

St. Gregory Is Committed to the Pit

On the thirty fourth day of the Great Lent the Armenian Apostolic Church celebrates one of the feasts of St. Gregory the Illuminator - Commitment to the Pit.



From his dungeon in Karin, St. Gregory was transferred to the city of Ardashad and thrown into a bottomless pit reserved for notorious criminals condemned to death and located in the citadel of that town. The bottom was muddy mire where snakes thrived and the air was bad. Those confined there suffered a sure death as a result of the unsavory surroundings.

It is reported that Gregory survived in the pit for thirteen years. Gregory's survival was made possible through the charity of a widow who lived in the fortress where the dungeon was located. She had received a command in a dream to prepare a loaf of bread everyday and throw it down into the pit. That served as the source of Gregory's sustenance for thirteen years. At the site of the bottomless pit there is now a monastery, called *Khor Virabi*



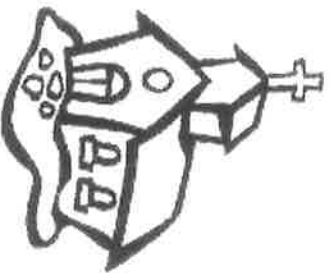
vank (Monastery of Khor Virab, a place of pilgrimage facing Mount Ararat and almost on the border of present-day Armenia and Turkey). Above the pit there now a small chapel and at the bottom there is yet another small chapel where the pilgrims light candles and pray. The original pit was twice as deep as it is today. As it was very difficult for pilgrims to descend into it, the lower half was filled at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Today, a visitor must descend by means of a metal ladder with 25 rungs. The entrance to the pit is a circular vortex with a diameter of about five or six meters. Within the monastic complex itself there is also a domed church that was originally dedicated to the Mother of God. The present seventeenth century sanctuary, called St. Gregory the Illuminator, replaced the former church.

The Feast of St. Gregory's Commitment to the pit is at present a day of pilgrimage to Khor Virab in the Republic of Armenia. During the night and morning liturgical hours on that day special hymns dedicated to St. Gregory's commitment to the world. These hymns, grouped together as a "canon," are attributed to the thirteenth century theologian and poet Hovhannes Bluz Vartabed of Erzinjan.

to the pit are chanted in all of our churches throughout

Practice what you preach!

Matthew 23:1-12



UMTS

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YEOB

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ARCPHE

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AWL

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HETREAC

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It is hard to be this when
you think you are great!

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Words Used

- teacher
- must
- obey
- preach
- must

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Practice What You Preach

But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. Matthew 23:3b (NIV)

Choose the word that best matches the definition.

Answers can be found in Matthew 23:1-12 (NIV)



- ___1. A large gathering of people
A. teacher B. crowd C. banquet D. servant
- ___2. To show high respect or esteem for someone
A. teacher B. humble C. servant D. honor
- ___3. A formal dinner honoring a particular person or occasion
A. greatest B. banquet C. honor D. obey
- ___4. Most important, powerful, or famous
A. greatest B. teacher C. humble D. crowd
- ___5. To consider yourself as having no special importance; not proud
A. humble B. honor C. banquet D. greatest
- ___6. A person hired to work for someone else
A. servant B. banquet C. obey D. honor
- ___7. Someone who trains or instructs other people
A. teacher B. banquet C. crowd D. humble
- ___8. To do what you are told or expected to do
A. greatest B. servant C. honor D. obey

Practice What You Preach

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Based on Matthew 23:1-12 (NIV)



J T F C R B X G R M A S T E R
 I K F O I U N R C I Q I J X T
 P S N B T Y B A N Q U E T S B
 Q O B F A P X R F C C O S B Y D
 H A F M Q S E O R R C D X H I
 R P P N I H M O S S E S S Y S S
 I R K R C X P B S Q R V R E C
 M A Z A E X D E O E A E K F I
 P C E K T A E Y D E H P T A P
 O T U V Y L L C L H T R F A T L
 R I Z J B L U H O E I P H H E
 T C L M E O Q R G L T U K E S
 A E U L H C B N N B G O P R L
 N H F S M R I C U H L O A D S
 T W Z H X F P H A R I S E E S

SHOULDERS	TEACHER	MASTER	DISCIPLES	PRACTICE
HUMBLE	FATHER	HONOR	LOADS	RABBI
BROTHERS	FINGER	IMPORTANT	MOSES	HEAVY
OBEY	PREACH	LIFT	PHARISEES	BANQUETS