

Havadamk “The Creed”

The Council of Nicaea

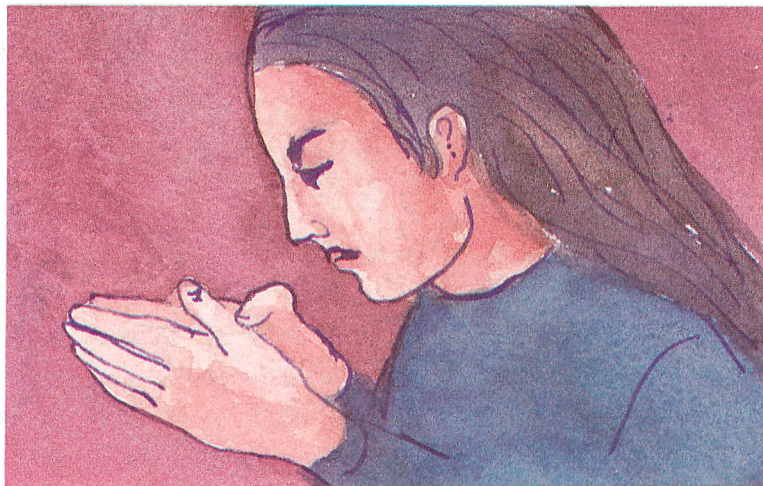
A very, very long, long time ago, there was a man named Arius. Now Arius may have been a good man; but one day he decided that believing Jesus Christ was God didn't make sense. Arius said that Jesus was a very good and important man, but he definitely wasn't God. No man could be God, Arius said. And he started telling his friends. Some of his friends believed Arius was correct; others said that Arius was wrong. The ones who said Arius was mistaken told him why. "Jesus said he was God; if Jesus lied, we'd have no reason to honor him at all. So, we have to believe that Jesus is God or else Jesus wasn't a good man." All this they told Arius, but still he didn't believe them. All of a sudden, Christians around the world didn't know what to believe. Some of them were saying that Jesus was both God and man; others were saying that Jesus was just a man, a very great and wonderful man, but just a man all the same. Well, what could people do?

At the same time, there was an emperor named Constantine who didn't like to see all these Christians arguing about such an important matter. So, he suggested that all the leaders of the Christian faith get together and decide once and for all what it was they believed. A good idea! The bishops and priests from all over the world came together in a city called Nicaea. The year was 325. When they got together, they prayed that God would guide them to the right decision. And we can be sure God did because one of the things Jesus promised is that the Church as a whole would have the Holy Spirit to guide it always. So all these holy men got together and

argued and debated over the matter at hand. Then they decided that they would create a written statement of what every Christian should believe. They did write this statement; it's called the Nicene Creed. In the Nicene Creed, we find that Jesus really is God and man both.

All Christians believe what the Nicene Creed says; that's what it means to be a Christian. It's good to know it by heart; someday we will. For now, though, we can read and understand the Nicene Creed.





The Creed

We believe in one God/the Father almighty/maker of heaven and earth/of things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ/the Son of God/begotten of God the father/only-begotten/that is of the substance of the Father.

God of God/light of light/very God of very God/begotten and not made/of the self-same nature of the Father/by whom all things came into being in heaven and on earth/visible and invisible;

Who for us/men/and for our salvation came down from heaven/and was incarnate, was made man, was born perfectly of the holy virgin Mary/by the Holy Spirit;

By whom he took body, soul/and mind/and everything that is in man, truly and not in semblance.

He suffered/and was crucified/and was buried/and rose again on the third day/and ascended into heaven with the same body/and sat at the right hand of the Father.

He is to come with the same body and with the glory of the Father/to judge the quick and the dead/of whose kingdom there is no end.

We believe also in the Holy Spirit, the uncreate and the perfect/who spake in the law and in the prophets and in the Gospels;

Who came down upon the Jordan/preached in the apostles/and dwelt in the saints.

We believe also in only one catholic, universal, and apostolic (holy) Church;

In one baptism with repentance for the remission and forgiveness of sins;

In the resurrection of the dead, in the everlasting judgment of souls and bodies, in the kingdom of heaven/and in the life eternal.

Unit VII: Badarak and Special Services

Session 1—Worshipping Together

Key Concepts

1. It's important to pray alone but, as the body of Christ on earth, it's as important for the Church to worship and pray together.
2. Our modern liturgies commemorate and recollect the Last Supper.
3. The focus of the liturgy is communion.

Objectives

Students will

1. Identify some of the things that happen in the badarak.
2. Pronounce and spell the word badarak.
3. Sing an Armenian hymn.

Background for Teacher

Saints and Sacraments; John 12:12-16; 13:1-17; Luke 22.

Materials Needed

- Crayons
- Divine Liturgy books

Procedure

1. Welcome students. Opening prayer. Begin class with a discussion of group prayer. The key to the discussion is the times and motives for group prayer. Begin with a question: "When do people usually pray together?" (Before and after meals, before class, before a big event that involves a group.) "Badarak involves group prayer as well." Ask someone to recite the Jashagestzook as an example of group prayer. If no one volunteers, say it yourself. Then ask students why people have group prayer. (The answer to this, of course, is that Christ's community needs to pray together to reaffirm that community; "religion" means "to bind together." Praying alone is good; but it is also necessary that all Christ's followers bind themselves to the community of Christ through group prayer. The badarak is the best group prayer.) (10 min.)

2. Have each student pronounce and spell the word for Soorp Badarak. Explain that it is the Armenian word for Sacrifice and it refers to what we also call the Divine Liturgy or Eucharist or Mass. (5 min.)

3. Say: "The badarak commemorates the Last Supper of Christ with the apostles, and it recalls Christ's death on the cross. That's why the badarak is a sacrifice: Christ again gives up his body for our

good." (Students will have difficulty understanding all this; but there's no getting around it. Go slowly through the message of the badarak by reading with students the story of the Last Supper on page 103.)

(10 min.)

4. Distribute crayons and have students color the picture of the Last Supper that includes blank places at the table where they can sketch in their own faces. (15 min.)

5. On the blackboard, list and describe things that happen in the badarak. For example, say: "As a group we express our beliefs about God when we pray a special prayer together called the *Nicene Creed*. We listen to *readings* from the *Bible* that remind us of our daily chores and tasks and the requirements of being good. We sing beautiful *hymns*. We share a *meal*. This last one is the most important because it is a special meal. The priest says the very words that Christ said at the Last Supper: 'This is my body; this is my blood.' And when he says those words God grants to his Church, to us, a miracle. The bread that the priest holds up changes to Christ's body and the wine changes to Christ's blood. Then the priest gives us the meal of Christ just as Christ gave it to his apostles." (10 min.)

6. Use the liturgy books to teach students the Armenian hymn: Kohanamk. Taking one stanza at a time, vary who sings and who listens so that the class gets as many repetitions as possible. (10 min.)

7. *Homework Assignment*: Students are to sing Kohanamk at home with family. If the family doesn't know the hymn, the student can teach them.

8. Closing prayer and dismissal.

Session 2—The Havadamk

Key Concepts

1. A community needs to agree on certain things or else it cannot be a community.
2. The Christian community's agreement is summarized in the Nicene Creed.

Objectives

Students will

1. Develop the idea that communities need to agree on particular matters.
2. Read about the Council of Nicaea.
3. Read the Nicene Creed in English and recite some phrases in Armenian.

Materials Needed

- DRE Flashcards of the Nicene Creed
- Dictionary

Procedure

1. Welcome students. Opening prayer. Tell students that every community needs to agree on particular things. Ask: "What would happen if people didn't agree that a red light means stop? What would happen if some people thought that the word 'toys' meant medicine and the word 'medicine' meant dirt? If they told you to take your medicine and you said you would rather play with your toys, would anyone know what you were talking about? But everyone agrees that 'toy' means the thing you play with, and 'medicine' is what you take when you're sick. The whole community of people who speak English have agreed what those words mean. And the record of that agreement is the dictionary." (Hold up the dictionary for the class to see.) "That's why when you don't know what a word means, you look it up in a dictionary." Ask students to think about what a community agrees upon? Can they think of some other examples? You may have to lead them. Examples: Time. (Why does someone say he'll meet you at nine o'clock if no one knows what nine o'clock is? The community has agreed.); Dress code. (Why don't we all walk around naked in the summertime?); Letters of the alphabet; names of colors and plants and cars; the values of particular coins and bills; days of the week and months of the year. The examples are countless. Ever-present, though, is the idea of community agreement. (15 min.)

2. Have students take turns reading the story of "The Council of Nicaea" on pages 104 and 105 of the student text. Explain what the word "creed" means: a creed is what a person believes and is willing to express in words and deeds. Discuss story. (15 min.)

3. After the story, go through all the flashcards and have each student read a phrase of the creed. (15 min.)

4. Remind the students that this creed is the basis of belief for followers of Jesus. It's so important, tell them, that it is said every time Christians gather to partake in the badarak. Say: "It comes in the badarak just after the priest has read the very words of the gospel. Then the whole church responds with the creed as it is chanted in Armenian. People at the badarak are reminded that they are there because they believe the words of the Creed." (5 min.)

5. Using the DRE Flashcards, show students how to pronounce the creed in Armenian. Go through the entire creed; obviously, it is worthwhile to emphasize some cards over others. The first card is very important. Make sure each student can say "Havadamk ee mee Asdvadz" from memory. You can do this by asking each student to stand and pronounce the words

and what they mean. The card for "We believe also in only one, universal, apostolic holy church," is an important one as well, because that brings us again to the sense of unity and community that the church should inspire in us. (10 min.)

6. *Homework Assignment:* Ask the students to find out, during the week, how many people they know who can recite the creed from memory.

7. Closing prayer and dismissal.

Session 3—Reading God's Word

Key Concepts

1. Different parts of the Bible are read during the badarak.
2. The readings at each badarak help us understand God's word.

Objectives

Students will

1. Review the three basic scripture readings done in church during badarak.
2. Color pictures of several writers of the Bible whose work is read during the badarak.

Materials Needed

- Crayons

Procedure

1. Welcome students. Opening prayer. Discuss homework: How many people knew the creed? Introduce the idea of Bible readings during badarak. Explain that there are several reasons for the readings: "All of us need to be reminded of God's goodness or of our duties to one another; all of us can use a deeper knowledge of God's word which only repetition and wisdom can bring; all of us live within the church year, which is reflected in the readings of each day." Illustrate each of these points in more detail. Tell the students to close their eyes and imagine that they are sitting in church. The priest is reading from the gospel and he is reading about the birth of Jesus. Can the students figure out what time of year it is from what the priest reads? "Yes, it's Christmas time and the priest is reminding us with the reading what the Christmas celebration is all about." Have the students close their eyes and imagine they are in church again. This time the priest is reading from one of St. Paul's letters. In the letter, St. Paul is telling his friends: Take heart, brothers; the Lord is with us. Say: "Why is the priest reading this to us? What does the priest want to happen to us? He wants us to take heart; he wants us to feel good about God's love for us even if things don't seem so good. The Lord is