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ARSHALOOYS ԱՐՇԱԼՈՅՍ • A Mini Magazine on the Armenian Church for Middle Grades

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THE DOORS!

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"*Uztrons! Uztrons!*" the deacon chanted and Donald smiled. He always did when the *Badarak* came to that part. He thought it funny that the deacon should shout "The doors! The doors!" He had all he could do to keep from turning around and looking at the doors. "Just one day," he thought, just one day I'd like to see the Parish Council members come down

the aisles of the church and escort all the unbaptized people out and shut the doors behind them. Then I'd see all those people looking into the church from those little windows in the doors."

Donald's strange look caught the teacher's eye. When the children finished taking Communion, the class went back to their room to con-

tinue the lesson. When all was finished and the homework assignment given, the teacher asked, "Donald, why were you smiling that strange smile in church today?"

A little bit embarrassed that anyone had noticed, Donald said, "I thought what the deacon said was funny and I was imagining it happening." Donald felt uncomfortable.

"What do you mean?" the teacher asked.

"Well, my dad told me that when the church was starting out, they used to not let anyone who was not baptized be in the room when the Communion was given. The deacon would sort of signal that it was time for the Communion part of the *Badarak* by calling out "*Uztroons, the doors!*" Then the unbaptized would leave the church to stand in the outer area and could only look in at the people having Communion. I guess I let my imagination get away with me. I was picturing that happening in our church."

To Donald's surprise and relief, the teacher was not angry. "How did your father know about that? I know he's not Armenian and didn't grow up in our church."

"He told me that years ago when he and my mom were planning to get married, mom insisted that he join our church and that if they had any children they would become part of the Armenian Church. Dad agreed but he said he wouldn't get into anything without first finding out all he could about it. Mom spoke to her priest and they started a class for non-Armenian husbands or wives to learn about the Armenian Church. Dad became a member of the Armenian Church. He showed me pictures of his Confirmation and First Communion. Now, I think he knows more about it than mom does! He likes our church and says he's glad to be a part of it. Dad says no one is too old to learn about God."

The whole class had been listening to the story Donald told. Many of them had only one parent of Armenian ancestry so they understood Donald's situation. The teacher was a bit amazed by the children's discussion of what it was like having parents who didn't know much about the Armenian Church.

"Class, how about if at the end of each unit we have a special review period. We can invite

our non-Armenian parents into class and they can learn what we have learned."

"Great," said Pauline, "and let's have a treat for them like cookies and milk and coffee." Everyone liked that idea. It was like having a little hospitality hour of their own.

"Can our Armenian parents come too?" asked Hripsime and Roger.

So it was set up that any parent who wanted to could attend the review session. The children liked having their parents in class with them once in a while. The parents liked it too.

THINK ABOUT IT

What do you think is important to know about the Armenian Church?

If you could set up a Sunday School for adults, what do you think they should learn?



WHY?

Why do other Christians pray "in Jesus' name" but we do not hear this expression in our Armenian Church?

The answer is that the Armenian Church is *Trinitarian* which means it believes strongly in the Holy Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. If you look in our *Badarak* book you will find many songs and prayers addressed to the Holy Trinity. When we pray we say "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." Praying in Jesus' name is part of the Protestant tradition. It is not incorrect for us, but it is not in the tradition of the Armenian Church.