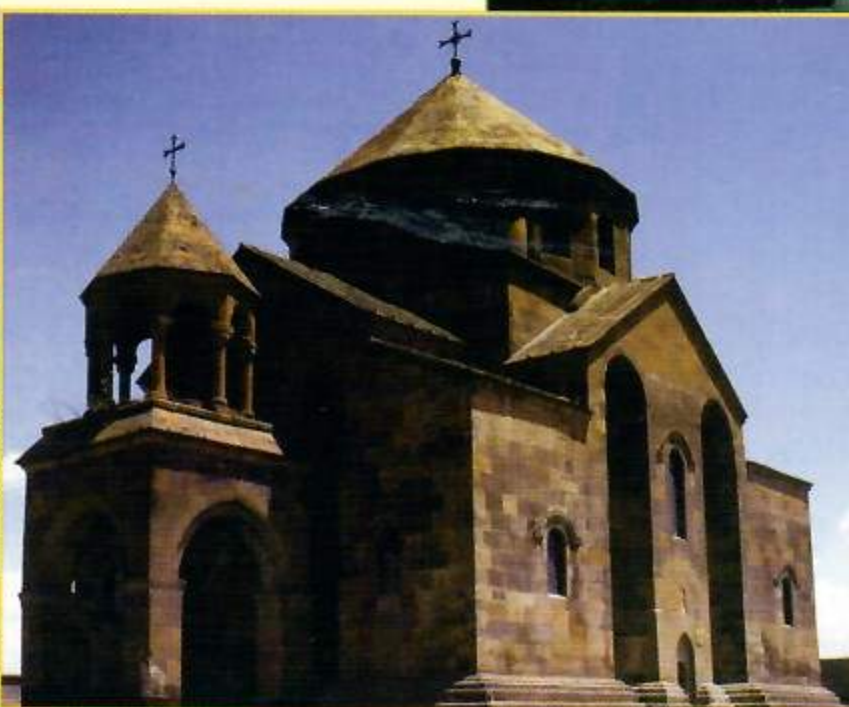


OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Jesus said that when two or more people gathered in his name, they would be creating a holy place for the Lord.

Many people came to America from Armenia to begin a new life. One of the first things they did was raise money to build Armenian churches. They wanted a special place to gather with other Armenians to feel close to God.

These people were also thinking about you. They wanted you to have a special place where God is present. The church is that special place because God is with us in the prayers we say and the hymns we sing.



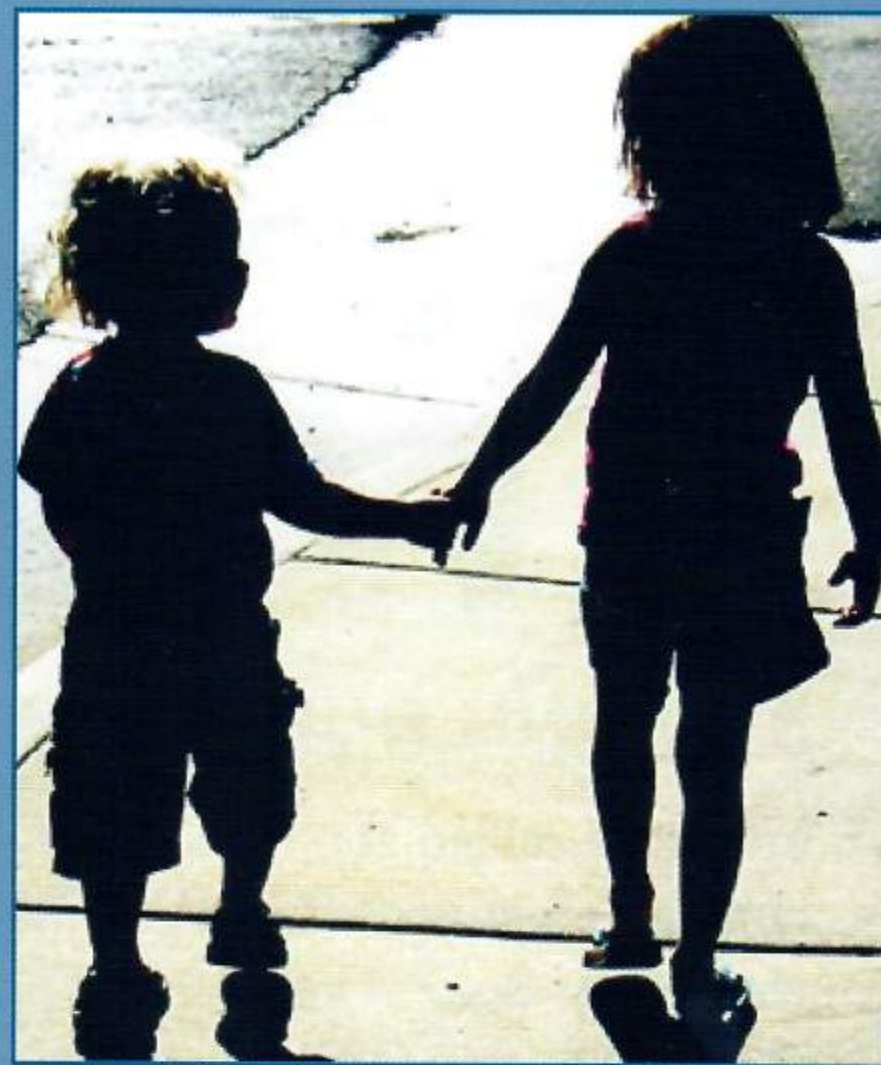
WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

There are many verses in the Bible that teach us about taking care of each other. Here are just a few of them. These are called “one anothers.”

Jesus tells us *to love* one another as brothers and sisters.

Jesus tells us *to help* one another.

Jesus tells us *to forgive* one another.



WE CELEBRATE



Every Sunday at church, we share a special greeting. The Kiss of Peace is shared with all the people in the church as it has been for hundreds and hundreds of years.

During the Kiss of Peace, we turn to the person standing next to us to share the greeting. One person leans over the right shoulder of his or her neighbor and says: “*Krisdos ee mech mer haydnetsav.*” (Christ is revealed among us.)

At the same time, the person receiving the greeting answers: “*Orhnyal eh haydnoutiounun Krisdosee.*” (Blessed is the revelation of Christ.)

God wants us to have a pure heart. When we share the Kiss of Peace, we are reminded of him and his words.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today we talked about the meaning of being together in church as a church family. “*Wherever two or three are gathered in my name, I am there.*” This week’s lesson addresses the need for people to be together, to worship together and to spread the word of God.

In keeping with that theme, we talked about the greeting or Kiss of Peace (Voghchooyn) which is passed among the congregation during Holy Badarak. The Kiss of Peace is a greeting delivering a message of hope. *Christ is revealed among us. Blessed is the revelation of Christ.*



LIVING OUR FAITH

Over time, many Armenian churches have been built because God wants us to be a community, a church family. He also wants us to be at peace with others and with ourselves. In sharing the Kiss of Peace, we are reminded of him.

With your child:

1. Practice the Kiss of Peace at home.
2. Attend Holy Badarak and pass the Kiss of Peace as a family. Explain to your child that the Kiss of Peace signifies the oneness with God of all the people in the church as they spread the joyful news.



Jesus Taught Us to Share our Faith



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Holy Father, we know you want us to care for others and do good works in your name at church, at school and at home. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Joseph and Haig were very close friends. They were in the same class at school. They played together after school and on the weekends. Their families had cookouts, and sometimes, the boys and their dads would go to a baseball game together.

A few months ago, Joseph had invited Haig to his church. Now Haig wanted to invite Joseph to attend Holy Badarak at his church. Both families agreed it was a wonderful idea. Haig and his family drove to Joseph's

house, and then they drove to church. When they entered, Joseph looked around at the stain-glass windows and the painting on the main altar. He saw the Der Hayr in his vestments. He listened to the choir. Haig's mother explained to him what was happening during the Badarak.

At the end of the service, Joseph watched his friend, Haig, approach Der Hayr to kiss the Holy Gospel.



GOD'S WORD TO US

.....

After Jesus went to heaven, his disciples were gathered together in a room. Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind, and fiery tongues appeared over the heads of each of the disciples. The Holy Spirit came to be with them. To their amazement, the disciples began to speak in different languages! Everyone was excited and confused.

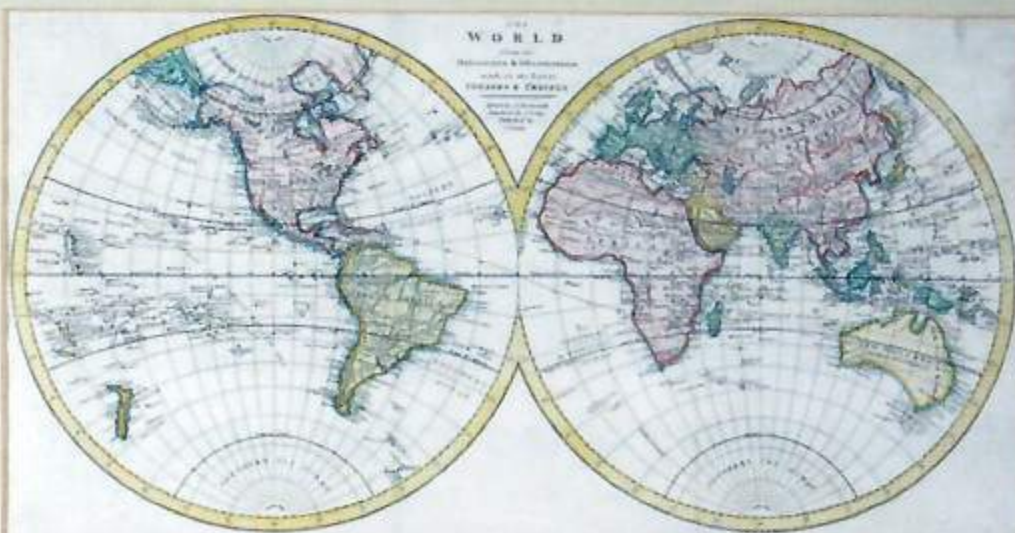
Because they could speak different languages, the disciples were sent to many countries to tell the people about God. Two of the disciples, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, were sent to Armenia.

Acts 2:1

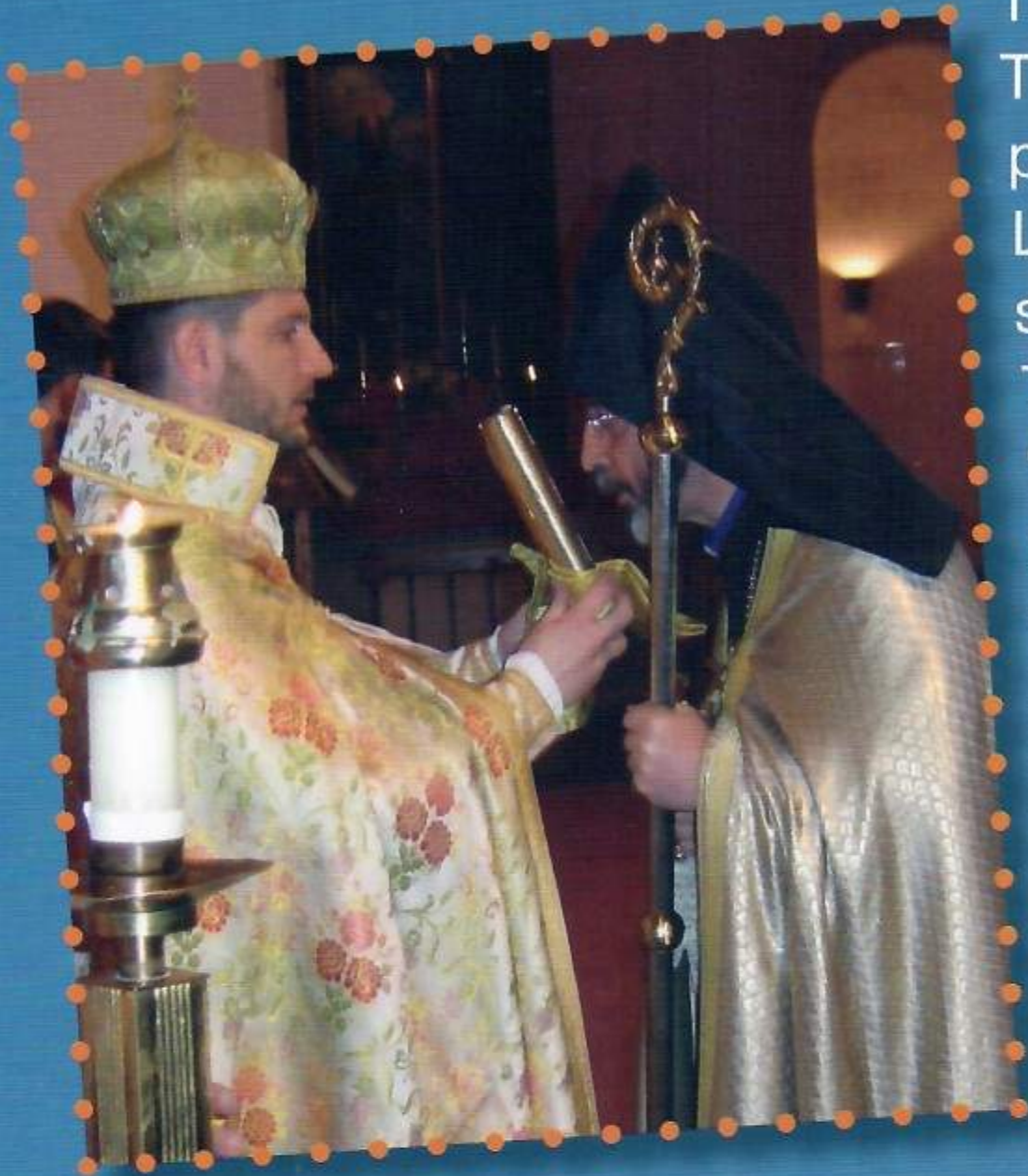
WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

.....

The disciples were sent to many places to share their faith and to welcome people into the family of God. We are all a part of God's family and God wants us to take care of each other.



OUR ARMENIAN WAY



The last part of the Badarak is called The Blessing and Dismissal. After the people recite the prayer, “I will bless the Lord at all times; at all times his praise shall be in my mouth,” the priest gives The Blessing of Dismissal. He says, “May the Holy Spirit bless you. Leave the church in peace, and the Lord be with you all.”

Then the congregation comes forward to kiss the Gospel Book. They leave the church, quietly, remembering the final prayers and the words of the priest.

The Gospel Book is decorated with gold and silver and precious stones.

The beautifully-decorated cover reminds us that inside the book there is also a treasure of a different kind. The treasure is the prayers and stories given to us by God.

WE CELEBRATE

The Gospel Book is called Avedaran in Armenian.

“I will bless the Lord at all times; at all times his praise shall be in my mouth!”

Psalm 34:1





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today, the children went to church to take an active part in the Last Blessing and Dismissal. We learned a brief but meaningful prayer that is recited at the end of the Badarak – “I will bless the Lord at all times; at all times his praise shall be in my mouth.”

The Bible passage for the day explained the Feast of Pentecost. On that day, the Holy Spirit enabled the disciples to speak in many tongues. This knowledge of languages allowed the disciples to travel to many countries to spread the word of God. Saints Thaddeus and Bartholomew traveled to Armenia to preach the word of God.

LIVING OUR FAITH

The theme of the day’s lesson was Jesus teaching us to share our faith. In keeping with that theme, the children heard a story about two boys, friends, who attended each other’s churches.

With your child, choose one of the following:

1. Learn the psalm verse sung as Badarak is ending: “I will bless the Lord at all times, at all times his praise shall be in mouth.” (Psalm 34:1)
2. As a church family, kiss the Gospel Book at the end of the Badarak.
3. Invite your child’s friend to attend church services with you and your family.



We Join the Church with Baptism



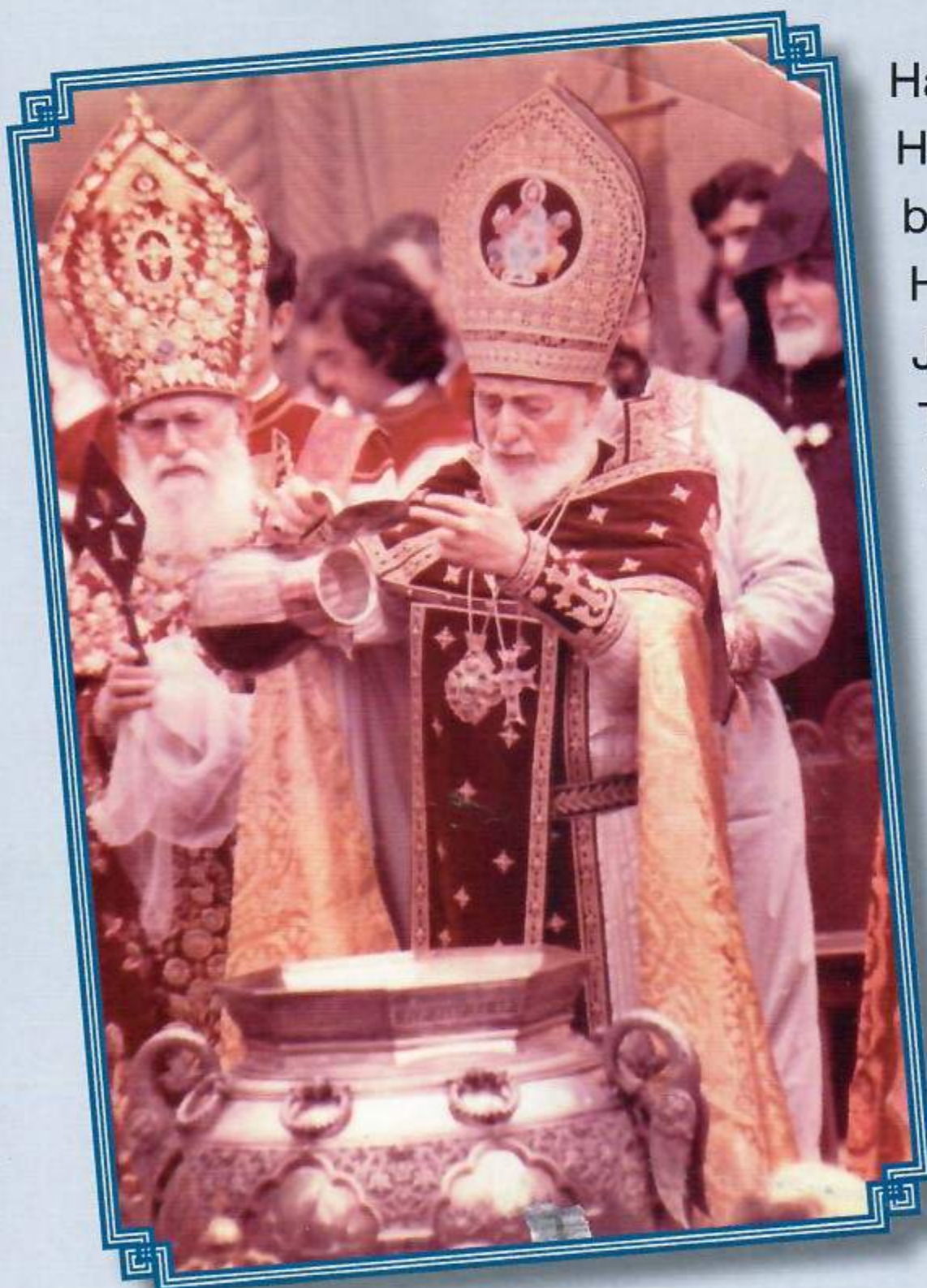
WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Jesus, through baptism, we became a part of your family. We pray that we will always make choices that please you. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Harout's Sunday School class met Der Hayr in the baptistry after church. Over the baptismal font, there was a painting. Der Hayr explained that this painting showed Jesus being baptized by someone. Who? The children raised their hands to answer. "John the Baptist," they shouted.

Der Hayr also showed them a silver dove in which holy oil is kept. It is called Holy Muron. When he tipped the dove forward, some of the oil came out of its beak. "Holy Oil is made every seven years in Armenia at Holy Etchmiadzin. It is made from the oil of many flowers, and always a little bit of the old muron is put in with the new. We use the Holy Oil to bless the baby after it is baptized—the forehead, eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, heart, back and feet."

Harout remembered his sister's baptism, and he remembered what Der Hayr had said, "When you are baptized, you become a part of God's family."

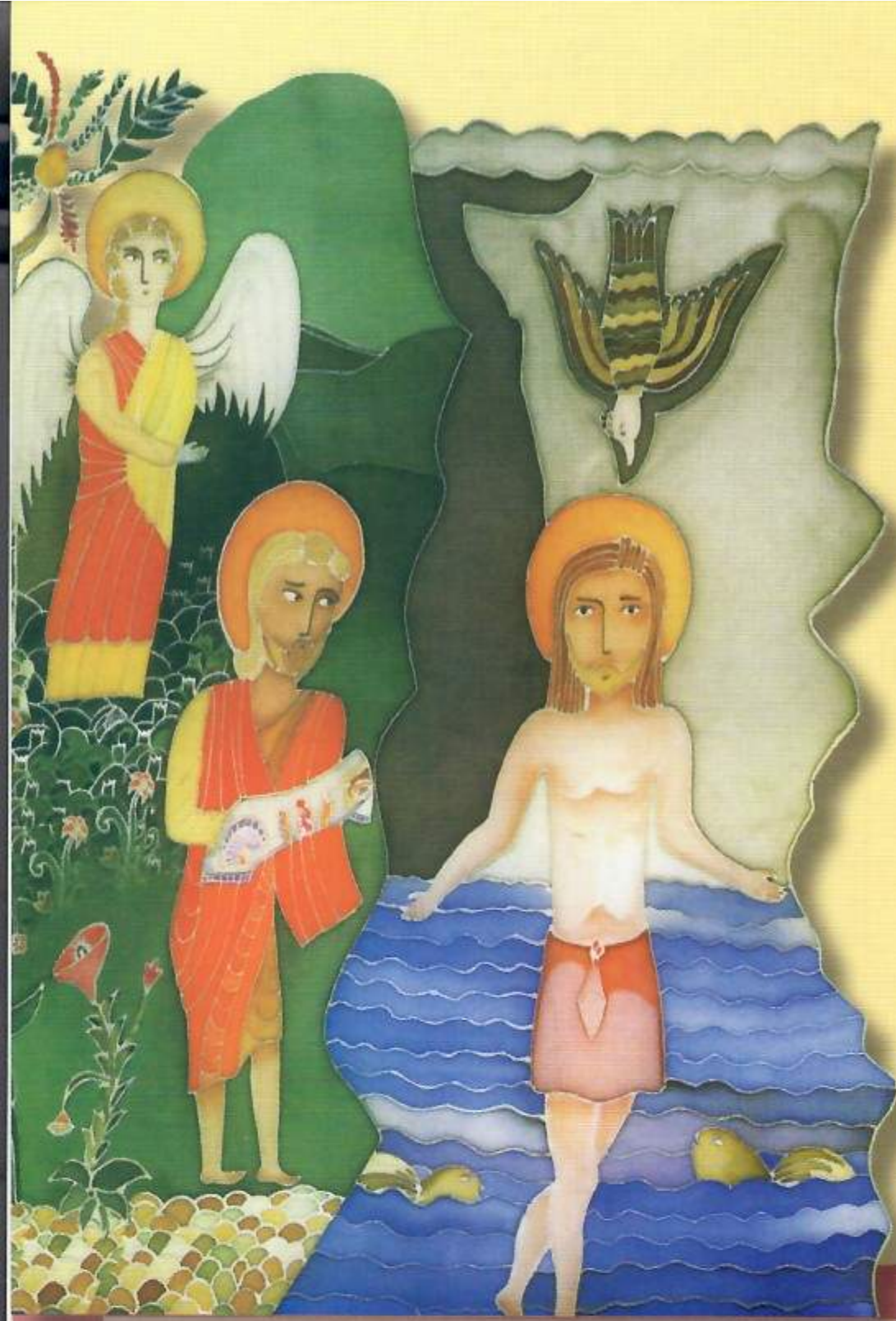
GOD'S WORD TO US

John the Baptist saw Jesus walking toward him. He thought, "Here is the Lamb of God. He has come to take away the sins of the world."

John said to Jesus, "I come to baptize you with water." After the baptism, the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, came down from heaven and appeared over Jesus' head. God's voice could be heard saying, "This is my Son. I am pleased with him."

John said, "Now I know that this is the Son of God."

John 1:29-34



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Jesus' baptism was sealed by the Holy Spirit. Your baptism was also sealed by the Holy Spirit when you were blessed with Holy Oil. This blessing makes you strong, strong in making choices. Everyone who was present at your baptism prayed to God to help you make good choices in your life.

We can make good choices in God's name:



We can attend Sunday School.

We can be patient with one another.

We can be kind to one another.

We can take care of each other.

We can... what else can we do?

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Chrismation (Troshm)

To bless and seal the nine parts of the baby, the priest pours some of the Holy Oil in the palm of his hand, and he begins by blessing the forehead, saying that this blessing is a gift from God. Each part is blessed with a special prayer:

The eyes – see the goodness of all things.

The ears – always hear the words of God.

The nostrils – have a sweet life.

The mouth – never speak unpleasant words.

The hands – use your hands to do good works.

The heart – always remain pure.

The back – be a shield to protect the baby.

The feet – always walk on the path chosen by God.

Then the baby is dressed in new white clothes and receives Holy Communion.

Դրոշմ



WE CELEBRATE

The dove-shaped container is used during Baptism and at other services. It contains Holy Oil called Holy Muron. Holy Muron is made in Holy Etchmiadzin in Armenia every seven years.

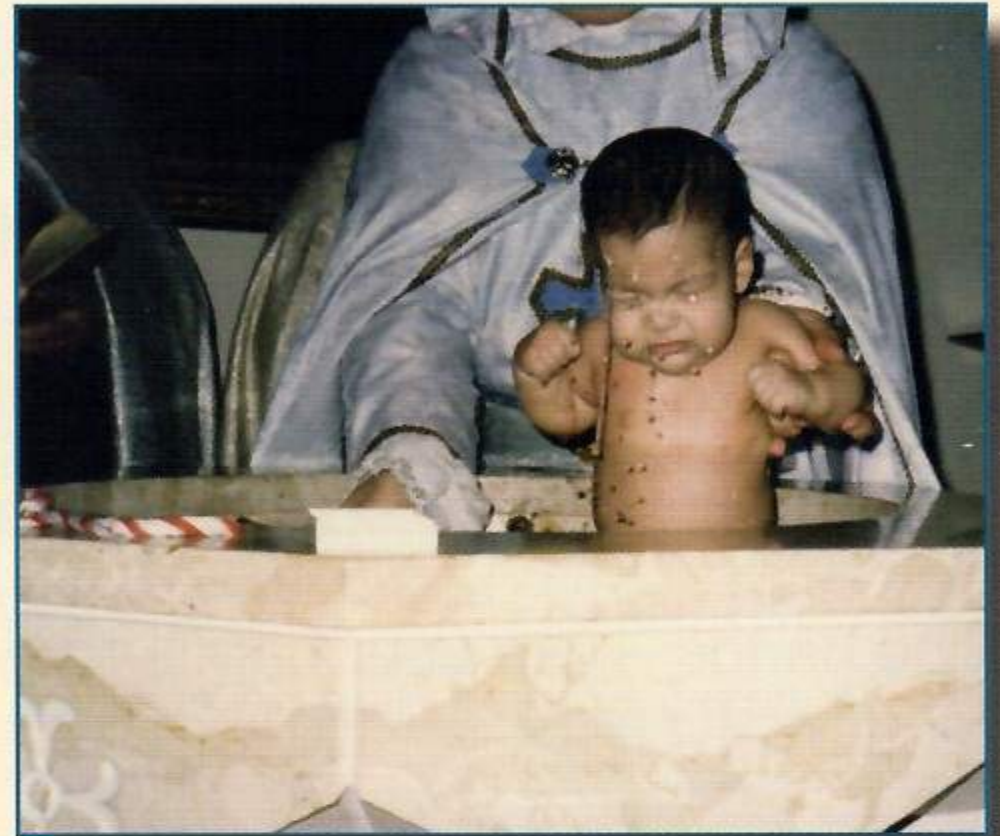




FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today the children learned about the Chrismation portion of the Sacrament of Baptism. After the baptism, nine parts of the baby's body are blessed – forehead, eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, heart, back and feet - with special prayers for each part. A dove-shaped container holds the Holy Oil (Holy Muron) which is used during this blessing. The dove, representing the Holy Spirit, can be found in many places in an Armenian Church.



LIVING OUR FAITH

The blessing or Chrismation makes the baby spiritually strong. For example, it is hoped that the blessing of the hands will encourage the use of the hands to do good works.

Encourage your child to:

1. Tell you the story of Jesus' baptism using the dove that he/she made.
2. Think of ways to help an elderly or ill neighbor. Make a list together.



We Grow in Faith Together



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooy'n Srpo.

Dear God, thank you for our families. They bring us to church just like Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Helen was a very curious little girl. At home, she would always ask her parents questions. "How does a caterpillar turn into a butterfly? What makes thunder? How does a bird fly?"

Helen liked to go to Sunday School. She would always ask questions. "Why did Jesus wash the feet of his disciples? Did



Jesus like children? Why did Jesus tell so many stories?" The teacher would answer her questions, and Helen would think of more.

One day, Helen's mother visited her Sunday School class. She said to the teacher, "Helen always has questions. I hope she is polite when she asks them."

The teacher answered, "I like it when Helen asks questions. It shows me that she has been listening to me and is thinking about what I have said."

GOD'S WORD TO US



In the time of Jesus, people would go to the Temple to thank God. Eight days after Mary and Joseph's baby was born, he was given the name Jesus. Then on the 40th day, Mary and Joseph presented him to the Temple.

When Jesus was twelve years old, his parents took him to Jerusalem to the Temple for the Passover feast. When the feast was over, they left Jerusalem. They thought Jesus was with the other children. When they could not find him, they returned to Jerusalem and found him in the Temple.

Luke 2:21-52

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD



“Didn’t you know that I would be in my Father’s house?” What did Jesus mean when he said that to his mother? He meant that he was in the house of God, his father’s house, saying his prayers.

There are three stories about Jesus’ early life -- one when he was a baby eight days old, another when he was forty days old and another one when he was twelve years old. These stories tell us that Jesus was raised in a loving family who taught him the ways of worship and prayer in the Temple. Together with other families, Jesus and Mary and Joseph became a community of the faithful.

How is Jesus’ life like your life?

Do you belong to a community of the faithful?

Do you go to church with your family?

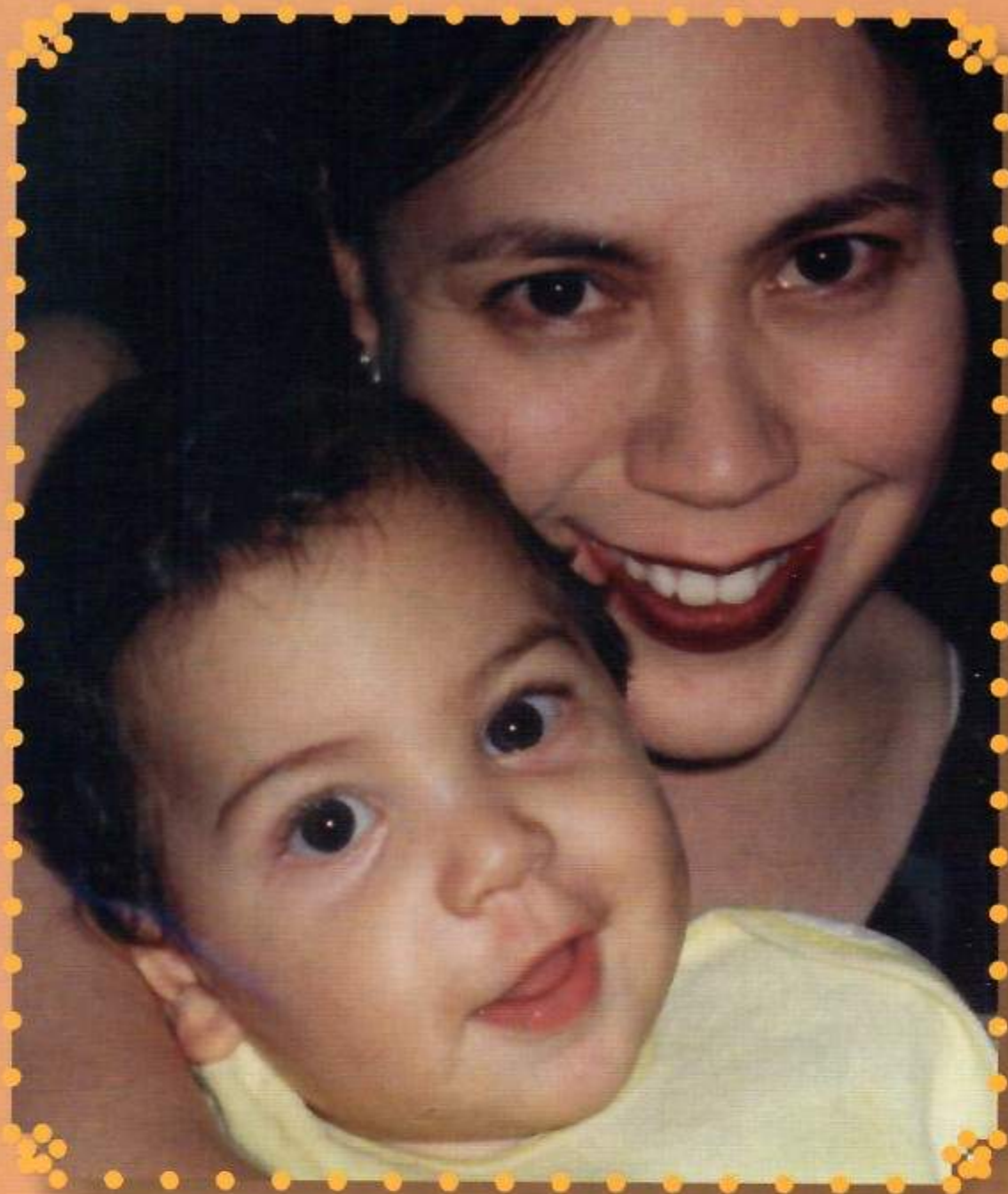
OUR ARMENIAN WAY

.....

When he was just a baby, Jesus was presented to the Temple by his parents. This is remembered by the Armenian Church on the Feast of Dyarnuntarach.

Dyarnuntarach is celebrated every year on February 14.

In the Armenian Church, it is the tradition that newborn babies are brought to the church when they are eight days old up to forty days old. The eighth day and fortieth day are as important to us as they were to families at the time of Jesus.



WE CELEBRATE

.....

Armenians sometimes celebrate the feast of Dyarnuntarach in an old, traditional way. A pile of wood is made ready in the churchyard. The people leave church with candles to light the woodpile. They gather on the grounds of the church to have fun, and some even try to jump over the burning wood.

At the end of the evening, everyone goes home with a light from the fire, and they try to keep it burning until the next morning.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

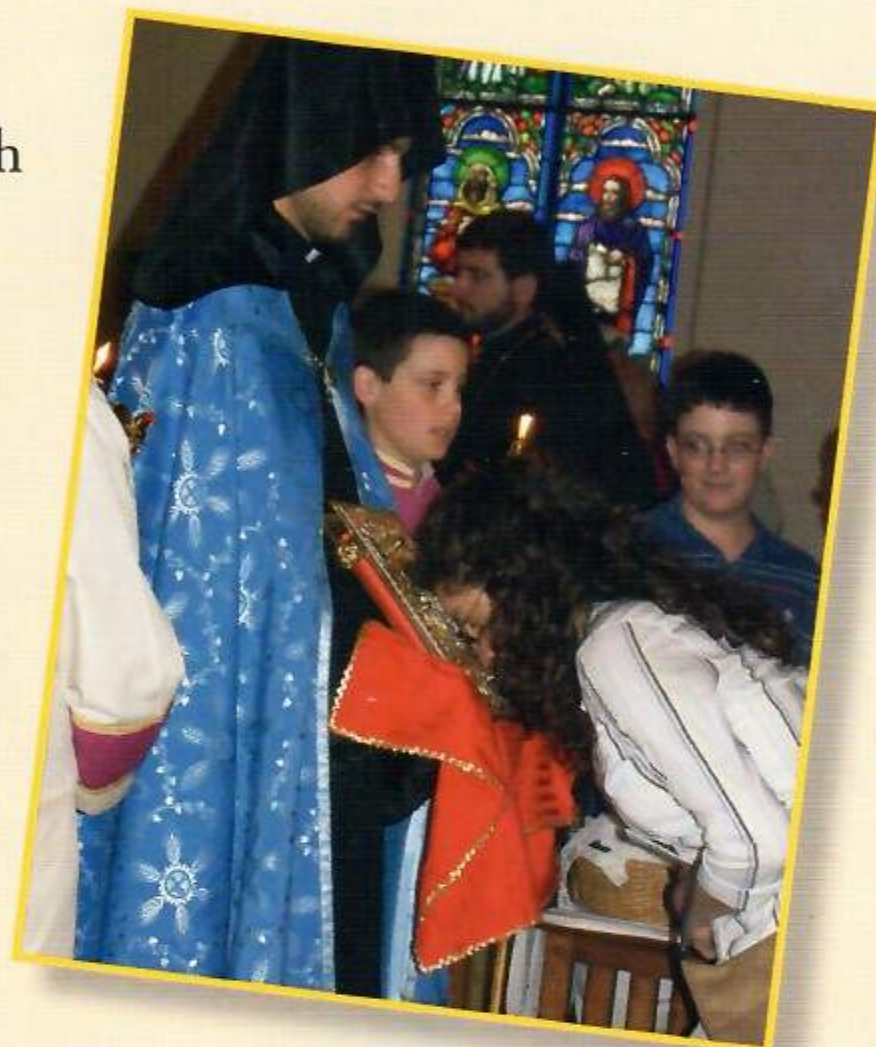
Today's lesson was about Jesus' early years. Tradition was very important at that time, and Mary and Joseph raised Jesus in the traditions of their faith. He was named eight days after his birth. When he was forty days old, he was brought to the Temple to be "given" to the Lord. At age twelve, Jesus accompanied Mary and Joseph to the Temple for the Passover feast.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Mary, Joseph and Jesus went to the Temple and worshipped with other families, thus laying the foundation for a community of the faithful. What do Armenian Church families do to be a community of faith?

With your child choose one of the activities below:

1. Attend church together as a family on a regular basis.
2. Participate in church activities.
3. Take Holy Communion as a family.
4. As a family, go up and kiss the Gospel at the end of Badarak.



We Remember Jesus on Sunday



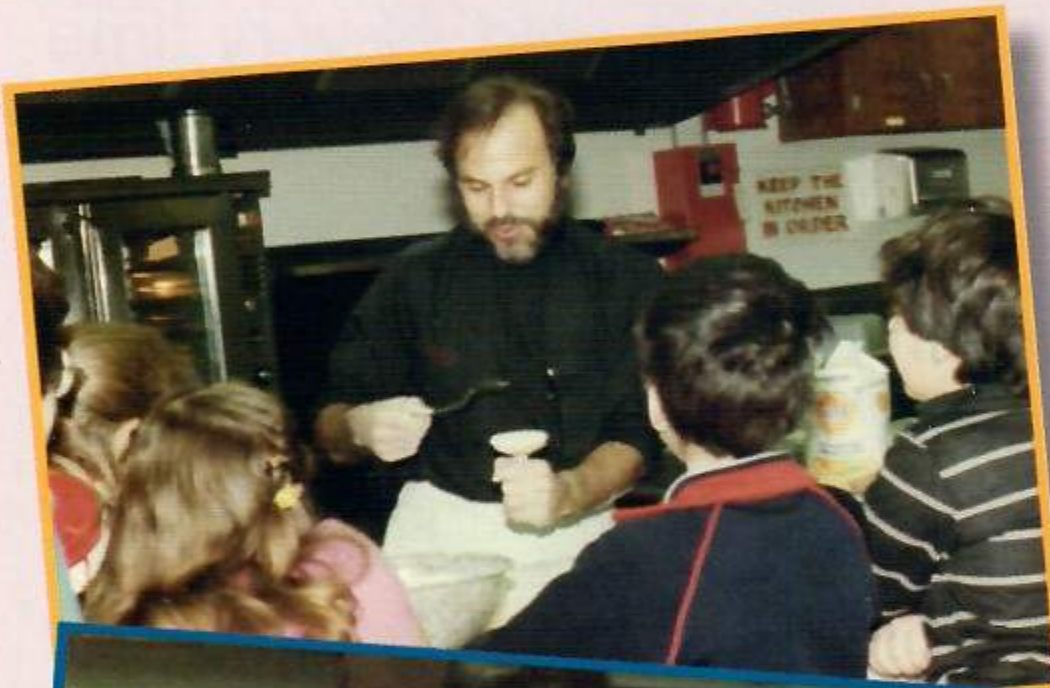
WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Heavenly Father, we know you are with us every day. We come to church on Sundays to remember your life on earth and your message of hope. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Der Hayr invited the kindergarten children to watch him make nushkhar. Nushkhar is thin and round, shaped like a cookie and is made out of flour and water. Der Hayr uses it for Holy Communion bread on Sundays.

First, Der Hayr measured flour and water and mixed them together by hand. Then he rolled out the dough to make it flat. He used the bottom of a glass to make the round shapes. Next he took a round wooden stamp. At the bottom of it, there was an impression of Jesus on the cross. He stamped this on each circle of dough and then baked them in the oven.

Then he surprised everyone! "You can each take one home and give it to your mother or grandmother. She can put it in her jar of rice or flour. It will be like a blessing for what is in the jars."



GOD'S WORD TO US

It was the time of Passover. Jesus and his disciples planned to eat the Passover meal together. Jesus told his disciples to go into the city to the house of a certain man. "Tell him that I want to eat the Passover meal in his home." The disciples did as Jesus asked.

During the meal, Jesus took some bread. He blessed it and broke it up into small pieces. He said, "Every time you are together remembering me, I want you to break the bread as I have done and share it."


Then he picked up a cup of wine and gave thanks to God. He passed the cup to his disciples. He said, "Drink this. Every time you are together, remember me with blessed bread and wine."

They sang a song together and went out to the Mount of Olives.


This is known as the Last Supper.

Matthew 26:17-30

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD



Many people all over the world break bread before each meal as Jesus did in front of his disciples. Breaking bread means that you share your food with those who are in your home.



A group of people called Bedouins are very famous for their hospitality. They live in the desert in tents and travel from place to place. They are called nomads. They believe that, if a traveler arrives at their tent site, he has been brought there by God. They provide food, water and shelter for their guest and his animals.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

In a small space in the wall near the main altar, the Der Hayr keeps the chalice filled with wine and the nushkhar, covered with a beautiful cloth. During the Great Entrance, the deacon brings the chalice and nushkharh to the priest who takes it and carefully puts it on the altar. He will use it later for Holy Communion, saying the words that Jesus said at the Last Supper.



WE CELEBRATE





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

The children heard the story of the Last Supper – when Jesus broke bread with his disciples. This was the beginning of Holy Communion. When Holy Communion is given on Sunday, we hear the same words that Jesus spoke to his disciples so many years ago.

Breaking of bread is a symbol of hospitality. Bedouins continue to break bread in this ancient way. Like the people of the Bible, they believe that any stranger arriving at their tent site has been sent by God. Therefore, they honor him and give food and shelter not only to him but to his animals.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Discuss all or one of following questions with your child:

1. Arrange to have your home blessed by your priest with all family members present. He can bring a nushkhar with him to leave with you. Serve refreshments in the spirit of hospitality.
2. Remember Jesus at mealtime by saying a prayer.
3. Take communion with your child whenever the next time his or her Sunday School class does.



We Honor Jesus in Church with Words and Actions



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Holy Father, we gather with our church family to remember you and honor you in prayer and song.
Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

It was Sunday morning. Jack's family was getting ready for church. Jack, his twin brother, Alan, their grandparents and parents were all going to church together. Jack and Alan both got in the back of the van. Their grandparents sat in front of them.

Their father said, "Is everyone ready? Do you all have your seat belts on?"

Then grandmother said a little prayer and crossed herself. She always said a prayer before the car moved so that everyone would be safe and they were on their way.

Alan sneezed. Mother said, "Bless you."

They heard an ambulance siren. Father pulled over to the side of the road.

Grandpa crossed himself as the ambulance drove by.

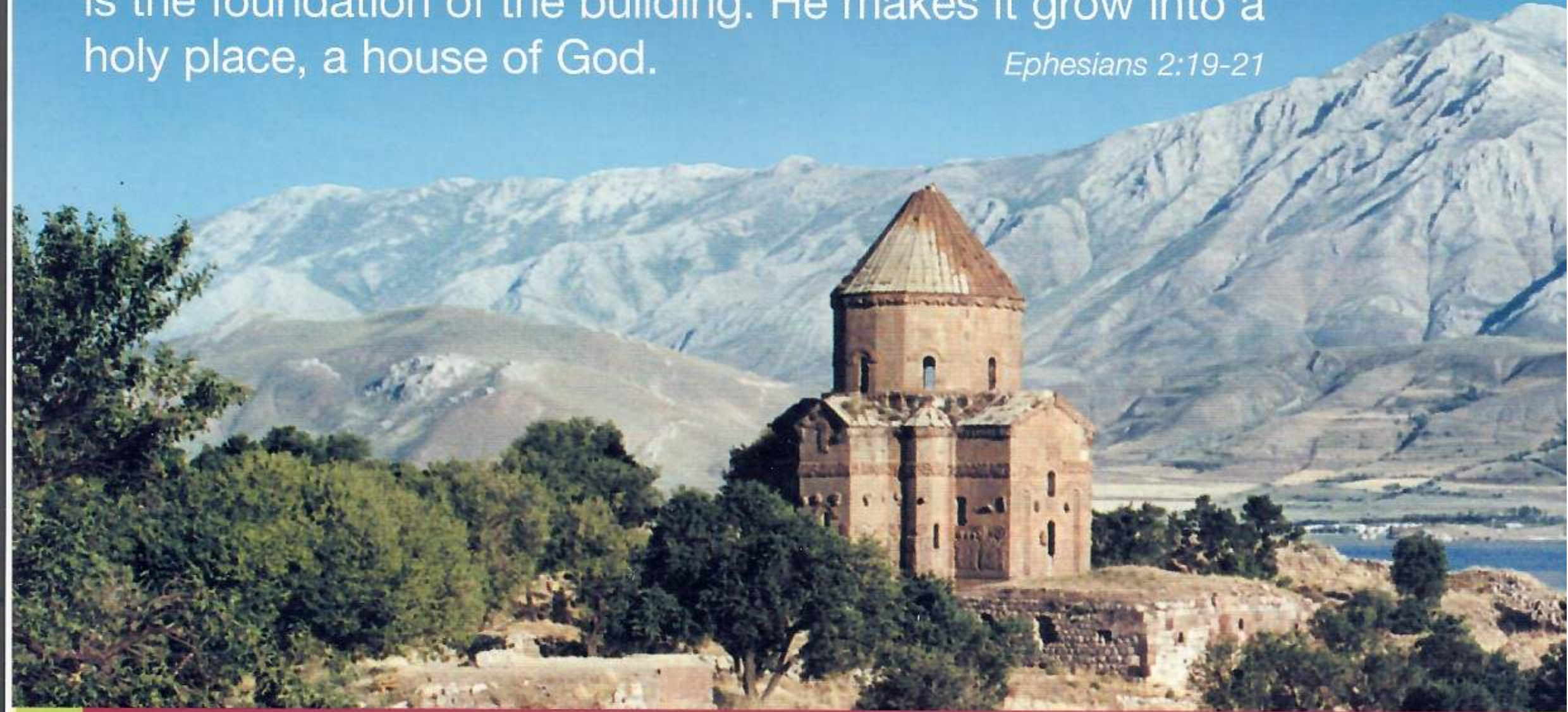
Soon they arrived at church. Jack and Alan went ahead to go to their Sunday School class. The rest of the family went into church to worship.



GOD'S WORD TO US

One of the apostles, St. Paul, tells us we all belong to the family of God. He says we are like a building. Christ is the foundation of the building. He makes it grow into a holy place, a house of God.

Ephesians 2:19-21



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Jesus said, "Whenever two or three people are gathered in church, I am there."

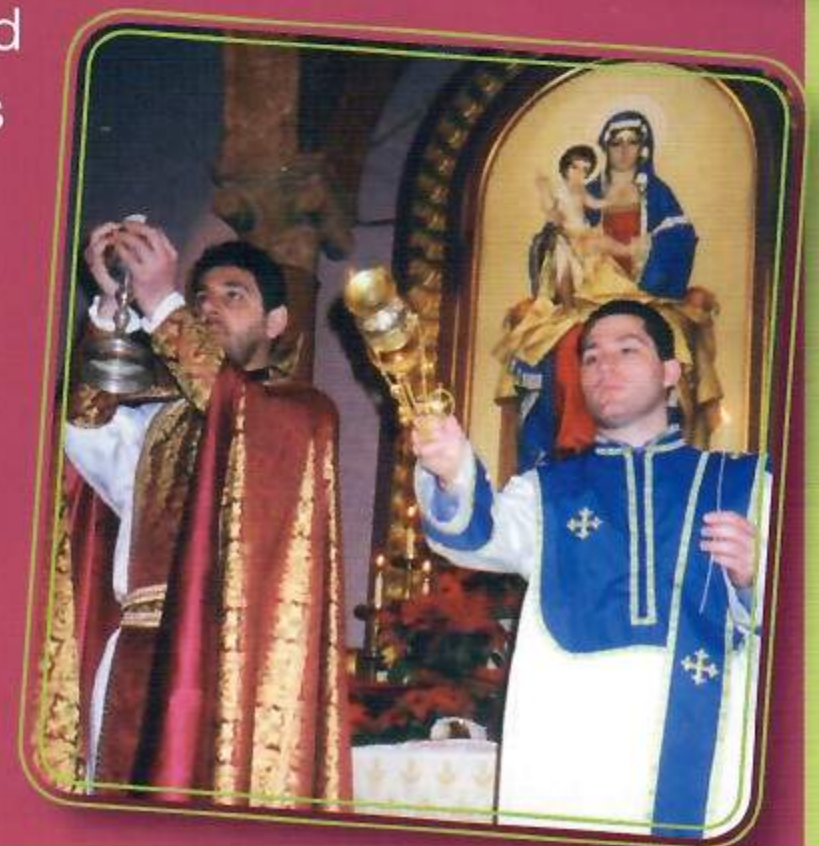
The church is a building made of brick and stone and cement. Yet when we enter the building, it becomes a living church. That means it isn't just a stone building any more. It becomes the holy place that St. Paul talked about. It becomes a holy place through our prayers and hymns.

Here are some things for you to think about.

When you are in church, what do you see?

When you are in church, what do you smell?

When you are in church, what do you hear?



OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Jesus chose disciples as his helpers. The deacons (sargavaks) are the priest's helpers on the Holy Altar. They do many things to help the priest during Badarak. They read from the Bible. They carry the chalice to the priest. They use the censer that brings forth the sweet smells of incense. They also shake the kshotz during Badarak.



WE CELEBRATE



A stole is a long, narrow vestment worn by the deacon on his left shoulder. After he is given the stole by the bishop, the deacon becomes the priest's assistant.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

The theme of today's lesson is honoring Jesus with words and actions.

The church is a stone and brick building until, as Jesus says, two or three people are gathered in his name. Then it becomes a living church.

Wherever we are, we carry our faith with us; the story of Jack and his family driving to church illustrated how often we can be prayerful, even in the most mundane circumstances.

The children also learned that when the deacon is awarded his stole, he becomes the priest's assistant with many duties to perform. Your child will tell you about some of them.

LIVING OUR FAITH

We honor Jesus by our words and actions. Discuss the following items with your child as a way of honoring Jesus.

- I help others.
- I pray for my family and others.
- I attend church with my family.
- I try to be kind to others.
- I receive Holy Communion several times during the year.



The Cross is a Special Sign



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Holy Father, the cross reminds us of your promise that you will be with us always. Amen.



OUR LIFE TOGETHER

Silva and her family were going to visit her grandparents. As they neared the town where her grandparents lived, Silva noticed a very large cross on the steeple of a church. It was so big! She wondered how it stayed up there. She turned to her sister, Mary, and said, "Look at that cross!"

They passed two more churches before arriving at their grandparents' home.

One of the churches had a round roof with a cross on top. It reminded Silva of her church. "That is an Armenian Church," she said to her sister.

Their grandparents were outside waiting for them. "Medz Mama, Medz Baba, on our way, we saw three churches. One was different than the others."

The girls had a lot to tell their grandparents.

Grandpa explained, "The one that you describe is an Armenian Church. I am glad you recognized that it was different from the others. That round thing is called a dome. Armenian churches have that with the Armenian cross on top. Girls, how was that cross different than the two others you saw?"



GOD'S WORD TO US

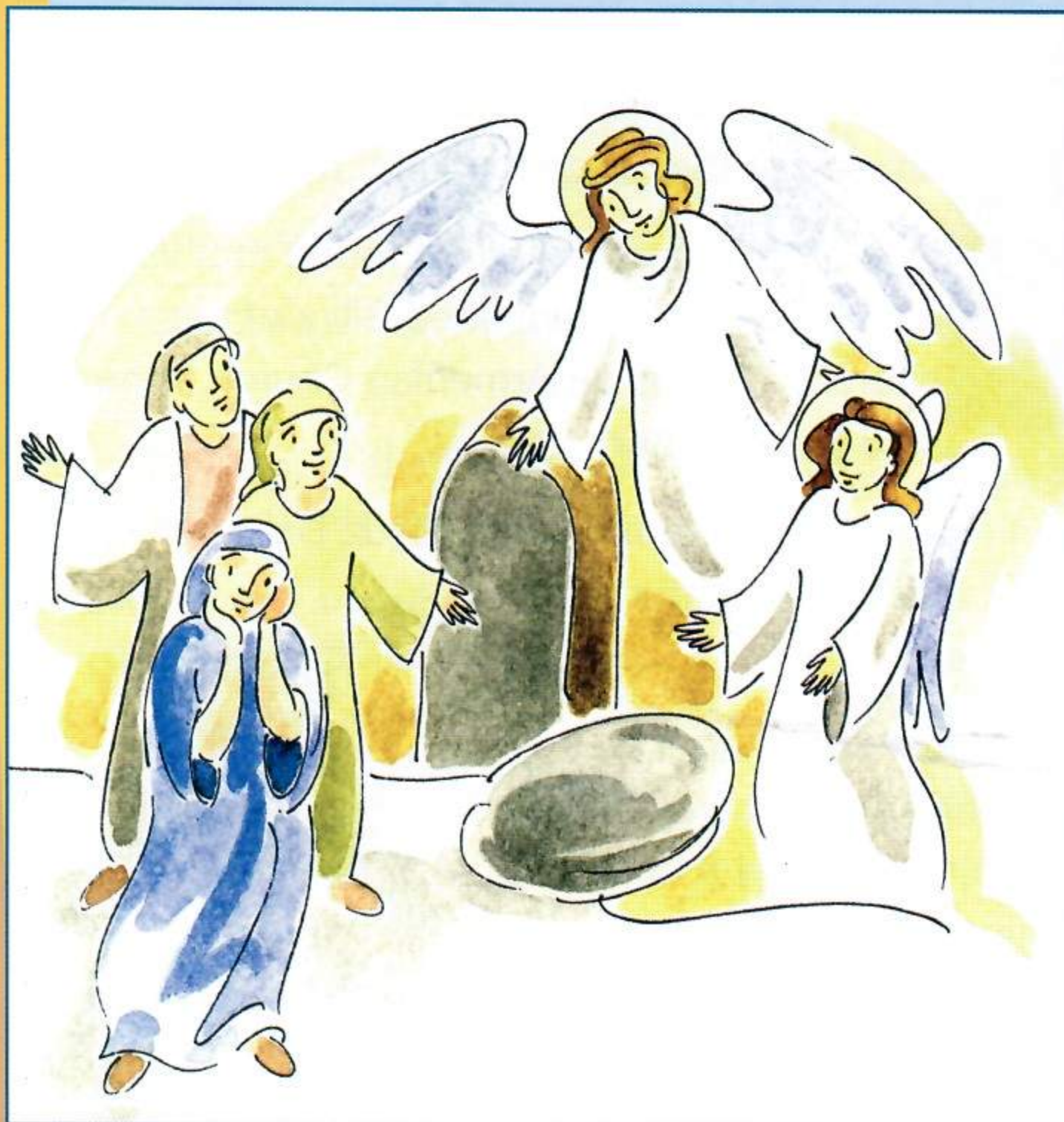
Jesus was carrying a heavy cross to a hill. He stumbled a few times and could not carry the cross any more. The soldiers saw a man in the crowd called Simon of Cyrene. They put the cross on his back so he could carry it the rest of the way. The soldiers were under orders to take Jesus to the hill, called Golgotha, and to place him on the cross. Two other men were also being taken to the hill.



A large crowd was following Jesus. They were crying for him. "Do not cry for me," he told them.

Luke 23:26-43

WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

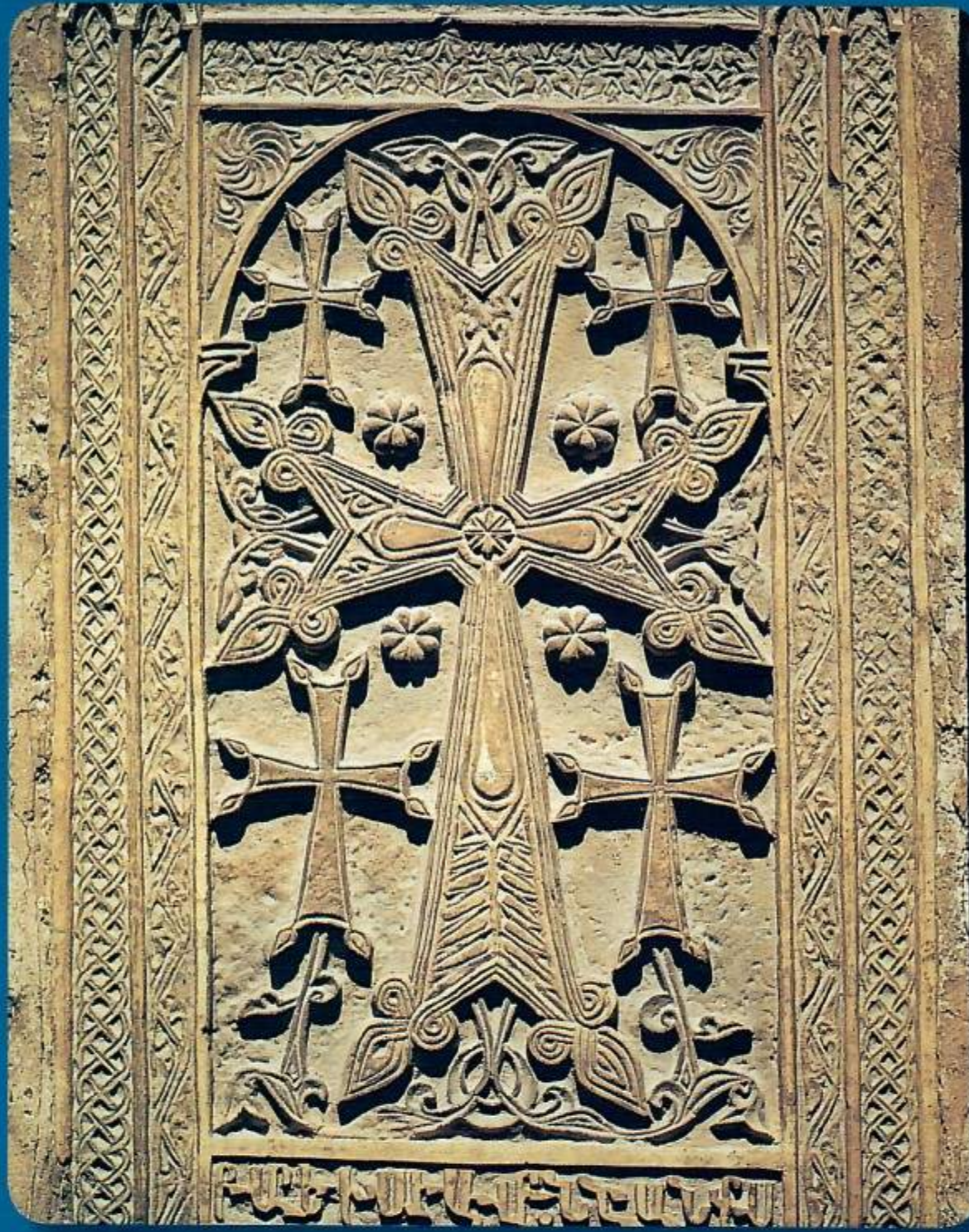


A man named Joseph of Arimathea took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped Jesus' body in a white linen cloth and placed him in a tomb cut out of rock. A large stone was placed in front of the opening.

A day later, a few women came to the tomb and found the stone had been rolled away, and there was no one inside the tomb. What had happened? They did not know what to think. Two angels in shining white clothes appeared to tell the women that Jesus was in heaven.

We believe that Jesus is in heaven. We believe that Jesus loves us very much.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY



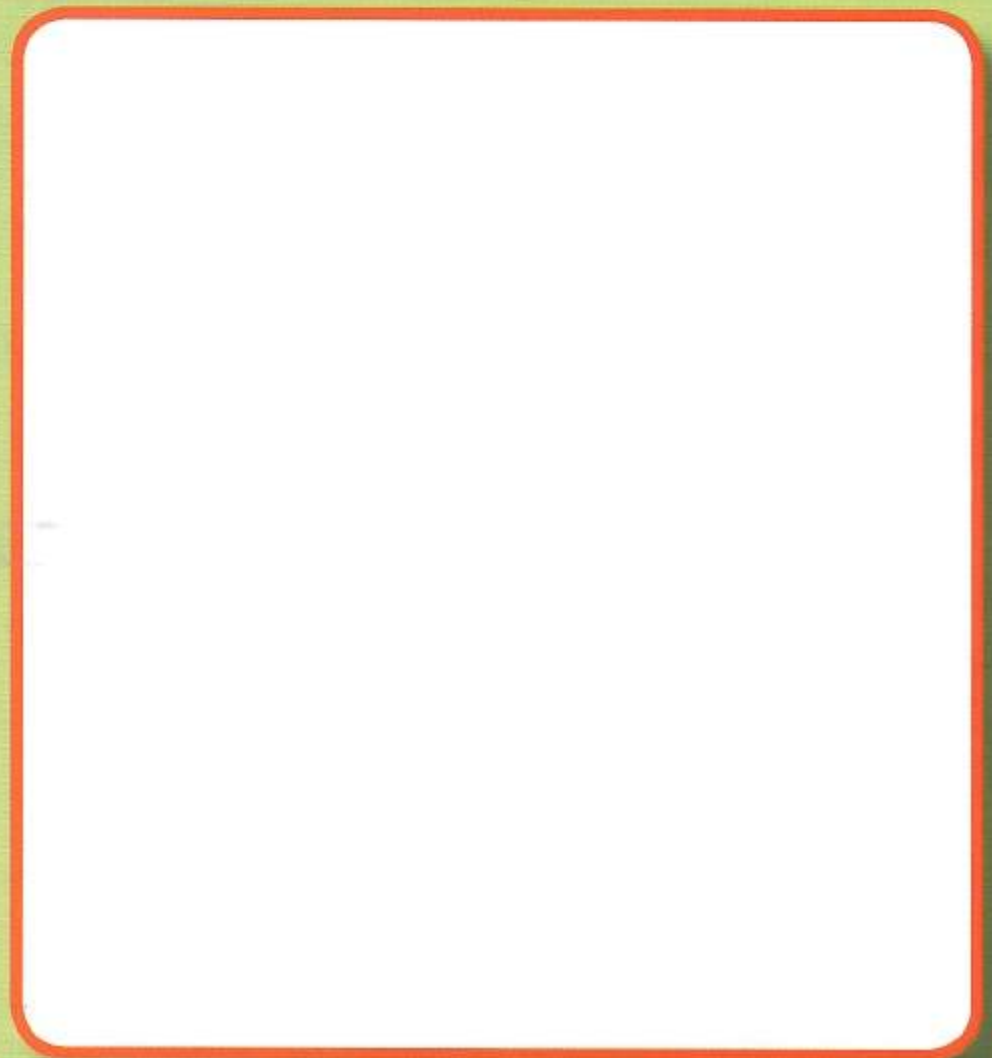
In the Armenian Church, the cross does not show a figure of Jesus on it because we want to show that Jesus rose from the dead and lives forever.

You will see many different kinds of crosses being used in the Armenian Church. There is a baptismal cross, given to a baby when he or she is baptized; there is a cross in the center of the Holy Altar; there is a hand cross that the priest holds; there is a cross, called a pectoral cross, that hangs around the neck of a priest.

There are khachkars (stone crosses). These are slabs of stone with a cross carved on them. Each khachkar is different. You will find many khachkars in Armenia.

WE CELEBRATE

Draw an Armenian cross
in this space





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today the focus for the children was the special place of the cross in the Armenian Church. They heard the story of the cross that Jesus carried to his crucifixion and the story of the empty tomb. Because we want to dwell lovingly on Jesus' resurrection, Armenian crosses do not show the crucified body of Christ. Crosses appear in many places in the church. Armenia is covered with khachkars (stone crosses), historic monuments to our faith over the centuries.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Your child made an Armenian cross today. We practiced making the sign of the cross in Armenian and English.

With your child, continue the practice of making the sign of the cross before and after prayers.

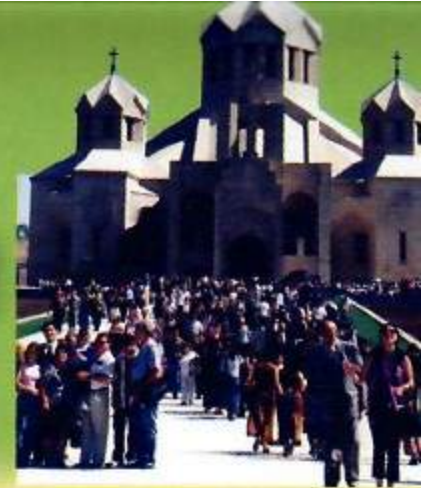
*Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yer Hokvooyn Srpo.
Amen.*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

- When you attend church as a family, ask your child to look for crosses.



How the Armenians Became a Christian People



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooy'n Srpo.

Holy Father, we are proud that Armenia was the first Christian nation. Thaddeus and Bartholomew and Gregory came to Armenia to bring the good news about Jesus. We hope they are proud of our faith. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER



Ruth was so excited. She was going to sleep at her friend Margaret's house. The next morning they were going to attend church with Margaret and her family.

The next day, when they arrived at church, Ruth and Margaret went to the Sunday School. Margaret introduced Ruth to her Sunday School teacher. "It is so nice that you came with your friend to visit us. What is the name of your church?"

Ruth answered shyly, "St. Mark Armenian Church." Ruth was surprised when the teacher turned to her class and said, "Did you know that Armenia was the first Christian nation?"

Ruth felt so proud that others knew about the Armenian Church.

The People of God Celebrate



WE PRAY TOGETHER



Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo.

Dear Lord, as a church family, we remember and honor the special events in your life. Amen.

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

One day, Johnny and his sister Angele were coming home from school. All of a sudden, their Uncle Toros jumped out from behind some bushes and splashed them with water. Johnny and Angele screamed. Angele said, "Uncle Toros, why did you sprinkle us with water?"



"Come inside, you two," he said.

"Medz Mama will explain why."

Johnny and Angele dried themselves off and sat down at the kitchen table. Grandma gave them a cookie and some milk. She began to tell them about this tradition.

"The Feast of the Transfiguration is also called Vartavar. Before we were Christian, Armenians would decorate their altars with roses. Vart means rose. They also sprinkled water on each other. Today we do these things in happy celebration of Christ's love and glory!"

Johnny and Angele could not wait for Vartavar when they could sprinkle water on Uncle Toros!

GOD'S WORD TO US

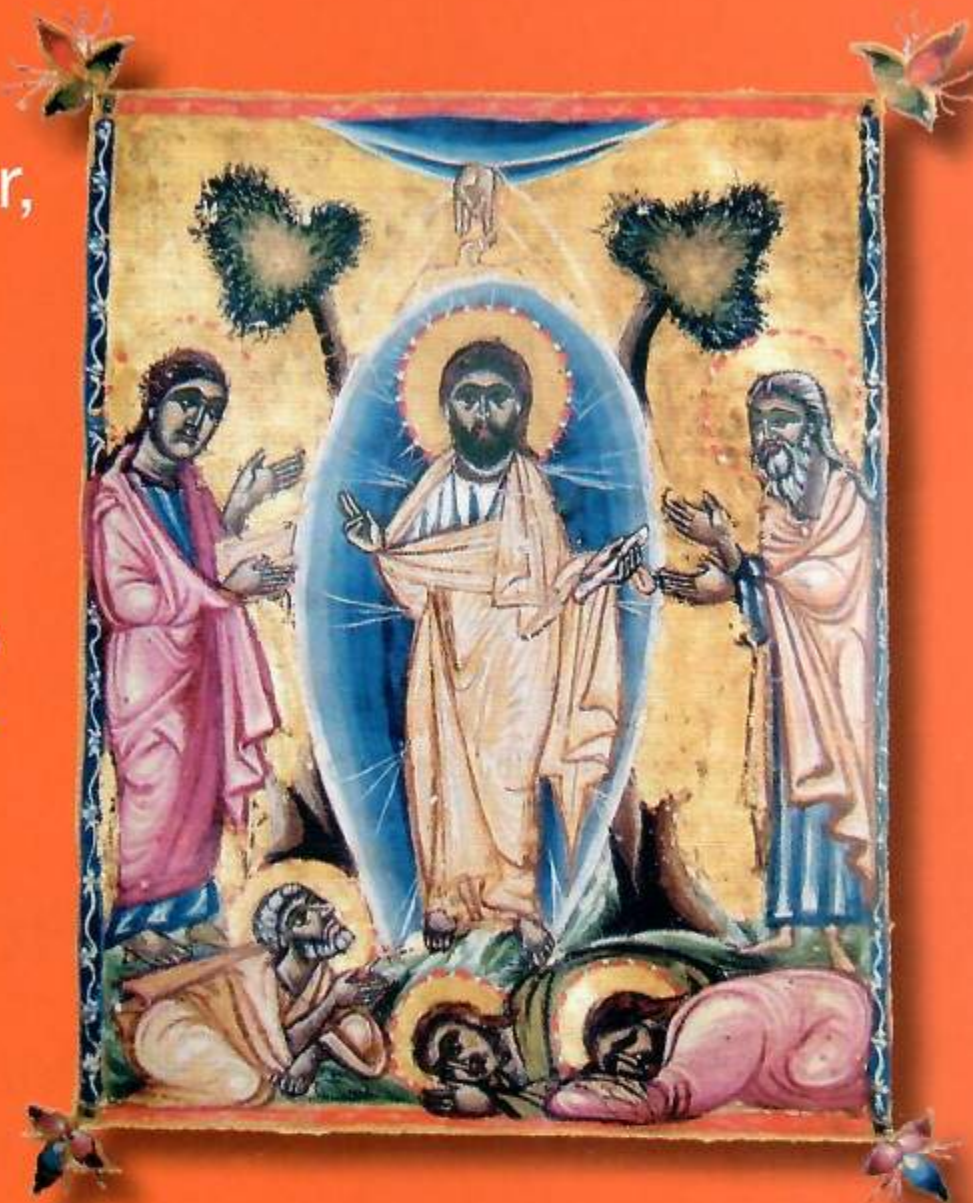
Jesus took three of his disciples – Peter, James and John, and they went up on a high mountain where they could be alone. There, in front of them, Jesus was completely changed. His clothes were sparkling white. Moses and Elijah, prophets from the Old Testament, were with Jesus, talking to him.

The disciples wanted to stay on the mountain to celebrate.

A cloud passed over them. From the cloud, a voice said, “This is my Son. I love him. Listen to what he says!”

As they came down from the mountain, Jesus told the disciples not to say a word about what they had seen. They did not tell anyone, but they wondered about what they had seen and heard.

Mark 9:2-10



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

On the mountain, something wonderful happened to Jesus. He looked as if a light was shining on his face, and his clothes were dazzling with brightness. This change in the appearance of Jesus is called Transfiguration. Transfiguration is a very big word that describes what happened to Jesus.

The disciples wanted to stay on the mountain to celebrate.

In the church calendar, special events in Jesus' life are called feast days. The church family celebrates feast days in different ways.



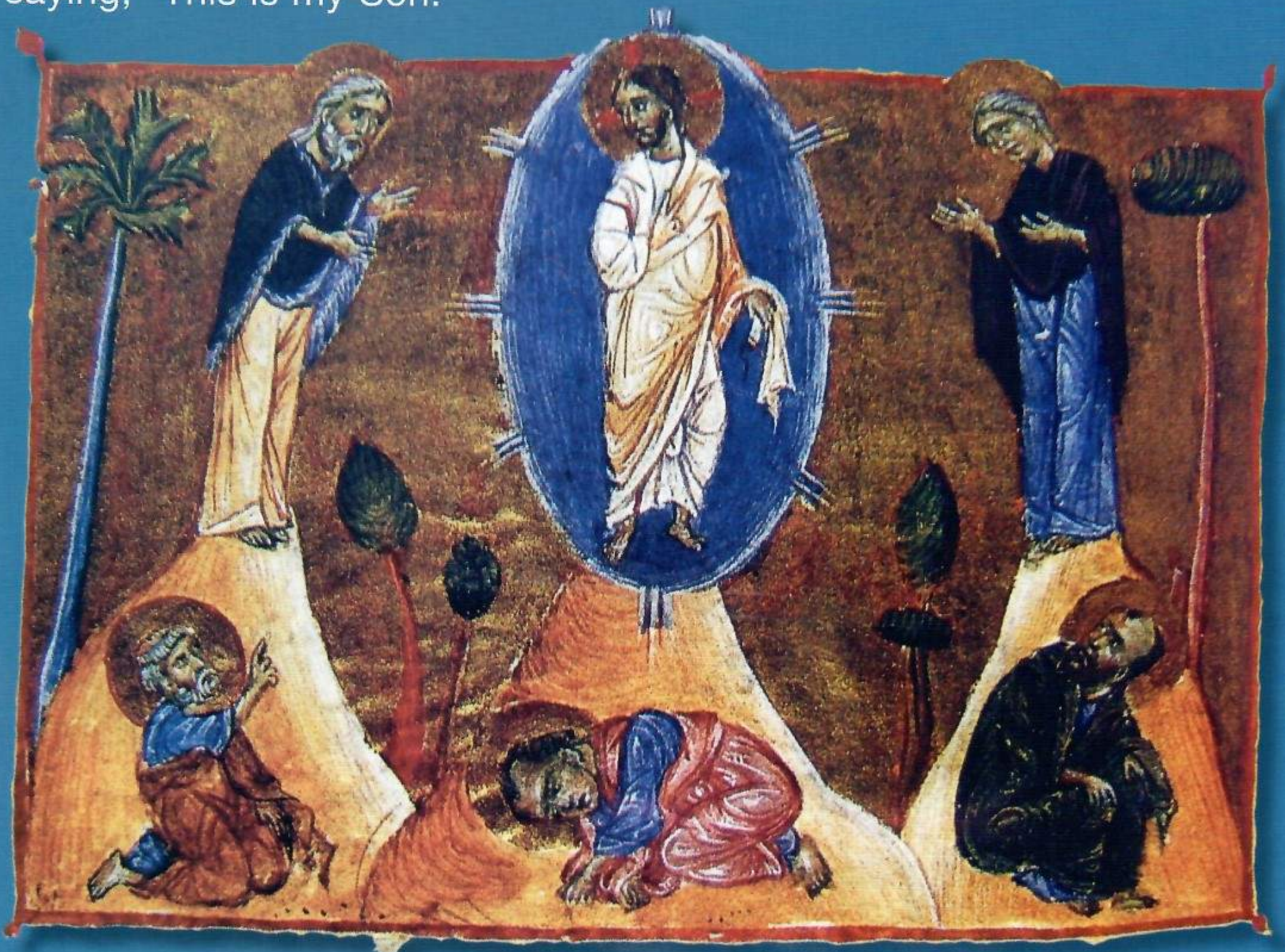


OUR ARMENIAN WAY

Armenians celebrated the Feast of the Transfiguration, or Vartavar, in many ways. People gave bouquets of flowers to the church. They tied roses on the heads of their animals. They splashed each other with water. Sometimes, they released pigeons into the air. Old customs helped people celebrate the life of Jesus!

WE CELEBRATE

Jesus took three of his disciples to a mountain to pray. There something wonderful happened to him. And God's voice could be heard once more saying, "This is my Son."





FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH

Today's lesson was about the Feast of the Transfiguration or Vartavar. St. Gregory joined the pagan Feast of Vartavar with the Feast of the Transfiguration so they would be celebrated together. Often pagan feasts were joined with Christian ones. So we celebrate Jesus' glorious transformation on a mountaintop by using older festive traditions, such as sprinkling water on each other. In the Middle East and Armenia, people continue to surprise friends and family with a splash of water on Transfiguration Day!



LIVING OUR FAITH

During the summer months, many feast days are celebrated. The Feast of Transfiguration is one of them. Other feast days that occur in the summer months are:

- Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother-of-God
- Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (early to mid-September)
- All of these are major feast days

To learn more about these feasts or any other information, visit the Diocesan web site: www.armenianchurch.net.



GOD'S WORD TO US

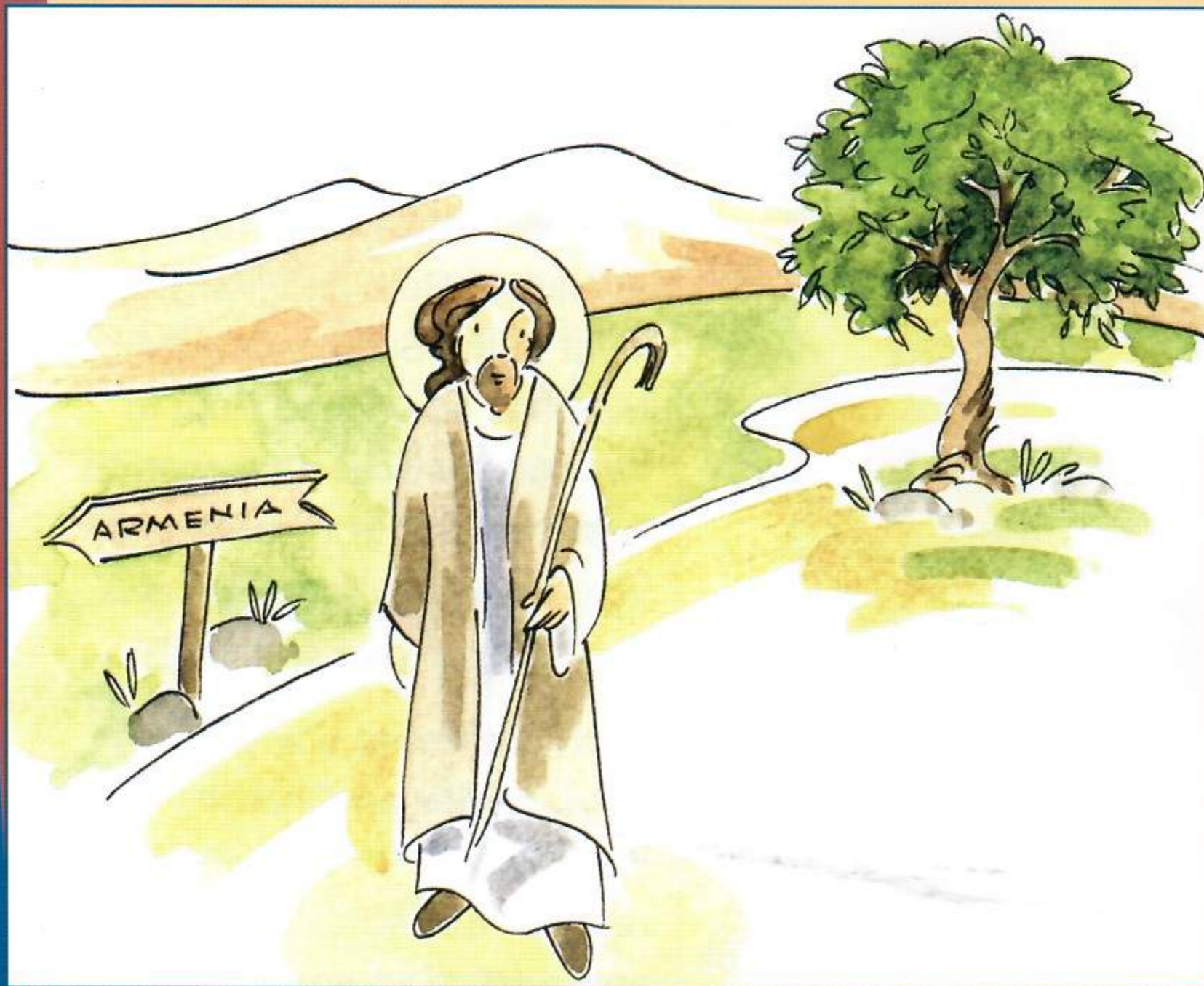
Jesus went to his disciples and said, "Go to the people of all nations. Baptize them and teach them to do everything that I have taught you. I will be with you always."

Matthew 28:19-20



WE LEARN ABOUT GOD

Jesus sent his disciples to spread the word of God everywhere in the world. St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew were sent to Armenia. Years



later, St. Gregory went to Armenia. It is because of Gregory, known as St. Gregory the Illuminator, that Armenia became the first Christian nation.

St. Gregory wrote about being holy, living by the teachings of Jesus Christ.

He said:

Do not make fun of others.

Do not make a promise if you cannot keep it.

Do not think mean thoughts about others.

Do not forget God in your daily life.

OUR ARMENIAN WAY

A long time ago, Drtad was king of Armenia. Gregory worked in his court. He was a Christian.

One day, at a feast, King Drtad asked everyone to worship a statue of the goddess Anahid. Gregory did not move. He said, "I believe in Jesus Christ. I cannot worship Anahid."

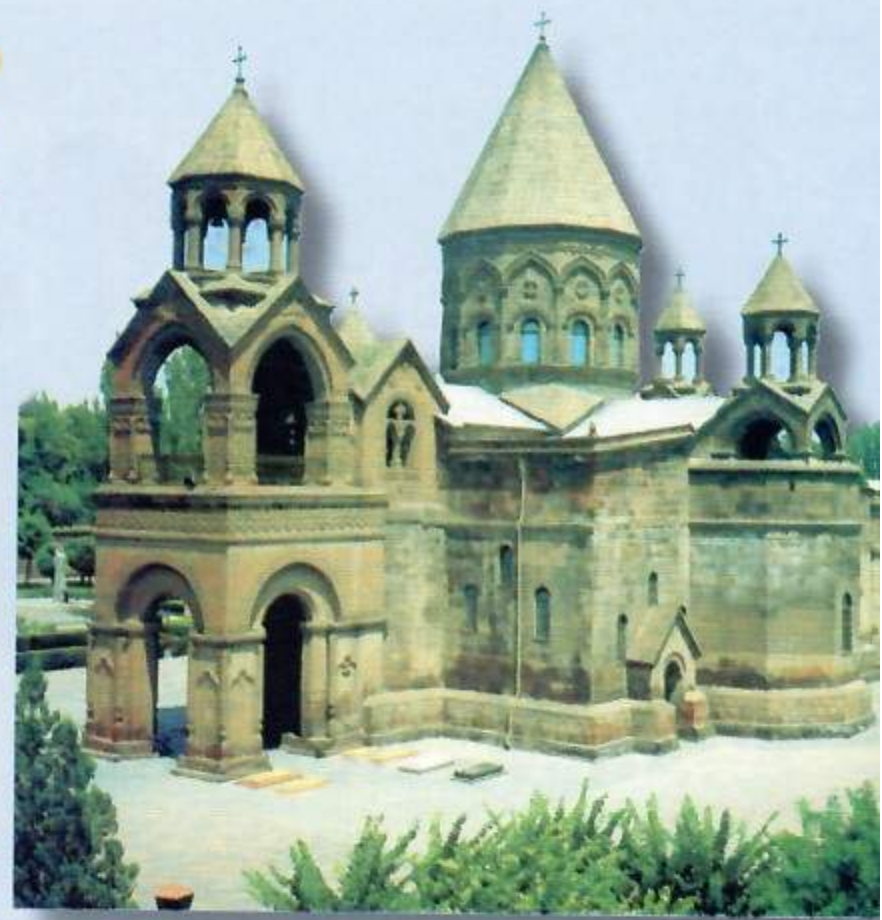
"Take him," the king roared. "Put him in the pit!"

Gregory was thrown into a deep pit called Khor Virab. He remained there for many years. But he did not die. A woman sent by the king's sister, Princess Khosrovitookht, brought food to Gregory.

Years went by.

The king was very sick. No one could help him. The Princess thought about Gregory. She felt certain that he could help her brother. So she sent for him.

Gregory healed the king. The king, the queen, the princess and the entire royal family became Christians. They helped St. Gregory build Holy Etchmiadzin!



WE CELEBRATE

It was dark in the pit and damp. There were snakes and all kinds of insects, too. Through his prayers and through the kindness of the princess, Gregory lived. He came out of the pit and converted the entire Armenian nation to Christianity.



FAMILY PAGE

SHARING OUR FAITH



Today's lesson focused on how Armenians became Christian. The children heard the stories of St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew, the disciples sent by Jesus Christ to Armenia.

St. Gregory went to Armenia a few centuries later only to be thrown into a pit for his courage in declaring himself a Christian. Armenia is the first Christian nation (officially declared so in 301 A.D.) because of Gregory, known as St. Gregory the Illuminator.

LIVING OUR FAITH

Like the saints who went to Armenia, we must take seriously the command of our Lord to tell others about having faith and hope.

Discuss with your child some ways he or she can do so:

1. Share with family the lessons learned in Sunday School.
2. With a member of the family, look over the materials and projects brought home from Sunday School. Ask your child questions about the theme of the day.
3. Encourage your child to invite a friend to attend church with your family.
4. Pray together, as a family, so your child can see your faith in action.

