

The Eucharist

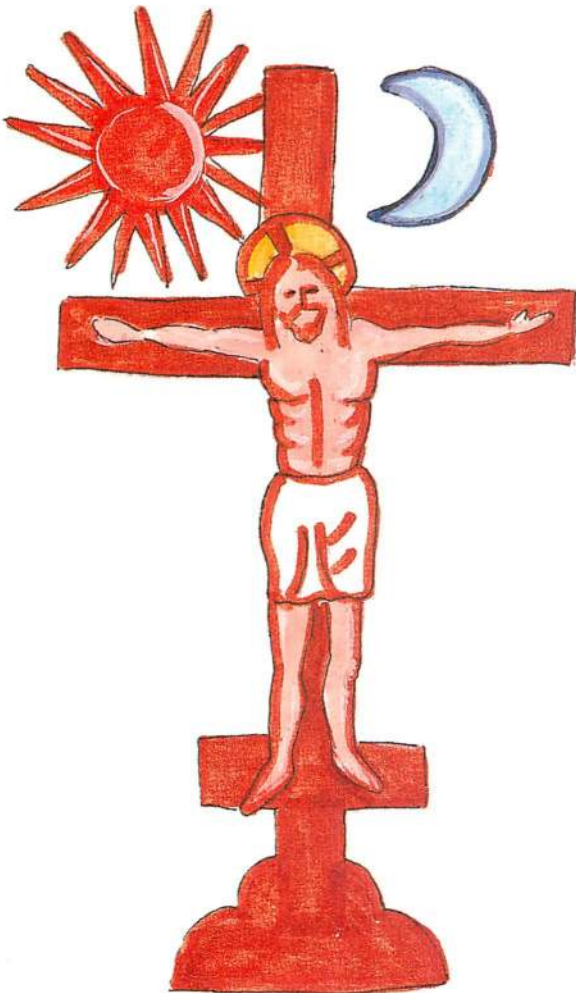
Take, eat; this is my body.

Matt. 26:26

Drink ye all of this; for this is my blood

of the new covenant which is shed for
many for the remission of sins.

Matt. 26:27-28



Holy Eucharist

We have heard the story of the Last Supper and the Crucifixion and the Resurrection of Christ many times. Did you ever realize that the Soorp Badarak is a re-enactment of those three events? The Soorp Badarak is a memorial meal to help us always remember our Lord and to be thankful for his great sacrifice.

The third and most important part of the Soorp Badarak is the section called the Holy Eucharist. Eucharist means thanksgiving. We have much to be thankful for.

- We are thankful that God loves us so much that he sent his Son Jesus to us as a sacrifice.
- We are thankful that God chose us to be his children.
- We are thankful that God has a place for us in his eternal kingdom.

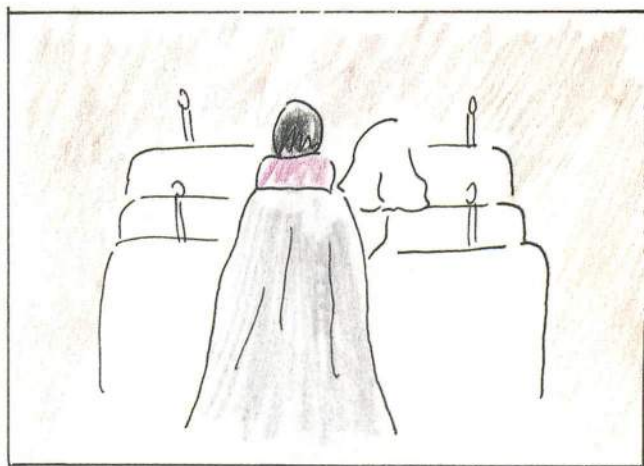
We should remember all of these things when we attend the Soorp Badarak.

The memorial meal that we receive during the Soorp Badarak is the bread (nushkhar) and the wine which is changed into the body and blood of our Lord. When we eat this meal we become one with Christ. We become part of him and he becomes part of us.

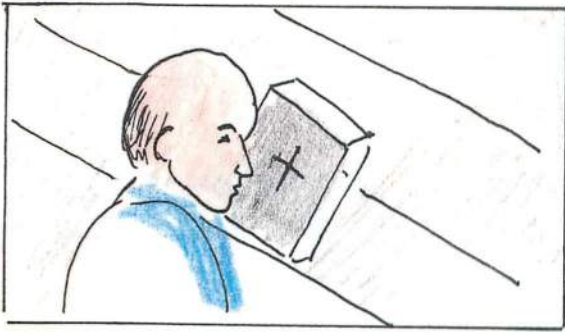
How do the simple bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ? The answer is in the service called Holy Eucharist.



The Great Entrance: The deacon carries the chalice with the prepared bread and wine around the altar and presents it to the priest.



The priest make the sign of the cross over the people with the chalice and puts the chalice on the altar.



The deacon kisses the altar and the priest's hand and takes the Kiss of Peace to the congregation. Everyone in the church gives the Kiss of Peace to each other.



The priest blesses the nushkhar and the wine. He breaks the nushkhar and says, "Take, eat; this is my body ..." and holds up the chalice and says, "Drink ye all of this, this is my blood of the new covenant ..."



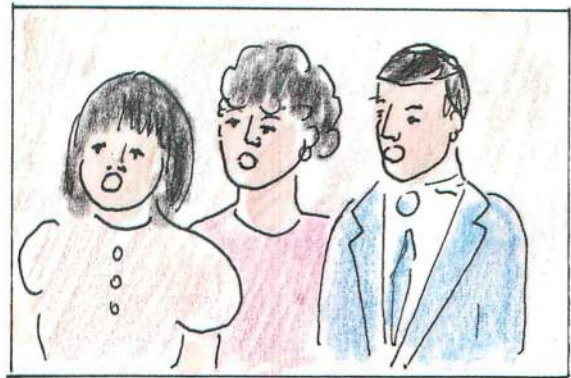
The priest makes the sign of the cross three times over the bread, three times

over the wine, and three times over the bread and the wine together.

The priest calls upon the Holy Spirit and says three times:

"Whereby blessing this bread, make it truly the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

"Whereby blessing this cup make it truly the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."



The entire congregation sings "The Lord's Prayer."



The people come forward to confess their sins and to receive Holy Communion which is the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Procedure

1. Opening prayer. Have students share their letters to God. (10 min.)

2. Read the student text in which the Preparation and Synaxis are illustrated along with a brief explanation of what is taking place in the illustration. The following is a suggested commentary to be given along with each illustration:

Illustration 1: The vestry is a small room at the side of the church in which the priest puts on his vestments. Vestments are the beautiful clothes he wears for the Soorp Badarak. The priest is vested behind closed doors because the Soorp Badarak is a mystery. At this time we should be praying that we can wear God's love like the beautiful vestments the priest wears.

Illustration 2: After the priest comes out of the vestry he walks into the chancel, which is the area below the altar (between the congregation and the altar). He washes his hands as a symbol of purification. Then he confesses his sins—facing the congregation (while the congregation remembers their own sins.)

Illustration 3: The bema is the raised area where the altar sits. When the priest goes up on the bema and stands before the altar table, he is beginning his divine duty and he must prepare the bread and the wine. Because the Holy Sacrifice of the Lord is a mystery, the curtain is drawn. The deacon brings the bread and wine to the priest; the priest pours wine into the chalice (or cup) and places the paten (or plate) on top and puts the bread (nushkhar) on the paten. Then he covers it with a special cloth. The bread and wine are gifts to God from the people. Later in the Soorp Badarak they will become the body and blood of our Lord.

Illustration 4: As the priest walks in the procession around the church, he censes the people with the censer. He represents Christ walking among the people, blessing them. When the priest walks by us, we should kiss the cross he is holding and bless ourselves with the sign of the cross, and say, "Remember me before the Immortal Lamb of God."

Now the first section, the Preparation of the Soorp Badarak, is over and the second section, the Synaxis, begins.

Illustration 5: The synaxis is the part of the Soorp Badarak in which we learn about our Lord's teachings and his life in this world. We also learn that we are the church and together we are the body of Christ. Because the Word of God is in the gospel book the Deacon carries it around the altar and holds it up gloriously for all to see. We should pray that we will be worthy to hear the Word of God. We sing the hymn "Soorp Asdvadz."

Illustration 6: A reader stands in the chancel and reads a prophecy from the Old Testament and a New

Testament epistle.

Illustration 7: The deacon chants the gospel reading. Chanting is reading in a singing voice. He stands on the bema and always holds the gospel with a cloth.

Illustration 8: The Nicene Creed tells about our belief in the Lord. When we say the Nicene Creed we are telling the Lord everything we believe about him. We are also reminding ourselves of our faith in him. When reciting the Creed, join your palms together and place your right thumb over your left thumb.

Note: The above commentary is merely a guideline. If you feel more information is necessary, ask your pastor's assistance or read from any of the various guidelines to the Divine Liturgy that have been published by the Diocese.

Be sure that the student understands that during the Preparation and the Synaxis the priest and the congregation are spiritually and mentally readying themselves to receive the body and blood of Christ.

If possible, arrange for the students to go into the vestry to examine the vestments and vessels in the church, as well as to identify the chancel, bema, and altar. Also if possible, arrange with your pastor to be present. This may be done before or after church (in Session 2, 3, or 4 of this unit). (30 min.)

3. Have students complete the matching exercise which will reinforce their vocabulary. Allow them to assist each other and to ask your assistance. This exercise is not a test. (10 min.)

4. Review the English and Armenian words to "Soorp Asdvadz" in *The Trisagion*. Sing the hymn in class. Distribute Nicene Creed Flash Cards and recite the Nicene Creed in English. (10 min.)

Session 3—The Eucharist

Key Concepts

1. The Holy Eucharist is the re-enactment of the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection.
2. In the service of the Holy Eucharist, the bread and wine offered to God are mysteriously changed into the body and blood of our Lord.
3. When we receive Holy Communion, we become one with Christ.

Objectives

Students will

1. Examine the basic points in the service of the Holy Eucharist.
2. Define the parallels between the service of the Holy Eucharist and the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection.

Background for Teacher

This session is an introduction to the third section of the Soorp Badarak called "Holy Eucharist." In this section the faithful gather to witness the sacrifice of our Lord and the divine mystery of the changing of the bread and wine, or gifts, to the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Materials Needed

- Nushkhar for each student

Procedure

1. Opening prayer. Sing "Soorp Asdvadz" and recite the creed. (10 min.)
2. Open the session with a review of the passion, crucifixion, and resurrection of Christ. In the student text are three illustrations of the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection. Review these three events as background for the Holy Eucharist.

Point out the following:

- The Lord instituted the Soorp Badarak at the Last Supper. (Matt. 26:27-28)
 - Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice to take away our sins.
 - He suffered and actually died on the cross.
 - He was removed from the cross and was placed in the tomb where he remained until the third day.
 - On the third day he rose from the dead. (10 min.)
3. Read the student text and discuss it in class. Be sure students understand the meaning of Eucharist.

The following is a suggested commentary to be used along with illustrations 1-7 in the student text.

Illustration 1. The deacon carries the chalice to the altar. Since the bread and wine will be changed into the body and blood of Christ, only those people who are baptized can be in the church at this time. This symbolizes our Lord's entry into Jerusalem before the crucifixion. We should pray for Christ and for ourselves during the Great Entrance, because we know how great is the suffering and sacrifice of our Lord.

Illustration 2. When the priest takes the chalice from the deacon and places it on the altar, we should think of Christ on the cross and in the tomb. We should promise to give our lives for God's work because of the great sacrifice of his Son.

Illustration 3. The priest says, "Greet ye one another with a holy kiss." We give the Kiss of Peace to each other so that we have no ill-feelings toward anyone. We must all love each other so that God will be pleased with us. To give the Kiss of Peace one says,

"Christ among us has been revealed." (Krisdos ee mech mer haydnetzav.)

The answer is, "Blessed is the revelation of Christ." (Orhnial eh haydnootiunun Krisdosi.)

(Briefly demonstrate the Kiss of Peace.)

Illustration 4. We remember the Last Supper and the chosen disciples who were present. We should be thankful that we are chosen by our Lord to partake of his sacrifice. The hymn, "Soorp, Soorp," is sung in praise of the Lord.

Illustration 5. This is when the gifts become truly the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The priest calls upon the Holy Spirit to change the bread and wine.

Illustration 6. No explanation needed.

Illustration 7. When waiting to receive Holy Communion, keep your mind and heart with Christ. We should have confessed all of our sins and now be prepared to receive our Lord. (25 min.)

4. A review of the proper behavior and procedure when taking Holy Communion may be given at this point. (See Unit IV, Session 3).

Arrange to have a nushkhar for each student. (Your pastor may wish to demonstrate how to make nushkhars.) (15 min.)

Session 4—Last Blessing and Dismissal

Key Concepts

1. The last section of the Soorp Badarak is the Last Blessing and Dismissal.
2. It consists of a final Gospel reading and a promise made by the faithful to take God's blessing with them into the outside world.

Objectives

Students will

1. Examine the Last Blessing and Dismissal and its parts.
2. Review all four parts of the badarak.

Procedure

1. Sing or recite the Lord's Prayer. (5 min.)
2. The first half of this session is a discussion of the Last Blessing and Dismissal. Explain the illustrations in the student text as follows:

Illustration 1. The Gospel is read at the end so we are reminded that the "Word" is Jesus our Lord. He is God incarnate—made flesh.

"Orhnetzitz uzder . . ." is a line from one of the psalms. (Recite this together with the students a number of times. Ask them to memorize it if they can. This phrase is important because it reminds us to go into the world always with our Lord in our hearts and minds. Everything we say and do should be with him in mind.)

Illustration 2. After the Last Blessing and Dismissal, the congregation comes forward to kiss the Gospel book and make the sign of the cross.