

In Remembrance of Him



A Course on the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church

Teacher Manual

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**A Course on the Divine Liturgy
of the Armenian Church**
Teacher Manual

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By order of
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Introduction

The basics

For the next sixteen weeks, you and your students will be immersed in the study of the Armenian Divine Liturgy. Your curriculum consists of:

- The Teacher Manual
- The Student Text
- The Divine Liturgy Book (pew book)
- The Bible

Students will need copies of the above three books at every session. For that reason — and since lessons will take students from Bible to student text to liturgy book — it is suggested that your classroom be equipped with tables and chairs (not desk chairs with arms, since these are usually too small). Place them so that students can see each other (u-shaped, round, etc.). A blackboard will also be necessary.

Read through the entire curriculum before the first session so you can make notes on materials needed and dates for church attendance. The last session will be spent in church with students serving in various capacities. That would need to be arranged with the pastor and parish council well in advance.

Church attendance

Sessions include regular church attendance at different parts of the liturgy. Clear this with your superintendent and pastor since you might not be in sync with the rest of the school's church schedule. Also be sure to give students (and parents) advance warning on those days when you need to arrive early or very promptly in church (for vesting or for the Preparation, for example). It might be helpful to have a church attendance schedule distributed to families at the beginning of the year. Where the curriculum advises you to attend church to observe a particular part of the liturgy, use your own judgment as to when you want to go and at what point you want to leave. But the more focused your observation, the better.

If your Sunday School time is too brief Sunday mornings, adapt this curriculum accordingly. You may have to insert some extra Sundays just to attend church or you may have to eliminate some activities. The ideal, however, is to follow the curriculum as is: a 60-minute lesson with the addition of 15-30 minutes of specifically focused church attendance. For those sessions that do not indicate any specific time to attend church, choose when you wish to do so yourself.

This curriculum is easily adaptable for a mixed group of middle and high schoolers (if they're too few to form a single class). It can also form the core of an entire year's upper grade curriculum that combines visits to other churches, attendance at the entire liturgy for feast days, and "service days" in church when your class performs all the parish council duties of greeting worshippers, sharing the Kiss of Peace, passing the collection plate, etc.

Defining terms

What's a "key concept?"

A key concept is a basic theme or idea that underlies the lesson. Many (but not all) of the key concepts in the *Teacher Manual* will be found in **The Least You Need to Know** at the end of each student session.

What's an "objective?"

Objectives are what the student will accomplish during the lesson.

Why are procedure steps timed?

Procedure steps are timed for an approximate sense of how long activities take. But in your own classroom, these can run shorter or longer depending on your group, your teaching style, and other factors. Adapt accordingly.

How do I handle all the text in each session?

There is a certain amount of text to read, especially in the initial sessions. Vary how this is accomplished. A few ideas: 1) have students read in pairs and underline key phrases, 2) have students read silently and underline the one word that sums up the paragraph to them, 3) assign students their own paragraph to “teach” to the class, or 4) you “teach” a section by paraphrasing material and then pointing to important ideas in the text.

How do I make classroom prayer meaningful?

Opening prayers are almost always provided. But feel free to explore the idea of prayerfulness by varying activities. After all, the Divine Liturgy is all about prayer, so it can only enhance the learning experience. Some ideas to begin or end class in prayer:

- Certainly use The Lord’s Prayer (*Hayr Mer*) and any other formal prayers you like as a means of practice.
- Bring in or have students bring in a picture from a newspaper or newsmagazine as a “prayer starter.”
- Bring in a multi-sectioned Sunday newspaper and give each student a section or a few pages, asking them to find a picture or a story that can be the basis of a prayer petition – then make a litany of all the students’ phrases.
- Find and paraphrase a prayer in the Liturgy Book.
- Have students scroll for a news story or picture on their phones and use it as a basis for a prayer petition.
- Have a prayer starter phrase on the board when students walk in (or at end of class) such as “Thank you, Lord, for”...or “Help me this week, Lord, to...” and go around the room and ask students to complete.
- Create a litany-style prayer (one is done in session eight).
- Have a single word on the board when students come in (or as they’re preparing to leave) e.g. “rain” or “socks” (yes, socks! – it’s feeling gratitude for the humble things that builds a grateful heart) and ask students to formulate a one-line thank-you prayer.

How do I “discuss” effectively?

A good discussion leader does not do most of the talking. A discussion facilitator invites answers and then probes a bit more deeply by following up with comments/questions such as:

“Wow, what a fascinating answer. Tell us more.”

“That’s great. I was intrigued by the word _____that you used. Can you elaborate?”

“How amazing that you’re all on the same page.”

“How wonderful that we all have such a different viewpoint.”

You can call on students but do so in an affirming manner:

“Peter, we need everyone’s viewpoint so that we have every possible angle as we consider this. Any thoughts on the subject?”

A discussion facilitator draws common thoughts together, points out recurring opinions, and helps conclude the discussion with a meaningful remark that pulls the discussion experience together: “That was a great warm-up; now let’s turn to...” or “Now that we’ve explored how we feel about____, let’s see what Scripture says.” Or: “What a great conversation about _____. That’s what Sunday School is really all about at this point in your lives - putting all our thoughts and feelings on the table and examining them together.”

The Sidebars

This curriculum features “sidebars” meant to add interesting information, ask probing questions, and prompt students to think a bit more or even laugh. These are:

Dictionary Definitions

The derivation and meaning of important words and phrases.

The Armenian Angle

Interesting tidbits of information about specifically Armenian saints, history, and worship traditions.

Up Close and Personal

Questions or activities to cultivate the relationship with God implicit in worship. This is the one sidebar regularly incorporated into each session. You might choose to begin or end each session with these.

What Do I Do...?

Explanations of important procedures and actions during the liturgy.

Who's Who

Brief notes on an important person directly mentioned or related to the session.

These sidebars are sometimes incorporated formally into the lesson, as in the case of **Up Close and Personal**. Generally, it will be up to you to point them out, use them for discussion, or just take a brief digression from class to discuss.

Most lessons end with a **Quick Quiz** to highlight the basic information presented in the lesson; they will generally be used at the beginning of the next session as a review.

The Least You Need To Know is a summary of the session's key concepts and can be used at the end of the lesson or the beginning of the next as a lightning-round review ("Okay, so what was this lesson all about? Fast! Let's go!")

You can return to earlier quizzes and sidebar notes throughout the year.

Session 1

The Earth is Crammed With Heaven

Key Concepts

1. God created us to know and love him.
2. Our natural response when we encounter God is awe and worship.
3. Worship is about gratitude, awe, praise, and spiritual restoration.
4. The Bible contains many examples of people encountering God.

Objectives

Students will

1. Read poetry and Scripture verses on people's encounters with God.
2. Work in pairs to re-tell Scripture stories and discuss common themes.
3. Complete an atonement exercise.
4. Review.

Procedure

1. As students arrive, give them a textbook and ask them to start reading and working on the **Introduction**. Then begin class with a prayer you've written on the board before students arrive: "May faith encircle my heart and mind and rid them of bad feelings and thoughts, and may the power of your grace abide in them at all times, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom is befitting glory, dominion and honor, forever and ever, Amen." After praying, announce that this prayer is from the first few moments of the Divine Liturgy - the priest prays it as the deacon places the belt around his waist during vesting. Continue to say that since you're embarking on a study tour together of the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church, it will be helpful to define terms as you go along. Ask: "how did we end our prayer just now?" Write students' answer - "Amen" on the board. Ask what it means. Direct students to **Dictionary Definitions** and have someone read.

Introduce yourself in a few words and ask students to introduce themselves to you with their name and their answer to the following warm-up question: "If you could step into a time machine and go to any time and place anywhere from the beginning of time to far into the future, where would you go? Why?" Give them a minute to think and then respond. (10 min)

2. Ask students to turn to the **Introduction** and, if they haven't already, circle the appropriate words. Discuss. Read through the rest of the introduction and ask students to write a question (you will return to these at the end of the course; for now, have students dictate their questions so that you can review them in Session 15). (10 min)
3. Read Browning's poem and have students sketch their impression. Have a few fun moments sharing these, then discuss the poem's images: 1. abundance, overflowing, everywhere 2. the humblest, most everyday thing 3. something's so filled with God, it's ablaze, being consumed, lit up, fire connotes heat and light 4. perhaps what Browning is proposing is that with the eyes of faith, things that others cannot see - not because these things are delusions or illusions - are visible. Expand discussion by asking for examples of people who can "see" (prophets, deeply faithful individuals - even in the parish, etc.) and what the image of sitting around picking blackberries suggests (idleness, purposelessness, focusing only on the superficial). Briefly discuss "Believing is seeing" which refers back to # 4, directly above in this paragraph. (10 min)
4. **Worship: The Heart's Answer to God and The Burning Bush (And Other Close Encounters)**. Read the text together or "teach" it while students underline key words. Then have students work in pairs - or alone, depending on size of class - as they read all four Bible selections and prepare themselves to tell the story. Allow five minutes to read and then call on pairs to share the task of telling the story aloud. You may have more than four pairs of students, so after the story has been told once, ask only if there is more to add or, from the beginning, have all pairs who read

the same story contribute to the re-telling. As they share, write key words on the board from the text itself (these will vary slightly according to your translation). 1. *flames of fire, I will go, strange sight, God called, here I am, take off your sandals, holy ground, hid his face, so now go, I will be with you, sign, worship, I am* 2. *throne, seraphim (angels), covered their faces, holy, doorposts shook, filled with smoke, unclean lips, live coal, altar, guilt, sin is atoned, here I am* 3. *the Lord said, stand in the presence, not in the wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire, a gentle whisper, pulled his cloak over his face, went out, then a voice said* 4. *high mountain, transfigured, shone like the sun, white as light, good for us to be here, bright cloud, a voice, fell face down, Jesus touched them, do not be afraid.* After everyone is done, discuss common themes: holy, God approaches/we approach, otherworldliness, angels, loud sounds, bright lights, willingness to be there, God comes in stillness – sometimes a gentle whisper, awe and fear, response to God’s presence: we worship. Briefly explore the **Up Close and Personal** question. (20 min)

5. Read **Sacrifice, Remembrance, and Atonement** and discuss themes of remembrance and expiation in the two great Old Testament rituals. Tell the class: “To give you a feel for what it must have felt like to place all your sins on a goat and drive it away, I’m going to pass around pieces of paper. Let’s all write down something we did this week that we feel was a sin – something that was not what God would have wanted – maybe expressing anger harshly, gossiping, hurting someone’s feelings, whatever.” Now walk around with a trash can, and show class how you crumple your paper up and toss it in; invite them to do the same. Discuss experience.
6. End with the Lord’s Prayer and the announcement: “Next week we’ll begin to see how Jesus changed everything when it came to worship and we’ll spend some time exploring the beginnings of Christian liturgy.” (10 min)

Session 2

Do This in Remembrance of Me

Key Concepts

1. In Jesus’ time, people lived in a regular cycle of worship and religious observance, often in sync with the seasons.
2. The Sabbath is a day of rest established in the story of creation.
3. The Temple in Jerusalem was the *only* place for sacrifice and communal worship until its destruction and the exile of the Jews, when the synagogues came into being.
4. At Passover supper with his disciples, Jesus established the most important words and gestures of the liturgy.
5. The early church quickly became a vigorous community of love and discipleship.

Objectives

Students will

1. Brainstorm the word “religion” and reflect on the aspects of their lives that are religious.
2. Read about worship in the time of Jesus.
3. Examine the life of the early Christians as written about in the Book of Acts.
4. Compare and contrast that church with their own.

Procedure

1. Open with prayer in Student Text. Mention that it is inspired by a verse in the book of James; it is one of the last prayers of the Divine Liturgy. Have students take last week’s **Quick Quiz** and review. (Answers: 1. *Abba-Daddy; Hayr Mer-Our Father; Aaron-Moses’ brother; Burning Bush-Moses; Amen-So be it* 2. *Exodus 3. Passover/Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur* 4. *worship*)
2. Put the word “religious” on the board. Brainstorm its meaning by having students offer words and phrases that come to mind when they think of the word. (Some words might be *belief, reverence, God, Sunday, church, morality*, etc.) Conclude by noting that the word comes from the Latin *religare* meaning “to tie securely.” Ask: “How does that meaning fit in with the ideas we’ve accumulated on the board? (Religion builds a strong foundation for our faith by tying these things together in rituals and creeds.) (10 min)

Now ask students to do the **Up Close and Personal** activity. Share answers and discuss. Conclude with “Let’s see how our own religious or not-so-religious lifestyles compare with the lives of people in Jesus’ time.” (10 min)

3. Introduce text topic by continuing “In order to understand how worship evolved into how we as Armenians remember Jesus in Sunday liturgy today, we need to take a quick look at what worship meant in Jesus’ own time. After all, he was born into a pious Jewish family, attended services, and read the Bible of his day (what we call the Old Testament). Well, what was this all like?” Have students read **The Way Jesus Worshipped** through to the end of **Early Christian Liturgy**. Accomplish reading by assigning each student a paragraph or two (divide up text before class). Ask them to read it and be ready to explain it to the class, including what key sentence to underline. Write key words on the board. At the end, review information using your chalkboard outline and simple questions, particularly noting the evolution and connection between Jewish commemorations and how they were part of the Christian story. Turn together to the Liturgy Book and emphasize the centrality of Jesus’ own words as the priest prepares the communion. (25 min)
4. Together read the passage from Acts and answer the questions. Conclude with a prayer. (15 min)

Session 3

Finding a Way to Pray Together

Key Concepts

1. By the mid-third century, Christians grew in number from less than a hundred to millions worldwide.
2. This growth inspired councils and prolific writings, all of which further defined the faith of the church.
3. The Roman Empire became “officially” Christian by the late 4th century (first under the influence of Emperor Constantine, then, finally, with Emperor Theodosius’ policies which established an orthodox Christian state); Armenia did so decades earlier, becoming the first Christian nation.
4. The earliest description of an actual Divine Liturgy can be found in a treatise by Justin Martyr in the mid-second century and greatly resembles our own in its basic structure.
5. From five original liturgy texts, the liturgy we celebrate today in the Armenian Church was more or less fixed by the 12th century.

Objectives

Students will

1. Role-play to explore the aftermath of Jesus’ death and resurrection for his followers.
2. Read and discuss information about the evolution of the early church and its form of worship in general and in Armenia.
3. Compare and contrast a second-century description of a liturgy with our own.

Procedure

1. Opening prayer from the Divine Liturgy book (should be read directly from book, pg 55): *Guard us, O Christ our God, in peace under the shadow of your holy and venerable cross. Deliver us from the visible and invisible enemy. Make us worthy to give you thanks and to glorify you together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.*

Have students take and review **Quick Quiz** (Answers: 1. F - 4th c, 2. T, 3. T, 4. F - Acts, 2. 5. Pentecost or Feast of Weeks, Feast of Booths or Sukkoth, Passover, 6. The Lord’s Day.)

2. Write each of these “roles” on a different index card: shepherd/Mary, Jesus’ mother/Balthazar (one of the Wise Men/the disciple Peter/the disciple John/Mary Magdalene/Martha, Lazarus’ sister/a Pharisee upset with Jesus/Bartimaeus, the blind man Jesus cured/Barabbas. If there are more than 10 students, duplicate some of the cards; if less, use

whichever roles you choose. Fan cards out face down and have students pick one. Wait till all have a card before explaining. “Okay. It’s a few months after Jesus was crucified, appeared to a number of people, and then rose to heaven before the eyes of his disciples. You are the person on the card. Let’s go around first and see who we have.” Make sure it is clear who each person is: a simple shepherd who loved Jesus; his mother; one of the Wise Men; Jesus’ close friend, the disciple Peter, who ended up betraying him three times as Jesus predicted but also became a zealous missionary; his close friend, the disciple John, the only one to be with him at his crucifixion and to whom he entrusted the care of his mother; Mary Magdalene, the woman Jesus healed and who followed Jesus faithfully (the story that she is a prostitute is not Scriptural and probably not true); Martha is a good friend of Jesus - her brother Lazarus was raised from the dead by him; the Pharisees were criticized by Jesus as being more interested in their own pious practices and doing things in the lawful way than in loving God and others; Bartimaeus’ story can be found in Mark 10:46-52; Barabbas is the criminal the people chose to release from prison rather than Jesus. Ask students to consider how their character now feels. What questions might they have? Instruct them to fill in the following blanks (write on board): I feel____; I’m wondering why_____. Discuss. (15 min)

3. Conclude with: “As you can imagine and as we just recreated, there were many feelings and questions in the people who loved Jesus and wanted to follow him and even in those who had been against him during his lifetime. But something extraordinary happened at Pentecost and then something started to happen in the way Christians prayed together. Let’s continue with that story.” Teach or have students read **A Community Becomes The Church** on page 8. Pause to discuss occasionally, and direct them to underline key words. Allow sufficient time for a brief discussion of **Up Close and Personal**. (15 min)
4. Have students read **How They Worshipped Way Back When** and answer the **Digging Deeper** questions. Discuss answers. Point out that another name for “president” would be elder, presbyter, or priest. The 12 actions are: *gathered in one place, memoirs of apostles and prophets read, president instructs and exhorts to excellent things (the sermon), we rise, we pray, bread and wine are brought, president offers prayers and thanksgivings, people say amen, Eucharist is shared, a portion sent to those not there, offering taken, given to president to disperse to the poor*. No evident difference except perhaps that offering was immediately distributed to poor. (20 min)
5. Go over **The Divine Liturgy: A Brief Historical Review**; have students highlight or underline key words and phrases. At the conclusion, direct students’ attention to **In Armenia...** and ask volunteers to repeat important points as a review. After everyone has shared, pray, and dismiss class. (10 min)

Session 4

Stepping into Heaven

Key Concepts

1. The appearance and structure of a church reflect the basic beliefs of the people who gather in them.
2. The narthex, nave, dome, chancel, and altar are basic “places” in the church building, each with theological/symbolic meaning.
3. The Church was established by Christ as his Body, as a “living, holy building.”
4. We are members of that Body and living stones in that spiritual building that is the Church.

Objectives

Students will

1. Review with a Quick Quiz.
2. Participate in an either/or activity about being in church.
3. Take an imaginary trip through the church & explore the meaning of each place.
4. Read and analyze the description of the church as made of “living stones” in 1 Peter.

Note: Arrange with your pastor this week to have students observe the vesting ceremony in two weeks. Get his permission and discuss the logistics. Also, next week you will be distributing copies of the Divine Liturgy book to students to keep.

Procedure

1. Open with the prayer in the student text. Do the **Quick Quiz** and review. (*Answers: 1. St. Paul, St. Thaddeus, St. Bartholomew – although others from the twelve disciples can be answers 2. newly-formed Christian communities 3. St. Nooneh 4. 301 A.D. T/F 1. F, his son, Aristakes 2. T 3. F, grew very quickly 4. F, 2nd century by Justin Martyr.*) Do the either/or activity and discuss. (15 min)
2. Segue: “Okay, we’ve been talking about feelings and how you feel is not a matter of right or wrong. It’s simply how you feel. But sometimes our feelings come about because we don’t have the whole picture, we don’t have enough knowledge. So let’s take an imaginary journey together into a typical Armenian church.” Have each student read a paragraph, starting with **Sacred Space** and then the entirety of **Stepping into Heaven**.

Pause for answers at the following text questions:

What’s important about a threshold? Wait for responses, then add: “moving forward, leaving one place of activity (i.e. living room) for another (i.e. kitchen); leaving one reality (outside) for another (inside).”

Where do you find lobbies? Apartment, hotel, theater.

What do you generally do there? Wait, prepare to go in, be greeted, register, buy tickets, get information.

What can the dome in the church’s center remind us of? The heights of heaven, movement upwards, the journey towards God – but the dome in Orthodox churches reminds us also of the wholeness of creation and how heaven embraces everyone and everything.

What is the meaning of the bishop’s chair? A symbol of the bishop’s authority and presence as “father” of a cluster of churches (Diocese).

Where is the Gospel read? From the altar.

What is the lectern called in Armenian? A “Kuh-ra-gal.”

Who assembles in the chancel at certain times? Priest and deacons.

The altar sits on a stage called a *bema*.

It is the place where Christ descends into the chalice.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit.

On the altar, you see: the Gospel book, liturgy book, flowers, candles, jajanch (reliquary), cross, chalice.

Have students share their summaries of the main parts of the church.

(*Answers: Narthex: vestibule, first place we step into the church and where, centuries ago, the unbaptized would go while believers received communion; Nave: main space of the church where worshippers gather; Dome: sits atop the intersecting arches over the nave, symbolizing heaven, embracing all the faithful below; Chancel: the intermediate area below and in front of the altar where priest and deacons gather at certain times of the liturgy, where the bishop’s and other chairs are placed, where the podium stands from which lections are read (other than the Gospel reading), where some choirs assemble to sing; Bema: the raised stage on which the altar sits; Altar: before which the priest stands and leads us in worship, where the Gospel book is placed, and where the bread and wine become Jesus’ very body and blood.*) (13 min)

3. Segue: “So far I think we have a great sense of the solid building and all its parts and what they signify. But where do *we* fit in? Is a church just a building? Let’s turn to Scripture for a deeper understanding.” Do **Up Close and Personal. Verbs:** come to him (rejected by men and chosen by God are more adjectival); are being built; offering sacrifices; you are; declare the praises, once you were not, now you are, once you had not received, now you have received. **Steps:** First you come to God, then he builds you, a living stone, into a spiritual house to be a priest - in a figurative sense - offering sacrifices to him; so in this way you are chosen, a royal priesthood, etc. but all of this is so that you might praise him and know him since he is why life has meaning. Now you are *bis* people, loved and forgiven. **Images:** living stone, holy priesthood, chosen people, royal priesthood, holy nation, belonging to God, people of God, received mercy. **Importance of living stone:** living things grow, give life to new generations, are capable of change; stone is also strong and endures, etc. (13 min)
4. Conclude with prayer: “Lord, thank you for the gift of your Church. It is indeed like a mighty ship from which we travel into eternity together, a place where we gather to learn about you, to love you and one another, to share in your life, and to simply *be* with you in the special way that only a community of believers can be. Amen.” (2 min)

Session 5

A Sacred Journey and a Guidebook

Key Concepts

1. The Divine Liturgy is a journey to God that begins the moment we leave our homes for church.
2. The signing of the cross and other bodily gestures are part of the “total body workout” of worship.
3. The Divine Liturgy consists of two main sections, the Liturgy of the Word - when Jesus is present in Scripture, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist – when Jesus is present to us in the bread and wine.
4. A preparation and a final blessing bookend these “movements.”
5. We need to learn how to use the Divine Liturgy book as we would need to learn how to use any other guide or reference book, including the Bible.

Objectives

Students will

1. Brainstorm a list of the most important gestures and words in church.
2. Review the two “movements” of the Divine Liturgy.
3. Outline the basic features of the Divine Liturgy book.

Note: Remind your pastor about the possibility of having your class observe him as he vests before next Sunday’s liturgy. Once approved, tell your class that everyone needs to be in church 30 minutes early. If you have a family e-mail list, send out a reminder.

Remember to have Divine Liturgy books today (procedure #5).

Procedure

1. Do the **Quick Quiz** and review (*Answers: 1. dome 2. bishop 3. bema 4. living stones 5. nave 6. narthex 7. chancel*). Opening prayer: from the Divine Liturgy book (should be read directly from book, pg 55): *“Guard us, O Christ our God, in peace under the shadow of your holy and venerable cross. Deliver us from the visible and invisible enemy. Make us worthy to give you thanks and to glorify you together with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen.* Call on a student to read the opening meditation. Briefly discuss, asking “What kind of journey was she on? (*A journey of the heart and mind.*) What are some examples of journeys, of traveling without leaving our seats? (*Reading, dreams, watching a movie or TV program, prayer!*) Conclude by saying that this session will explore the idea of journey and how it relates to liturgy.
2. Form groups of 2-5. Give each group paper and one pencil. Instruct them to make a list of things they do and say in church and say “I will give points for each response that matches mine; I have ten answers listed.” Limiting responses to ten is just a means of focusing on the most important. Have a recorder in each group take down group’s responses. Allow five minutes. Then have each group quickly report. As responses match yours, write them on the board or easel; affirm non-matching correct responses as well. When all ten are down, briefly discuss meaning (see below).

Make the sign of the cross (an acknowledgment of our faith as followers of Christ, in response to priest’s blessings, when Trinity is invoked in prayer, when Gospel is read)

Pray

Kiss the Bible (which contains the 4 gospels, a sign of our reverence for the word of God)

Share the Kiss of Peace (establishes the peace and love of the community)

Bow (a sign of reverence and respect)

Sing (all worshippers, not just the choir, should sing in imitation of the angels)

Receive communion (the high point of the Divine Liturgy; sharing in Jesus himself; imagine being invited to a dinner and not eating it)

Light candles (Jesus is the light of the world, the light of illumination, light in a dark world)

Put money in the plate (the people have always returned God’s bounty through gifts)

Stand/kneel (positions of: respect – when we hear the Gospel, when we pray for the leaders of the church/of awe or reverence, when the gifts are brought to the priest/penitence – when we confess before communion) (20 min)

3. Read **Basic Actions** together, pausing to discuss questions. Some of the information above can guide your discussion. It might be nice if you had a *poorvar* or an incense burner to demonstrate sight and smell of incense. Discuss **Up Close and Personal**. (10 min)
4. Teach **Two Movements in a Symphony of Faith**. Answer to boxed question: The liturgy is an extended composition; there is a “plot” in the liturgy in that it relives the teachings and sacrifice of our Lord and so each event in the liturgy leads us closer to the fulfillment of that story. The events in liturgy all work together to foster a connection with God and one another; liturgy *is* literally the work of the people in common pursuit of this connection. (15 min)
5. Distribute the Divine Liturgy books. Tell the class that this book is now their property and they should write their names in it and can write notes in it. Do **Use It or Lose It** and review basic features:

Guideline to answers:

- a. Divided into two parts, etc.
 - b. Pagination of each part is identical
 - c. Inaudible prayers of priest are also included. Ask class: “How many of you realized that there were prayers in the liturgy that we did not hear? Sometimes the fact that we don’t hear what the priest says affects the meaning of what he does say out loud, making it confusing. For example, turn to page 40 and note how at the bottom of the page, the priest is in the midst of a prayer, when he suddenly says, out loud, on top of page 41, ‘And grant us....’”
 - d. The inaudible prayers are in regular typeface; everything heard aloud is in bold typeface.
 - e. Although it is understood that pews are a recent innovation in worship and the common worship posture is standing or kneeling, arrows in the text indicate where we sit, stand or kneel.
 - f. Accept all other comments on the book’s format (there do not have to be twelve listed).
6. Have students turn to page 55 of their pew books and say: “One of the last prayers we say as a congregation in church is from Psalm 34. Let’s say it together as a way of ending our lesson.” Read the line together and end with an ‘Amen.’ (15 min)

Session 6

Getting Ready to Be the Church

Key Concepts

1. Only by gathering as the Body of Christ in one place do we truly become the Church, a Jesus-centered, spiritually grounded community of faithful, in which we share in the love of the Lord through Holy Communion, parish life, and service.
2. The preparation section of the Divine Liturgy begins with the priest’s vesting.
3. The priest wears special vestments as he assumes his role of celebrant, confessor, and consecrator of the Eucharist.
4. Each vestment has a special significance and prayer.
5. Church vessels are the assorted objects used at and on the altar during liturgy.

Objectives

Students will

1. Attend the vesting of your priest prior to liturgy.
2. Read an article on the spiritual character of a worshipping community and discuss.
3. Participate in an activity on the role of special clothing.
4. Review liturgical vestments, vessels, and books.

Note: In this session you will have arranged to witness your priest’s vesting as a class. Schedule accordingly. You may review the vestments with the use of the vestments doll as well as the actual vesting in church. Also, announce that students need to be prompt next week, since you will meet in church to observe the Preparation part of the Liturgy.

Procedure

1. Once back in class from the vesting, open with the prayer. Review with the **Quick Quiz**. (*Answers: 1. incarnation; 2. 10th century; 3. the deacon; 4. bowing slightly and crossing ourselves; 5. St. Basil; 6. two*)
2. Have students read **Up Close and Personal** and share answers to the *Christian Century* article. (15 min)
3. Write on the board the following words: astronaut, soldier, deep sea diver, ballerina, Broadway actor. Then ask: What do these people have in common? (They all wear special clothing to do their jobs.) Why? (protection, to symbolize who they are, the mark of their trade, equipment necessary for the job). In the same way, an Armenian priest – and the priests and ministers of other Christian traditions – wears special clothing for many of the same reasons. (10 min)
4. Ask for students' comments on the vesting. Discuss. Review the historical background of vestments by either teaching or having the students read **The Preparation and Vesting**.
5. Now have students review together by asking for volunteers to read **Armor of God**, one vestment at a time, while having their books open to pp 2 and 3 of the Pew Book. The purpose of each vestment is expressed in the prayer the priest says as he puts them on. These prayers can also be read aloud (for the first three vestments as indicated). (20 min)
6. Read and review **Church Vessels and Books**. (10 min)
7. Have students take the **Quick Quiz** and do the **Matching** exercise. (10 min)

(*Answers: True-False: 1. F, 2. T, 3. T, 4. T, 5. T, 6. F, 7. F, 8. T, 9. F, 10. T Matching: crown-sagbavart; tunic-shabig; stole-poroorar; belt-kodi; cuffs-pazban; collar-vagas; cape-shoorchar; towel-tashginag; slippers-hoghatap; Divine Liturgy-Badarak*)

Session 7

O Mystery Deep

Key Concepts

1. The priest prepares for the ritual role he is about to undertake by symbolically purifying himself, confessing his sins, and asking the congregation's prayers for his forgiveness.
2. Liturgy begins not at the altar, a symbol of heaven, but among the people.
3. Washing one's hands, as the priest does, is an ancient symbol of purification.
4. Behind the closed curtain the gifts are received and prayed over. The preparation ends with the opening of the curtain.

Objectives

Students will

1. Attend church for a close observation of the Preparation.
2. Review Psalm 26.
3. Complete a run-through of the Preparation.
4. Explore the meaning of select Psalms.
5. Summarize the liturgical activities that conclude the Preparation.

Note: Attend church for the Preparation part of the Liturgy. Plan to attend for the entire Synaxis next week.

Procedure

1. Once you're back in the classroom, pray out loud together the opening prayer on page 22 of the student text.
2. Say: "You know the feeling when you haven't had a good semester at school, so you say to yourself as a new semester begins, 'I'm starting with a clean slate, this time I won't mess up.' Well, starting fresh happens every Sunday at liturgy – for everyone, priest *and* people. Let's look at that **Up Close and Personal** question." Share answers, starting with your own.
3. Read or teach **A Prayer of Faith and Praise**. Have students read the psalm and answer and discuss questions. (*Answers might include 1: because God's assessment would matter to a Christian more than any human judgment, because a priest is committed to a life of faith and good works; 2. That he has an innocent heart and this is symbolic of that inner state, that the water is a way of purifying him further so that he is actually immersing his hands in innocence; 3. Speak openly about the important role God plays in our lives, share the good experiences we have in church, etc.*) (15 min)
4. After students have located the prayer of confession on page 5 of the pew book announce that you will do a run-through together from purification through the "accession" or going up to the altar. Assign parts of priest and deacon, and everyone else is altar server. Read pp 5 to 7, stopping at the prayer of St. Gregory of Narek. After each "part," stop and ask for the meaning of words as follows:

The Priest: intercession: intervention, supplications: prayers

Deacon: "that he may be pleased to have mercy": that what Mary and the saints tell him will move him to be merciful

The Priest: "immaculate": without sin; expiate: correct; remit: forgive

The Altar Servers: top of page 6, "Remember us Lord..." (Just note to students that this greeting will resurface later when the priest proceeds around the church)

The Priest: list how the priest describes the church in his last prayer on page 7.

(10 min)

5. Turn the students' attention to the psalms. Read **The Psalms: The Prayers of the Badarak**, and do the activity.

Answers:

Psalm 105:1-3: praise of God; Psalm 13:1-2: sorrow

Psalm 26 - possible themes: love, trust, pledge of faith, innocence

Psalm 100 – possible themes: joy, strong faith, gratitude, praise, faith

Psalm 43 – possible themes: sorrow, despair, seeking God, hope

Psalm 137 – possible themes: sorrow, captivity, anger

Key words/phrases will be obvious

(15 min)

6. Read the text and do the activity **Behind Closed Curtains**. A few things to note for students: The second paragraph of the commentary actually describes what happens when the Preparation part of the liturgy ends and "The Synaxis" begins.
Protodeacon simply means senior deacon.

Answers:

1. The deacon – representing the people – presents bread and wine (also known as "the gifts") to the priest. First he presents the bread.
2. The priest blesses the bread with the sign of the cross and places it on the small plate called the paten.
3. Then the deacon presents the wine.
4. The priest blesses the wine with the sign of the cross and pours it into the chalice.
5. Then he makes the sign of the cross over the gifts three times, saying (from the Gospel of Luke 1:35): "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the most high will overshadow you."
6. The chalice and paten are covered with a veil and set in side niche.
7. Altar servers light candles and prepare for the procession.

(20 min)

Session 8

God Comes to Us as Word

Key Concepts

1. The Synaxis or Liturgy of the Word is the “teaching” half of the Divine Liturgy, meant to educate and prepare worshippers for the Eucharist.
2. The Synaxis focuses the congregation on the Word of God.
3. The Gospel Book contains the revered Word of God and, as it is adorned in precious metal and stones and carried aloft, is a symbol of Christ himself.

Objectives

Students will

1. Take last session’s quick quiz for review.
2. Complete an exercise on incense.
3. Review the exchange with the priest in procession.
4. Survey the first half of the Synaxis.
5. Participate in a group litany exercise.

Note: You will need a small incense holder, church incense, a lighter, and (if possible) a hand cross. Attend church to observe the Synaxis part of the Liturgy.

Procedure

1. After prayer, begin class by doing the **Quick Quiz**. (*Answers: 1. The priest puts on special clothing, each vestment a symbol of spiritual strengths. 2. The priest washes his hands (purification). 3. The priest confesses his sins. 4. The priest receives and blesses the gifts of bread and wine for the Eucharist. 1. We pray. 2. Through the deacon, we present the bread and wine to the priest.*)
2. Do a verbal review as follows. Direct students to fill in the blanks under **An Encounter With God in Two Parts** as you review orally: “Okay, let’s see where we are in our *Badarak*. We saw that the Divine Liturgy consists of how many major parts? Yes, two. What do we call them? The Liturgy of the Word or the Synaxis. And, secondly, the Eucharist. Now, each of these two major parts has an additional element. The Liturgy of the Word begins with a ‘preparation.’ And the Eucharist ends with a Last Blessing. You can look at this picture and say, as often is said, that our Divine Liturgy has *four* movements or parts. But if you think about it, it’s more accurate to say that there are two important halves and that the whole begins with a time of preparation for both celebrant and people, and ends with a last blessing.” (10 min)
3. Have students open their liturgy books to page 11 and direct their attention to the photo on page 25 of their Student Text. The curtain has opened and the celebrant and the altar servers proceed from the bema through the sanctuary. The priest has taken the poorvar from the deacon and censes the altars and the people as he and the altar servers start their procession through the church. “Now let’s think for a moment about incense.” Light the incense in the dish and let the students pass it around. Make sure the dish is deep enough for incense to be secure. Once the incense is back on your desk, have students read **Incense** and look up the Bible references. Discuss. (1. God asks Aaron the priest to burn fragrant incense morning and evening. 2. God gives specific directions to Moses about incense and wants it to be burned in front of their worship tent. 3. Incense and all other offerings are meaningless if worshippers are not also helping the poor and the oppressed. 4. One of the gifts of the Magi to the baby Jesus was incense (frankincense). 5. Burning incense is being carried by an angel in a golden censer; the smoke and prayers of the saints rise up to God.) (15 min)
4. Continue: “As the priest censes the church he offers his hand cross to the faithful for them to kiss, a sign of reverence and obedience (to the cross).” If you were able to borrow a hand cross, pass it around. Direct students’ attention to **Remember Me**. Now review the exchange, especially what we say to the priest. (5 min)

5. Do a walk through of pp 11-18 of the Pew Book and point out the following:

p. 11 Whenever we hear the Trinity intoned, we cross ourselves – a sign of our reverence and obedience to the triune God. Also, note that during the Synaxis, the choir sings hymns that vary depending on the feast day.

p. 12 Whenever the priest turns to bless us with the words “*Khaghaghootyoon amenetżoon*” (*Peace to all*) – and this is the first time — remember to cross ourselves and respond together with the choir – in word or song – “And with your spirit “*Yev unt bokvooyt koom.*” This simply means “and may peace also be with you.” Pause to review dialogue and appropriate gestures with students.

p. 13 Notice in the priest’s inaudible prayer (2nd paragraph) the reference to praying “in common and with one accord” which means with one will or voice. That’s an important statement about corporate prayer or worship.

p. 14 Pause and have students read **The Gospel Above All and Up Close and Personal**. Discuss. (15 min)

6. Continue your walk-through.

p. 15-16 Have a student read **Litanies: Petitions from the Faithful** aloud in the student text and follow directions for litany activity. Discuss. Important words could be peace, stability, holy, orthodox, life, salvation, for all, pious, God-loving, leaders, souls at rest. Accept all reasonable answers for a title i.e. *A Prayer for the Leaders and People of the Church or A Prayer for Christians*.

7. Conclude with a litany by asking each student to fill in a personal petition in their text. Go around the room and after each student reads his or her prayer, everyone together says “*Der voghormya*. Lord, have mercy.” (15 min)

Session 9

This is What We Believe

Key Concepts

1. The readings from the Old and New Testaments help us understand God’s character and purposes.
2. The Creed is a summary of our most important beliefs as Christians. We recite them together as an act of worship: many hearts and minds become one as we declare what we believe.
3. The Synaxis prepares the faithful, through prayer, Scripture, and Creed, to receive the greatest gift of the Liturgy, the Body and Blood of our Lord.

Objectives

Students will

1. Take a quick quiz for review.
2. Examine the purpose and place of Scripture in the Liturgy and do a lectionary exercise.
3. Complete a photo-sequence exercise as a review of the liturgy to this point.
4. Paraphrase the 12 basic statements of the Creed.
5. Read aloud and reflect on a litany.

Note: For this session you’ll need copies of the Diocesan calendar or copies of the pages needed (see Procedure #2).

Procedure:

1. After the prayer, do the **Quik Quiz** as a review. (*Answers: 1. F. Given by one of the Magi to the baby Jesus 2. F. The high point of the Liturgy of the Word is the Gospel reading 3. F. The priest and altar servers proceed majestically through the church; the priest offers his hand cross to the faithful to kiss and blesses them 4. T. 5. F. Litanies are the prayer petitions to which all the faithful respond. 6. T.*) (5 min)
2. Distribute Diocesan calendars OR hold up one and then distribute copies of the appropriate page. Explain its significance as follows: “Have any of you ever seen this calendar? Of course, it looks a bit different each year, the artwork may vary, etc. but this is the calendar released by our Diocesan headquarters and it contains – just

like any calendar – the 12 months of the year and the important holidays. Since it’s a *church* calendar, it also features the important days for the *Church*. And because it’s an *Armenian* Church calendar, it features days that are important to us as Armenians. So what might be on there that you won’t find on a regular calendar?” (Answers might be Vartanantz, Holy Week – although mention that Easter and Christmas are on secular calendars but not Armenian Christmas – April 24 or Martyrs Day, etc.) “Okay, turn to page 28 in your texts and read **words, words....The Word** and do the exercise (you can choose to pair people for this exercise). At the conclusion of the exercise, review answers and ask, also as a review, “Okay, so what do we read during the lections? And what is a lectionary?” (15 min)

3. As a segue to the next exercise, do a review of our progress so far. Have students look at photo sequence on page 28 and write a phrase next to each one. Answers, of course, can be phrased slightly differently:

1. *We arrive at church and sit in private prayer*
2. *Priest vests*
3. *Servers and priest walk out of vestry into chancel*
4. *Priest washes hands and confesses*
5. *Priest prepares bread and wine*
6. *Servers and priest come down from altar in procession*
7. *Priest censes altars, church, etc.*
8. *People kiss hand cross*
9. *Priest and altar servers return to altar*
10. *Gospel procession*
11. *Bible readings*
12. *Creed*

(10 min)

4. Now have students read **We Believe!** and do the **In Your Own Words** exercise in groups of 3 or 4. If your class only consists of 5, they can work as a single group. Discuss the process. Was it difficult to put into simpler words? Allow 15 minutes for their work and 10 for discussion and review of their statements. If there is time, discuss **Up Close and Personal** or ask students to think of this question on their own for discussion next week. This exercise is designed to encourage each member of the class to think actively about his or her faith. That said, however, don’t let these personal beliefs stray too far off course; help students focus on the key features of the *Armenian Christian faith* that are significant for *them*. (25 min)

5. Have students turn to page 19 of the Divine Liturgy books and read through the prayer litany after the Scriptures (through the middle of page 21, the three “Lord have mercys”). Assign a deacon to read the petitions and everyone else responds (response should be in Armenian *and* English. Ask: “How does this litany differ from the one right *before* the readings? Have students turn to pages 15 and 16 of their Liturgy books to refresh their memories about the theme of that litany. (Answer: These petitions are prayers for our own protection, forgiveness and help as opposed to leaders of the church.)

6. End with a prayer.

(10 min)

Session 10

The Eucharist: The Focus of it All

Key Concepts

1. The Eucharist is the ultimate purpose of the Divine Liturgy; historically, at this part of the Liturgy, those not baptized were asked to leave.
2. The congregation symbolically gives the gifts to the priest in the presentation of the bread and wine by the deacon.
3. The Kiss of Peace cements the love relationship among the faithful as well as between the faithful and God.

Objectives

Students will

1. Review through a Quick Quiz.
2. Complete an exercise on interpersonal conflicts.
3. Explore the beginning of the Eucharist service and define the word “catechumen.”
4. Summarize Psalm 24.
5. Examine the “Kiss of Peace” ritual.
6. Analyze the Eucharist service through page 29 of the Pew Book.

Note: Attend church from the beginning of the Eucharist to pg 29.

Procedure:

1. Read the opening prayer together in the student text. Do the **Quick Quiz** as a review. (*Answers: 1. F The Armenian lectionary began taking shape as early as the 4th century. 2. T 3. F A lectionary is a list of readings primarily for use in worship. 4. F The Nicene Creed was formulated by the 1st and 2nd Ecumenical Councils, Nicaea (325) and Constantinople (381) respectively. 5. Discuss.*) (5 min)
2. Direct students to think about someone they really don't like, someone they might have a problem with right now. Pass out pieces of paper (a quarter page of an 8 ½ X 11 page is fine). Ask them to write the person's name and a brief description of the problem. After a few minutes, ask: “Was this hard to do?” Discuss. Share students' answers, if they wish. Certainly share a situation from your own life – whether a colleague at work, a relative (you can change the name, but certainly let it be a real situation). Now ask “In your own case, is there any way you can heal the situation so there are no hard feelings?” Discuss. Conclude: “Well, it's never easy to resolve interpersonal conflicts. But that's exactly what Jesus asks us to do. Remember he said: “Blessed are the peacemakers.” He said this during what we have come to call the Sermon on the Mount. Today's opening prayer comes from that same group of teachings. Look in your texts. That's no joke. Jesus wants us to literally and truly approach the altar with all human misunderstandings – of course, to the best of our ability – cleared up, so we participate with a clear and clean heart. We'll find out today that this is exactly how we get ready for the second half of our Divine Liturgy – by clearing the decks, so to speak, and preparing our hearts.” (15 min)
3. Have the students open their liturgy books to page 23 and their student texts to page 31. Draw their attention to the picture of the priest removing his slippers. Turn back to the first session and remind them of the poem they began the course with, and the symbol behind the gesture of removing one's shoes, namely, being in awe of the Holy. “That was the last act of the Synaxis and the first of the Eucharist. Let's see what happens next.” Have students read **What's A Catechumen?**, copy words in their texts, and conclude with **Who's Who**. (10 min)
4. Continue by having students turn to page 25 of the Divine Liturgy book. Draw their attention to the photos on page 32 of their texts. “Teach” rather than have students read **The King of Glory**. Then have them do the Psalms exercise. Answers: 1-2: God created the world and everything in it; 3-4: since God dwells in the holiest of places, only those who are righteous (clean hands/pure heart; interesting note: clean hands is about what people can see; a pure heart is what God can see) and believe in the one true God can approach him; 5-6: that kind of generation looking

for God will be received and blessed by him; 7-8: let every gate open wide to let the Lord, the King of Glory in (this can refer to the gates of the city that received the Ark in David's time or the gates of our hearts); 9-10: Open wide your heart! This King of Glory we make room for is the Lord himself. (This triumphal entry echoes Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem recalled on Palm Sunday as well as his Second Coming). The Psalm is quoted because the priest is receiving and glorifying the chalice as a symbol of Jesus himself. (15 min)

5. Have students turn to page 27 of the pew book. Say: "We started class with an exercise about healing personal relationships. Now we come to the moment in liturgy when we literally give one another a hug and a declaration that with Christ in our midst, we are one heart and soul. Now here's where we are called upon to really forgive and love one another. What do we call this? The Kiss of Peace." Read or teach **The Holiest "Kiss"** Then discuss **Up Close and Personal** together. (10 min)
6. Conclude by walking through pp 28-29 of the Divine Liturgy book pointing out that on p 28, the deacon is calling everyone to attention (*abeev gatzook...Let us stand in awe*) as the priest begins the very important prayer, the Anaphora or the Eucharistic Prayer, which starts on this page, and actually ends on page 39. At the top of page 29, note the exclamation of the deacons "the doors, the doors!" This is a direct reference to the actual doors of the church and that care should be taken that no one unworthy be present at what will now become the deepest act of faith, participation in Holy Communion. Conclude class with the deacon's part on page 29. "All right, we'll continue through the Liturgy next week. Until then, let's remember the deacon's words: "*and give thanks to the Lord with the whole heart.*" (5 min)

Session 11

Take, Eat!

Key Concepts

1. As the Eucharist service unfolds, we enter more deeply into the holiness of God.
2. The priest prays for the Holy Spirit to enter the gifts of bread and wine that they might become the Body and Blood of our Lord.
3. The congregation prays for the entire Body of Christ, the Church.
4. Finally, fully conscious of our miraculous status as God's children, we pray to him as Father in the Lord's Prayer.

Objectives

Students will

1. Identify Isaiah 6:1-8 as the source of *Soorp, Soorp* and do a brief Bible study.
2. Examine Scripture passages that describe the historic beginnings of Holy Communion.
3. Analyze the Intercessions.
4. Participate in a reflection exercise on the Lord's Prayer.

Note: Attend church where appropriate for today's session (from "Soorp, Soorp" to Hayr Mer).

Procedure

1. Open with prayer. Do the **Quick Quiz** for review. (*Answers: 1. c, 2. f, 3. b, 4. e, 5. a, 6. d*) (5 min)
2. Direct students to page 29 of their pew books. Note that the priest's prayer, upon which today's opening prayer was based, is inaudible until the last line (turn page), in which he directs us to sing a special hymn of praise. Have students read **Looking Up (Even When You're Down)** and do the Bible Study on Isaiah 6 (there are no right or wrong answers here). (15 min)

3. Continue walking through this part of the liturgy: Have students look at the bottom of page 30 of the Divine Liturgy book as the priest continues the Eucharistic prayer and then turn to page 31. “Once again, the celebrant recites a line of prayer that actually continues from the one he’s been quietly praying. And we come to these truly astounding words ‘Take, eat... You’ll hear the Armenian: *Arek, gerek.*’ Look in your student text to find three key passages in Scripture — Matthew 26:26-30, Luke 22:14-20, I Corinthians 11:23-26. Let’s analyze them together to see what this incredible moment in the history of the world has to do with our liturgy, and for that matter, our lives as Christians.” Have students open their Bibles and read the Matthew verses (aloud, silently, or taking turns). Write “Matthew 26:26-30” in bold letters on the board. “Okay, now, where is this taking place? Yes, Jerusalem. What are the disciples and Jesus doing? (celebrating Passover dinner together) In that first verse, what did Jesus do?” Have students volunteer to come forward and write each action on the board. (took bread, gave thanks, broke it, gave to disciples). Then ask students to repeat what he said. Again have answer recorded on board. Do the same for verses 27 and 28. Then write “Luke 22:19-20” on the board. Ask students what is different about these verses. What new words? As answers are given, have them written on board (“do this in remembrance” “the new covenant”). Finally, say: “The third reading is from an epistle of Paul in which he is summing up what Jesus did – for the new believers in the city of Corinth.” Have someone read it aloud. Conclude by telling students that by participating in communion, we are proclaiming our faith and sharing in the Lord. (15 min)
4. Have students turn to page 32 in their pew books. Point out the hymn *Hamenaynee* and how it sums up the fundamental action of the liturgy in the short phrases of worship – we bless you, we praise you, we give thanks to you, we pray to you. On page 33, point to the hymn *Vortee Asdoodzo* and the prayer the priest inaudibly prays to the Holy Spirit, to come down upon the gifts and make them truly the Body and Blood of the Lord (bottom of page).
5. Direct students to pages 35 to 39 of the liturgy book and have them take turns reading the priest’s and choir’s (people’s) part (only what is in bold) with the entire class responding and do the exercise in **The Intercessions: Getting Real**. (15 min)
6. Direct students to page 39 of the Divine Liturgy book, pointing out the deacon’s litany in the “Pre-Communion Rites” which asks God’s blessings on our prayers, the altar and the gifts (page 40), and ultimately leads to the moment when we can pray as self-aware children of God. Have students read **We Are Your Children!** And do the exercise. Announce that next week you will continue your journey through the liturgy. But as a closing prayer exercise, have students turn to **My Lord’s Prayer**. Give them five minutes to complete the exercise, then read the prayer line by line, pausing after each line to have each student, in quick succession (or simultaneously!), read their “translation.” It can be a moving experience. Feel free to comment on unusual or particularly affecting choices at the conclusion. (10 min)

Session 12

The Main Event

Key Concepts

1. The ultimate encounter we have with the Lord during liturgy is receiving him through Holy Communion.
2. Confession and penance are the final acts of spiritual “housecleaning” prior to receiving communion.

Objectives

Students will

1. Do a pictorial review of the liturgy up to this point.
2. Complete their survey of the Eucharist part of the liturgy.
3. Examine the Armenian form of confession and fill out a personal reflection exercise.

Note: You will need index cards with a single word on each which lined up will produce Psalm 34: 8 and Psalm 148: 1-2 (depending on your translation, you'll need 34 cards.) BEFORE CLASS: Make space on the board to tape up each card facing backwards out of order, line by line. Leave space over the first line (to later write "Psalm 34:8" and then space over the next group of lines (to later write "Psalm 148:1-2"). See procedure #3.

Attend church to observe the specific events of today's session (approximately pp 41-52 of the Divine Liturgy book).

Procedure

1. Have students turn to page 43 in the Pew Book and as an opening prayer recite each line of the Doxology together, ending with the "blessing and glory to the Father, etc." Then have students read **Getting Ready for the Main Event** on page 37 of the Student Text and do the matching photo quiz on pp 38-41. Students should simply write the letter of the correct photo in the blank space under each numbered sentence. Discuss and review sequence. (Answers: The Preparation:1e, 2d, 3f, 4a, 5g, 6c, 7b; The Synaxis: 1f, 2d, 3g, 4e, 5c, 6b, 7a; The Eucharist:1c, 2e, 3g, 4i, 5d, 6b, 7j, 8a, 9k, 10b, 11f; Last Blessing: 1c, 2a, 3b) (15 min)
2. Walk through Divine Liturgy book pages 42-46 quickly noting the following: 42: ee srpootyoon srpotz – "holiness for the holy" — is a beautiful phrase capturing the entire movement in liturgy of purification and spiritual readiness for communion. The priest lifts up the chalice containing the sacred elements of transformed bread and wine — the Lord Himself — and declares it appropriate for people who have been made holy through the grace of God. Historically this was the point at which people were given Holy Communion and dismissed, but additional hymns, prayers and rituals were added over the years, such as the two hymns: "Meeayn Soorp" – praising Christ, and "Amen Hayr Soorp" – exalting the Trinity, after which the priest turns to the people with the chalice and proclaims it the Body and Blood of our Lord (p 44). The hymn "Der voghormya" is a very recent entry into the liturgy, first in use in the 17th century – it is perhaps the only appropriate time for personal prayer, since liturgy is always about praying together, with one voice and "with one accord." Have students notice the command to sing psalms (p. 45) which comes to fruition on page 47 in *Obrnyal eb Asdvadz* when we do indeed sing an ancient hymn based on the Psalms (34: 8 and 148:1-2). (5 min)
3. Now - and this activity should be quick and lively - turn over all Psalm cards so they are facing front. Assign lines (6 all together) to student pairs to correct and then come forward and put in the right order. Once they've corrected order, have them open their Bibles to Psalms 34 and 148 in turn to see where these exact words appear, then write the Psalm titles on the board in the appropriate place and comment on what a perfect example this is of the Biblical foundation of so much of what we pray and sing in the liturgy. (10 min)
4. Have students turn page 39 in their student text to read **A Life Without Sin** and do the **Up Close and Personal Confession Exercise**. Make sure the following are mentioned: 1. acknowledgment of sin before God; confession to saints - the people who "got it right;" sins can be committed in thought and words as well as actions; 2. share an example from your own life; 3. sin is as much a matter of not doing what you *should* as it is doing what you *shouldn't*; calling ourselves Christians, yet not behaving like one). Conclude with **The Armenian Angle** for a clear picture of the priest's role in our absolution. (20 min)
5. Walk through pages 50 to 52 with students, pointing out: after communion the curtain closes. Ask what students think might be happening behind the curtain (answer is in the commentary right on page 50). During this time, two hymns of thanksgiving are sung: "Lutsak" and "Kobanamk." As the curtain opens, the Eucharist "part" of Liturgy is over and the Last Blessing is about to begin.
6. Conclude by asking students to respond with a word or phrase when they hear the words Holy Communion; keep repeating the words as students respond. End with an "Amen." (10 min)

Session 13

The Lord Be With You All

Key Concepts

1. The Last Blessing formally concludes the Divine Liturgy with special prayers and a Gospel reading.
2. Kissing the Gospel at Liturgy's end is a way of bearing the Word of God out into the world.
3. Taking the blessed bread (*mabys*) is a way of sharing the Lord's Body with those not present at liturgy.

Objectives

Students will

1. Review the sequence of words and gestures in the Divine Liturgy through a reordering game.
2. Survey the prayers and hymns of *The Last Blessing*.
3. Do a values exercise on "gifts."
4. Complete a matching exercise on the Psalms.

You will need index cards. BEFORE CLASS: Write phrases as indicated (see Procedure #1).

Attend church to observe the specific events of today's session (approximately pp 52-55 in Divine Liturgy book).

Procedure

1. Before class, prepare signs (half typing sheets or large size index cards) with the following written on each one: The priest vests. The priest washes his hands and confesses. The priest walks through the church. The Gospel Book is exalted. The Bible is read. The Creed is recited. The gifts are placed on the altar. The Kiss of Peace is passed. The priest prays for the Holy Spirit to come upon the gifts. The Lord's Prayer is sung. Communion is received. We sing songs of thanksgiving. The sermon is given (do not tape this up; save it for later (see below).
2. Begin with the prayer from The Last Blessing on page 40 of the Student Text. Once students have all gathered and you are ready to begin, tape the cards on the front of the board *out of order*. Introduce this segment as follows (this is very effective if done *while* you're taping up the cards): "We've come a long way in our review of the liturgy. We know there are two large, basic parts to our liturgy, the Synaxis or Jashou and the Eucharist. We know that our liturgy begins with a preparation and concludes with a last blessing. Seen in this way, you can also say there are 4 parts to the liturgy. I think by now you'll agree that there's a clear sequence of events, a logical flow of prayers and gestures and hymns that truly does build to a climax and a conclusion. I've put up on the board some of the basic elements of this journey. As a different way of reviewing and remembering, let's see whether we can put the puzzle together." Ask a volunteer to start off by placing the first event of liturgy at the top. Then call on students for the next, etc. Be prepared to comment and review as each is taped in the right place. For example: "The priest vests. Yes! Wonderful, that's the first of the events listed up there. So, let's think. Why does he vest? (To clothe himself in a symbolic armor of faith, each vestment having a symbolic significance and a special prayer.) Can you name some of the vestments?" Refer to previous lessons or the commentary in the Divine Liturgy book itself if you want to review your own understanding of these "key moments." (30 min)
3. Direct students to page 52 of the Divine Liturgy book. Walk through pages 52-53 by having students take parts or simply take turns reading. If you can sing those parts indicated as choir, we urge you to do so. After the read-through, do the **Up Close and Personal** exercise. As students share their 'gift' stories, list items on the board. Then brainstorm God's gifts and compare the list. No doubt, the best gifts will be things that will rust, be ruined, broken, become useless; and God's gifts, whether sunshine, love, creation, etc. are for all time. (10 min)
4. Have students read and work on **Sing Psalms to the Lord!** And discuss. (*Answers: 1.f, 2.g, 3.b, 4.c, 5.a, 6.b, 7.e, 8.d*) (15 min)

5. Have students close their books. Then say. “Now let’s think for a moment. Before we *end* our liturgy, there are two gestures that kind of take us from the world inside the sanctuary to *out there*, in the world. What do we all do, once the priest has given the last blessing and before we head out the door? Yes, we file up to where he is standing with the Gospel book extended, and kiss it. The formal exchange that should take place is this. You say: ‘May the Lord remember all your sacrifices.’ And the priest responds ‘May the Lord grant to you according to your heart.’ So here are the parishioner and the priest praying for one another. Why kiss the gospel (and cross yourself after you do)? (*A way of bearing the word of God on our lips as we leave and live in the world until next Sunday*). Refer back to “*Amen Yegheetsee*” (Psalm 34:1); sing it if you can. “It’s all about the praise of God being on our lips. The next thing we normally do as we file out the door, is receive *mabs* which literally means ‘portion’ to be given to those at home who did not receive communion, a way of sharing the communion meal with others. As you receive it, you say, ‘God is my portion forever.’”
6. End with the closing words of the liturgy... “Let us depart in peace and may the Lord be with us all.” (5 min)

Session 14

Requiem: Grant Rest and Mercy

Key Concepts

1. The Church consists of both the living and the dead – the Church “Militant” and the Church “Triumphant.”
2. During the liturgy, as well as in a special requiem service after its conclusion, we pray for those who have fallen asleep in Christ.
3. Praying for the rest and forgiveness of those who have passed on is a declaration of faith and hope in eternal life and Christ’s judgment upon his return.

Objectives

Students will

1. Brainstorm the word “death.”
2. Write their own brief eulogy as a values exercise.
3. Review the Armenian Christian understanding of death.
4. Paraphrase the Armenian requiem hymns.
5. Do a Bible study on John 12:24-26

Attend the last few moments of liturgy for the bokehankeesd. Make sure there is one scheduled by calling the church office during the week.

Procedure

1. Open with the requiem prayer printed in their texts. Then write the word “death” on the board. Ask the class “Okay, there it is, the word so many fear and dread – well, it’s up there. What do you think of when you see it?” Call on a volunteer to draw lines from the word and write the phrase or words students volunteer as you facilitate the discussion. (10 min)
2. “Okay, pretty gloomy (that adjective can change depending on your discussion) stuff. But let’s read how our faith turns that all upside down.” Read **Death: The End AND The Beginning** and **The Armenian Angle** and have students do the **Up Close and Personal** exercise. (20 min)
3. Now turn to the pew book, page 56. Take turns reading the commentary, noting that: par 1: “The 40th day after one’s death is a traditional time to have a special requiem service in church to mark the anniversary. Forty is a special number, and we hear about it often in Scripture as a sacred time. What are some famous ‘forties’ you remember?” (40 days and nights: Jesus tempted in the wilderness, the rain at the time of the Flood; Moses on Mt. Sinai; Elijah fasting on the mountaintop). Also point out that even though prayers can

be especially requested at the end of liturgy for individuals, *all* those who have passed on are prayed for every liturgy – refer them to the petition on page 37; par 3: “Our prayers for the dead don’t ‘add up’ or ‘change’ our deceased loved ones in any way. Rather, our prayers are petitions to God to be merciful. (5 min)

4. Assign students the paraphrase exercise in their texts on the three Requiem hymns. Time constraints would require dividing the work so that each is done simultaneously. Once completed, share results and then remind students to keep these meanings in mind when they go to church and hear the hymns. (15 min)
5. Direct students’ attention to the Requiem Gospel reading on page 59, John 12:24-26. Have someone read it aloud. Discuss briefly by asking: What do you think this reading is about? (*While students will not know this since you need to go back a few verses, it is really about Jesus himself, whose death will produce new life everywhere. But it also continues to be about all of us.*) What does this mean: “if you love your life, you’ll lose it; if you hate your life, you’ll gain it forever”? (*Using the Semitic style of exaggeration, Jesus is telling his followers that there are superficial things in life that can seem so valuable, that we lose sight of God and what is truly valuable in life – a relationship with him.*) “If we think poetically, what might we need to ‘die to’ to really find life? Excessive cell phone use? Social media? Video games? Hours online? Egotism? Greed?” Conclude by saying: “This reading is a source of great comfort to us all since it tells us that death can bring good things, including eternal life.” End the lesson by reciting together the priest’s prayer on page 61 (“Guard us...”) Stop at the first Amen. (10 min)

Session 15

Review At Your Own Jeopardy!

This session will invite families to class for a double dose of review on the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church: First through a rousing round of Outburst; second, a Jeopardy-style quiz game. These are both available in a PowerPoint version. To access, go to www.vemkar.us. Click on Resources, then scroll down menu to Faith Formation and then *Teacher Manuals/ Student Texts*.

Before beginning the games, have students turn to the initial question they wrote (*Introduction*) in their texts (a question they would have liked to see answered during the course). Were their questions answered? Point to the page where they were; if the text never did address this question, be prepared to have the answer ready.

Outburst Review Game

Outburst is played as follows. Photocopy and cut apart the categories below. Each “team” (parents vs. students or just the class divided into two) gets three categories to present to the other. Team A announces the category to Team B which is given 1 minute to provide the ten correct answers. Team A can cross items off as they are shouted out. Members of the team providing answers do not have to consult one another; the object is to simply shout out the answers. An answer may be very good but if it’s not on the list it does not count. Each correct answer gets one point for a maximum of 10 each game.

Things You See On/At the Altar

Priest, deacon(s), candles, Bible, service book, chalice, nushkhar, flowers, pourvar or censer, icon.

Things Associated with Holy Communion

Priest, confession, sin, megha Asdoodzo (I have sinned against God), arek gerek (take/eat!), Eucharist, bread, nushkhar, wine, chalice.

Things A Priest Wears

Crown (*saghavart*), belt (*kodi*), cuffs (*pazban*), slippers, cape (*sboorchar*), ornamental collar (*vagas*), stomach stole (*poroorar*), white robe (*alb*), socks, cross.

Armenian Phrases You Hear Said or Sung During Badarak

Amen, Der voghormya, hishya Der, havadamk, park kez Der, Soorp Asdvadz, kobanamk, aseb Asdvadz, Hayr Mer, Krisdos ee mech mer haydnetzan.

Things an Armenian Parish Does

Worships together, raises funds, helps the needy, learns the faith, shares in sacraments, enjoys fellowship, studies the Bible, learns Armenian heritage, supports one another, and breaks bread together.

Things People Do During Badarak

Sit, stand, kneel, bow, cross themselves, give the kiss of peace, kiss the hand cross, kiss the Gospel book, receive communion, and confess their sins.

Liturgical Jeopardy

This review game is played as follows. Categories can be written across the board with the five different point values underneath: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50. Erase them as they are chosen. Form two teams (random division of class, boys against girls, visiting parents against students, etc.). Team 1 selects a category and point value and you read the question accordingly (toughest questions are 5th and therefore are worth 50 points). If Team 1 gives the correct answer, they go again. If Team 1 gets it wrong, Team 2 has a chance to win the points and then go again. Teams are limited to three consecutive turns.

SINGING HIS PRAISES

- 10 This hymn is sung during the Gospel procession. (*Soorp Asdvadz*)
- 20 We sing “We have been filled...” after this takes place. (*Communion*)
- 30 “Soorp, Soorp” is based on a passage from this Old Testament prophet. (*Isaiah*)
- 40 A victim of the Genocide, he composed music for the Badarak. (*Gomidas*)
- 50 It’s the first hymn of the Badarak. (*Khorhoort Khoreen*)

HYE AND ALMIGHTY

- 10 “Lord, have mercy.” (*Der Voghormya*)
- 20 The first line of the Lord’s Prayer. (*Hayr mer vor bergeens yes*)
- 30 The Mother of God. (*Asdvadzadzin*)
- 40 The greeting and response of the Kiss of Peace. (*Kreesdos ee mech mer haydnetzar / Orbnyal eb haydnootyoonun Kreesdosee*)
- 50 The classical Armenian used in the Badarak. (*kerapar*)

FOUR-LETTER WORDS

- 10 The blood of Christ. (*wine*)
- 20 “So be it.” (*Amen*)
- 30 Babies are baptized in this. (*font*)
- 40 An architectural feature of Armenian churches. (*dome or arch*)
- 50 The altar sits on this stage-like structure. (*bema*)

RHYME TIME

- 10 King Drtad’s abode and the vessel holding communion. (*palace/ chalice*)
- 20 Sacred headgear and a circus entertainer. (*crown/ clown*)
- 30 The theme of 1 Cor. 13 and the shape of the vessel containing muron (*love/ dove*)
- 40 One of the seven deadly sins and our confession of faith. (*greed/ creed*)
- 50 The space where the congregation sits and the Jews in Egypt. (*nave/ slave*)

GOD TALK

- 10 Response to “Peace to all.” (*And with your spirit*)
- 20 Response to “Let us bow down to God.” (*Before you, O Lord*)
- 30 Response to “Let us all say with one accord.” (*Lord, have mercy*)
- 40 A series of petitions usually between the deacon and the people. (*litany*)
- 50 We hear, “Who is this king of glory?” during this key moment in the Badarak. (*transfer of gifts*)

POTPOURRI

- 10 This Old Testament book, more than any other, is used in the Badarak. (*Psalms*)
- 20 The teaching part of the Badarak. (*Liturgy of the Word/Synaxis/Midday/Jashou*)
- 30 Communion is distributed during this part of the Badarak. (*Eucharist/Holy Sacrifice*)
- 40 This sacrament usually takes place during Badarak but is not part of it. (*Penance*)
- 50 The Badarak is never celebrated on this holy day. (*Holy or Good Friday*)

Session 16

Worshipping and Serving Together

The final session will consist of attending the entire Badarak, with class participating in the liturgy as follows:

1. Greeting people in the vestibule.
2. Reading the lections.
3. Passing the Kiss of Peace.
4. Leading the confession.
5. Taking the collection.
6. Distributing the *mahs*.

End with a party in the class or at the general church fellowship. Have a poster in the church vestibule and then down at fellowship, announcing the class’ celebration upon completing a 16-week course on the Divine Liturgy of the Armenian Church.



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