

FOR TEENS: Naregatzi

Among the Holy Translators honored this month on Saturday, October 9 is **St. Gregory of Narek**. One of the greatest mystic poets of the Christian Church, this saint's work can be appreciated by today's readers thanks to recent translations.

Since our high schoolers study poetry in school, why not have them take a closer look at one of St. Gregory's poems? Follow these steps as a guideline:

1. Tell them about St. Gregory as follows: He was born in 951 A.D. in the village of Narek near Lake Van in Armenia. (If you have a large map available, show them where this is.) As is often the custom in referring to our Armenian saints, he is therefore called *Krikor Naregatzi* or Gregory of Narek. He was educated at the Monastery of Narek by its abbot and a great scholar and philosopher, Anania of Narek who also happened to be Gregory's great uncle.

He was ordained at the monastery, taught there and began to write poetry, chants, and commentaries on the Bible. His masterpiece was a book of prayers called *The Lamentations of Narek* which became so beloved by Armenians that they attributed a special curative power to it.

He died in 1011 A.D. His life and contributions to the Armenian Church are celebrated in October every year.

2. Have students read the poem (you might want to read it aloud together, slowly), translated by Diana Der Hovanessian and Marzbed Margossian in a book called *Anthology of Armenian Poetry* published by Columbia University in 1978.

3. Use the following as discussion ideas/questions:

- a. Have students underline all adjectives (*buried, deported, worn out, etc.*). What do these words tell us about how St. Gregory is feeling as he wrote this poem?
- b. What images in this prayer/poem can you relate to in 1999? (*buried and don't struggle? Enslaved? Shops are stocked with nothingness?*)
- c. What does the image "contrary clay" mean? (*Clay is something you can mold, but contrary clay is clay that is resisting being shaped.*)
- d. Did you like the poem? Why? Why not?

Here is the prayer/poem:

*Conversations with God, from the Depth of My Heart
(Elegy 55c)*



The pagan philosophers labeled death evil if it were mindless, purposeless. And I agree because we are dying like irrational animals and we are not afraid.

We are lost, and not terrified.
We are forgiven and do not accept it humbly,

We are buried and do not struggle.

We are deported and do not panic.

We are falsified and do not protest.

We are worn out and do not try to understand.

We are diminished and do not replenish.

We walk and do not look where we go.

We are enslaved and do not feel put upon.

While it is true that blessed Job called final rest the aim of man

I might more readily agree if

I had not the burden of deadly deeds

to carry and especially when obvious traps

are laid along the way, but

the one setting the traps is invisible.

The present does not exist, the past

unknown, and the future uncertain.

I am impatient, my nature is doubting.

My feet are uncertain and my mind wandering.

My passions overpowering, and my habits

intemperate. My body hardened by sin,

my desires, loving the world.

My inclination is to follow nature and my nature

is contrary clay. The rains are tumultuous.

My needs are numerous and purposeless everywhere.

My mind is malicious and my desires malevolent.

My life is one day long and pleasures brief.

Illusions are stupid, toys childish.

Labors are in vain and pleasures frivolous.

The shops are stocked with nothingness,

and the stockpiles are made of wind.

I am like a shadow,

my appearance is ridiculous.

The commandments, according to Paul,

were given, but I was found unready.

Sins took the appearance of justice.

I died for life and came to life for loss.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that this is crucial for ensuring transparency and accountability in the organization's operations.

2. The second part of the document outlines the various methods and tools used to collect and analyze data. It highlights the need for consistent data collection practices and the use of advanced analytical techniques to derive meaningful insights from the data.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of technology in data management and analysis. It discusses how modern software solutions can streamline data collection, storage, and processing, thereby improving efficiency and accuracy.

4. The fourth part of the document addresses the challenges associated with data management, such as data quality, security, and privacy. It provides strategies to mitigate these risks and ensure that the data remains reliable and secure throughout its lifecycle.

5. The fifth part of the document concludes by summarizing the key findings and recommendations. It stresses the importance of a data-driven approach in decision-making and the need for continuous monitoring and improvement of data management processes.