

Sacraments: A Call to Holy Living

SEVEN AND MORE: AN OVERVIEW

UNIT

3

LESSON
ONE

From Our Hearts to God

Lord, you are our Father and we are your children. You unite us and make us a family. You are there when we celebrate the special moments of our lives because you want to be with us and we grow with your blessing and grace. Amen.

MY WORLD

Families share special events, special times. Some of these times are very happy and some are very sad. Some are new beginnings and some are endings. Here are some special times to think about:

- the birth or adoption of a child
- initiation into a special group or club such as Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts
- admitting our mistakes to each other and giving our loving forgiveness
- the sharing of a special holiday meal
- a wedding
- a graduation
- a funeral

We want the people we love most to be with us at our special times and we want God to be with us also. There are seven very important times when we are sure to include God in those events. We call them the **SEVEN SACRAMENTS**. Not everybody has all these seven events happen in their life, but all members of the Armenian Church do experience at least four of them.





Here is the list of the **SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH.**

1. The Sacrament of Baptism – being born again or adopted into God’s family.
2. The Sacrament of Chrismation – being marked with holy oil as special to God.
3. The Sacrament of Penance – recognizing our sins and asking God’s forgiveness.
4. The Sacrament of Holy Communion – Jesus said, *“Eat this bread in remembrance of me. This is my Body. Drink this wine in remembrance of me. This is my Blood.”*

All of us have received these first four sacraments.

5. The Sacrament of Marriage or Holy Matrimony – when two people become one new family.
6. The Sacrament of Holy Orders – when a person becomes officially ordained into church service – as an acolyte, deacon or priest.
7. The Sacrament of Extreme Unction and Prayers for the Sick – the anointing of a priest who has died and prayers for the sick.



GOD’S GUIDING WORDS

“Jesus came to the River Jordan where his cousin John (who was called the Baptizer) was baptizing people. Jesus asked John to baptize him. John objected knowing that Jesus did not need to be baptized. But Jesus said, “For now this is how it should be, because we must do all that God wants us to do.”

Matthew 3:13-15



Getting Closer to God

Have your parents or a teacher ever asked you, “What happened?” and you told what you saw happen? This is what we call being a **WITNESS**. A witness can tell anyone the truth about what he or she has seen.

We witness in church all the time. We witness to tell the truth about events. At a baptism, we witness that the child became a member of God’s family. At a wedding we witness that two people married and became a new family. At confession time in church, we witness that people are sorry for their sins.

We are members of the Armenian Church. We witness the sacraments. We share in the event by being with our

fellow Christians. It is an important part of being a community of believers. God is present and our Christian family is present at these events. In earlier centuries, and even today in some places, baptisms and weddings take place for everyone to attend, as one big church family. But these are now mostly invitation-only events.

Have you ever witnessed a baptism or wedding? Have you ever seen a person become an acolyte, deacon or priest? Write about one of these experiences:

Our Armenian Way

It is the practice of the Armenian Church to baptize babies in their first few months (40 days is the traditional guideline). When a baby is baptized in the Armenian Church, that baby receives the sacrament of baptism, the sacrament of chrismation, and the sacrament of Holy Communion! We call these three sacraments together the sacraments of initiation. They start the baby in his or her Christian life.

What gift would you give a baby who has just become a Christian? Write two good ideas:





Taking a Closer Look

Match the symbol to the sacrament it could represent:

Baptism



Chrismation



Penance



Holy Communion



Marriage



Holy Orders



Extreme Unction/Prayers for the Sick



RESPONDING IN FAITH

Lord, walk with me through my life. Amen.

Time to Celebrate

This Is Sacrament Jeopardy!

You will be given an answer to one of these questions.

- What is baptism?
- What is chrismation?
- What is penance?
- What is Holy Communion?
- What is matrimony or marriage?
- What is holy orders?
- What is extreme unction or prayers for the sick?

Raise your hand if you know the questions to the answers. For every correct response you will get a sticker. The student with the most correct responses will win a prize.



FAMILY CORNER

Sharing Our Faith

Today's lesson introduced our unit on the seven sacraments. The children had an opportunity to recall all that they've learned about the sacraments so far and then surveyed basic information about all seven. They participated in two enjoyable games for a further review. Ask your child to share what he or she learned today!

Living Our Faith

Try one of these activities at home this week:

1. Help your child make a poster of his or her baptism. Title it and add pictures. Write captions for the pictures. Note who the godparents are and other things about this special event. Be sure to put the date of the baptism. Have you still got your child's christening outfit? If so, get it out and let your child see it.
2. Look through your wedding album with your child. Talk about the wedding. Tell your child who your best man (godfather) and maid/matron of honor (godmother) were.

3. Continue: “Remember God has made all people and we are all God’s children. We think of Jesus as Savior but *also* as friend and brother. You are important to our Lord and he wants us to see others as just as important to us as to him. Read the single verse from Matthew in **God’s Guiding Words** and then ask a student to find the passage in Matthew and read all the verses. 15 min.

4. Teach **Getting Closer to God** and then have students fill in their reaction to each situation. As the students are writing, circulate among them and read their responses. When all are done, go through each situation and share answers, or ask each student to read *one* of their responses. 15 min.

5. As a segue to **Taking a Closer Look**, tell students: “Doing good works, helping the poor and hungry – good people of faith have devoted themselves to this from the very time Jesus was teaching. Our own Armenian Church story is filled with such people. One great example was a saint of our church, St. Nersess the Great. You probably remember his name from your Third Grade textbook. (*Write his name on the board and continue to jot down key words as you teach this section*).

Direct students to complete the puzzle.

(Answers: hospitals, shelters, orphanages, schools, soup kitchens, monasteries.) 10 min.

6. Read **Our Armenian Way** and fill out **Time to Celebrate** as you plan a short term project with your class. You might want to come up with some ideas to present to them if they can’t think of anything on their own. Have the class vote on which project they would like to undertake. Decide on a time limit, which should not go beyond a few weeks. Have the students enter the information in their text. *Note: you will need to return to this periodically over the next few weeks; plan accordingly.* Design a poster together announcing their project and mount it in the hallway. Perhaps at an Assembly, the class can make a presentation on their completed project.

7. Conclude with the prayer in **Responding in Faith**. 20 min.

Evaluating Your Lesson

What went well today?

What would you change about this lesson?

Extending the Lesson

If you have more time, read to the class about St.

Nersess the Great from one of the reference books you have available.

Sacraments: A Call to Holy Living

Seven and More: An Overview



Key Concepts

1. The seven sacraments of the Armenian Church bond individuals to God and to the believing community.
2. The sacraments bring God into seven critical life milestones.
3. The community of believers witnesses and supports the sacramental experience.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Recall and review what they have learned previously about the sacraments.
2. Explore the concept of Christian community as witness and their own sacrament experience.
3. Define and discuss “initiation” and the sacraments of initiation.
4. Test their “sacrament” savvy with a matching game and group quiz.

Materials Needed

The Sacraments, The Symbols of Our Faith by Fr.

Garabed Kochakian is a good source of background information for you

7 sheets of oak tag each with the name of one of the sacraments on it

Tape (to adhere the above to the walls of your classroom)

A variety of colors of water based markers (that won’t bleed through to the wall); try to have a different color for each student

Stickers and small prizes you can award for correct answers

Note to the Teacher

Important: Remember to schedule time each week to continue and complete your service project. This will be the only reminder!

Procedure

1. Pray **From Our Hearts to God**. Ask if anyone has a prayer to offer. Offer your own prayer if you wish.

2. Read the first paragraph of **My World** to the students then have students read the list of events. Ask them to share what they remember about attending any of them. 10 min.
3. Teach or read the second paragraph to the students. Read through the list (you might want students to take turns). Ask the students what they recall about the sacraments from lessons in previous grades. (This will be a good assessment of what they know.) Tape the sacraments sheets to the wall. Give each student a marker of a different color. Ask them to go up to the papers and write something they have learned and know about the sacrament. The students should rotate to each of the papers. Allow ten minutes for writing and ten minutes for review and discussion. Conclude by having a student read **God's Guiding Words**. 20 min.
4. Read **Getting Closer to God** and have students write their observations. After five minutes, stop and discuss, asking for volunteers to share. 10 min.
5. Ask a student to read the paragraph in **Our Armenian Way**. Ask if any of them have been through an initiation process (perhaps scouts or a club) and let them describe the initiation. Have the students define the word **initiation**. Conclude with the idea of "a ceremony that formally makes you a member of a group or organization and gives you recognition as a member." Initiate means to start. When you are initiated, you start your membership. Ask students to fill in their two gift ideas. Accept all answers but suggest, if they haven't been mentioned, a cross, a baby's book of Bible stories, a child's Bible, a prayer book for children, etc.
6. Direct students to the matching game in **Taking a Closer Look** and give them 30 seconds to complete it. 5 min.
7. Segue with: "Okay, I think we've done a great survey of the sacraments just to get our feet wet. But let's play a game now to be sure of ourselves. Turn to **Time to Celebrate**." Read the instructions and make sure everyone is clear about how to play. If the class is large you can form teams; if it's small, children can just volunteer their answer. Be sure to have at least 24 stickers and a final prize (perhaps a candy bar or a game or puzzle) ready to award.

Answers for the Jeopardy game:

1. A cross is signed in oil on the forehead (chrismation)
 2. A man and woman form a new family (marriage)
 3. The priest visits hospitals and prays for parishioners there receiving treatment (prayers for the sick)
 4. A priest becomes a bishop (holy orders)
 5. A child becomes an acolyte (holy orders)
 6. A baby is dipped into a font of water three times (baptism)
 7. A baby is born again in the Holy Spirit (baptism)
 8. A couple wear crowns and put their heads together (marriage)
 9. The priest drips *muron* into the water (baptism)
 10. The priest anoints the back and heart of the person (chrismation)
 11. The person becomes a deacon (holy orders)
 12. The child is marked with oil as one of God's children (chrismation)
 13. This sacrament is for a priest who has died (extreme unction)
 14. We confess our sins (penance)
 15. The godfather or best man holds the cross above the couple's heads (marriage)
 16. The priest forgives sins (penance)
 17. The priest give the body and blood of Christ to the person (Holy Communion)
 18. The Holy Spirit transforms the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ (Holy Communion)
 19. We kneel and pray for forgiveness (penance)
 20. The priest asks the godparent, "What does this child want?" (baptism)
 21. God adopts us as one of his children (baptism)
 22. Ranks of service such as acolyte, deacon, priest (holy orders)
 23. Anointing of the body's eyes, ears, forehead, nose, mouth, hands, feet, back and heart (chrismation)
 24. The three sacraments of initiation (baptism, chrismation, Holy Communion)
8. Conclude with the prayer in **Responding in Faith**. 15 min.

Evaluating Your Lesson

1. How well did the students play the game? If not well, perhaps you can include additional opportunities to review information in the weeks ahead. Next year you might want to have the students research more

information about the sacraments before playing the game.

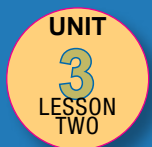
2. Knowing what the sacraments are about is important but the main idea about the sacraments is that our lives intersect with God through them. Do your students give you a sense of understanding this?

Extending the Lesson

Use reference books to read more about the sacraments.

Sacraments: A Call to Holy Living

The Living Water: Baptism



Key Concepts

1. The three sacraments of initiation (baptism, chrismation, and Holy Communion) start our life journey with God and our church community, affirming that each of us is called to holy living.
2. Our physical birth is possible with a father and mother and our rebirth into God's family gives us special parents called godparents who, with our parents, help us to live a holy life.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Reexamine the story of St. Gregory's baptism of King Drtad.
2. Read about Jesus' baptism in the Gospel of Matthew and discuss.
3. Review the sacrament of baptism.
4. List elements of holy living.
5. Explore the concept of Jesus as "living water."
6. Make a baptismal "narod" or braid.

Materials Needed

How Armenia Became the First Christian Nation

A clear glass or pitcher of water

Strands of red and white yarn or ribbon, one of each color for each student (cross will be strung onto braided yarn, so make sure loop is wide enough or yarn is thin enough)

Inexpensive Armenian crosses, one for each child

Procedure

1. Pray **From Our Hearts to God**. Offer your own prayer and ask for student suggestions as well.

2. Have students read the "news article" in **My World** and ask the following questions:

1. Who is this article about? (King Drtad and St. Gregory)
2. What is happening? (King Drtad and the royal family are being baptized)
3. When did it happen? (In 301 AD)
4. Where did it happen? (In the Euphrates River)
5. Why did it happen? (King Drtad wanted to become a Christian)
6. How did the people get baptized? (They went into the river and Gregory baptized them)

Ask if anyone knows the whole story of St. Gregory and King Drtad. If no one can tell you, quickly review the story using the coloring book *How Armenia Became the First Christian Nation*. Hold up the book for students to see (they reviewed the story with this same coloring book in Third Grade), as you might for a much younger group – don't worry, they will enjoy it!

3. Conclude by saying "we know how important baptism is to starting our walk with Christ" and then have a student read aloud the verse in **God's Guiding Words**. 20 min.
4. Turn to **Getting Closer to God**. Read the first five lines and then have students do the brief Bible study. Discuss answers (see: John trying to stop Jesus, thinking he was unworthy; Jesus entering the water; the heavens opening and a dove descending; hear: a voice from heaven saying: "This is my Son whom I love; with him I am well pleased.") Ask students to read the remaining text and underline key phrases and words; then have them share something they've underlined. Allow them a few moments to write about a holy life. Walk around the room and look over their responses. When they are finished, ask for volunteers to share - they can come up and write their answers on the board. When everyone has had a turn, review the list together. 20 min.
5. Hold up the glass or pitcher of water. Segue with: "What's so important about what I'm holding up? Yes, it's water. Can anyone explain why water is important?" Discuss and make sure answers include that we can't live without it, all living things require it, our bodies are mostly made up