

DECEMBER SAINTS - During the month of December, the Armenian Church celebrates the feast days of the following saints. These should be reviewed and presented to your students:

- a.) St. Thaddeus & St. Bartholomew - 12/1/84 - These were two of Christ's Apostles and they were the first to bring Christianity to Armenia. They are known as the *FIRST ENLIGHTENERS OF ARMENIA*. St. Thaddeus labored in Armenia from A.D. 43 - 66 and St. Bartholomew from A.D. 60 - 68.
- b.) St. Nicholas the Bishop - 12/8/84 - He was the Bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor and is also frequently referred to as *THE WONDER WORKER*. St. Nicholas lived in the 4th century and is regarded as the patron saint of sailors and children. From this latter fact have grown the stories about Santa Claus.
- c.) St. James of Nisibis - 12/15/84 - He lived in the 4th century and served as the Bishop of Nisibis. St. James was known for his pastoral care, preaching, and dedication to Jesus Christ.
- d.) Holy Fathers Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Sylvester of Rome, and Ephraem the Syrian - 12/22/84 - This is a group of Church Fathers representing both the Eastern Church and the Western Church.
- e.) St. David the King - 12/24/84 - King David is the reputed author of the Book of Psalms. He was the second of the Hebrew kings of Palestine. King David, as a young boy, killed the Philistine giant, Goliath. This episode can be found in 1 Samuel (1 Kings) 17:1-58.
- f.) St. James the Apostle - 12/24/84 - He was one of the 12 Apostles and is also known as St. James the Lesser. St. James was one of the leaders of the Christian Church in Jerusalem. For his refutation of Jewish arguments against Jesus Christ, he was martyred in A.D. 62.
- g.) St. Stephen the Protodeacon and First Martyr - 12/25/84 - St. Stephen was one of the first chosen to serve as a Deacon in the Christian Church. He was also the very first Christian martyr. We read about him in Acts 6:1-8:1.
- h.) St. Peter the Apostle - 12/27/84 - He was formerly known as Simon, but his name was changed to Peter by Jesus - Matthew 16:18. At Jesus' arrest and trial, Peter denied Him 3 times. Later, he tearfully repented. Peter first preached in Jerusalem, see Acts 2:14-42. He eventually found his way to Rome where he was martyred in A.D. 67 by being crucified upside down.
- i.) St. Paul the Apostle - 12/27/84 - St. Paul was not one of the original 12. However, he has always been regarded as an Apostle. He started as a persecuter of the Christian Church and ended up as a great evangelizer. The story of his conversion is to be found in Acts 9:1-30. St. Paul was eventually martyred in Rome by beheading in A.D. 64.
- j.) St. James the Apostle - 12/29/84 - This St. James is also known as St. James the Major and was the elder brother of St. John. He was a leader in the Church of Jerusalem. He was martyred by King Herod Agrippa in A.D. 44 and was the very first of the Apostles to be martyred.
- k.) St. John the Apostle - 12/27/84 - St. John is also referred to as *the beloved disciple*. He was the younger brother of St. James the Major. Together, they are referred to as the *SONS OF ZEBEDEE (Sons of Thunder)*. St. John is the author of the 4th Gospel, the Book of Revelation, and 3 epistles. He was the only one of the Apostles to die a natural death.

MINI- BIBLE STUDY

1 Peter - This is the 21st Book of the New Testament and contains only 5 chapters. It was written to offer encouragement and hope to the Gentile Christians of Northern Asia Minor during a time of persecution. 1 Peter 2:9-10 is a most poignant statement of both the privilege and the honor of being a Christian. It points out that one way of demonstrating the depth of faith is by the willingness to share in the sufferings of Christ. Certainly, the entire book serves as a source of comfort and direction for any who suffer.

