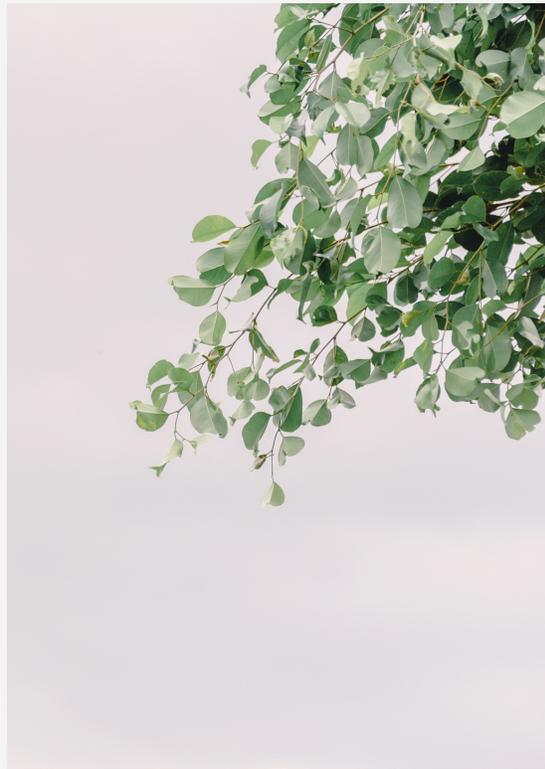


"the power at work within us"



The foundation of our Christian life is Հավատք/*Havadk*, or **Faith**. To have faith is to know and trust God, and that faith starts with God's son, Jesus Christ. We receive and strengthen our faith from the very promises of Christ himself, who said "If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes" (Mark 9:23). With faith in Christ, we develop wisdom, strength, gratitude, and grace.

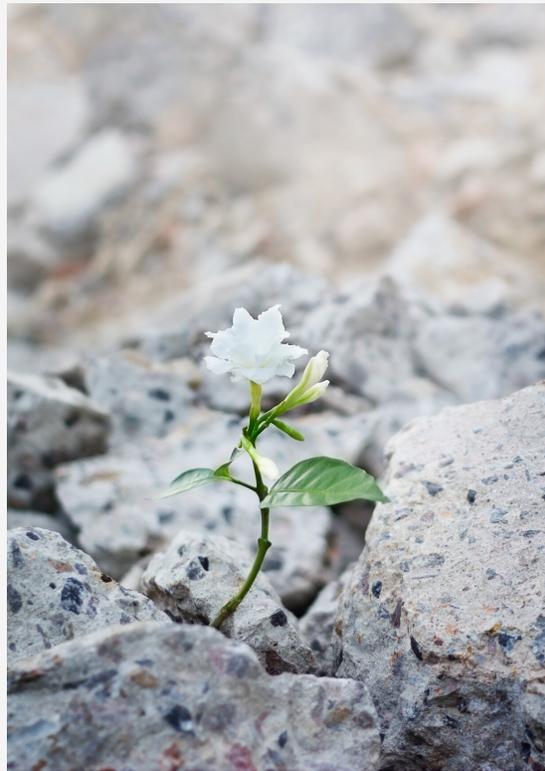
Faith is the virtue that gives us guidance in life. As Armenian Christians, faith is nourished in both our minds and our hearts. We learn about God within the teachings of the Church, but we come to know Him through living out that faith with others. Faith is not simply "blind trust" -- we have faith because we have seen, heard, and felt the goodness of God.

Read **Ephesians 3:13-21** and discussion the following questions:

- 1. When do you first remember having faith in God? Can you describe what it looked/heard/felt like?*
- 2. Have you ever felt your faith weaken? Who or what helped you restore your faith?*
- 3. Describe a moment where you kept the faith during uncertain or challenging times. What were some of the good things that happened as a result of your persistent faith?*
- 4. Do you have faith that you were created to feel "the fullness of God" in your heart? What is hard about keeping the faith when you don't have all the answers?*
- 5. What are some active ways you can strengthen your faith, at home or at school or at church? Give examples of ways you could do this for both yourself, and for others.*

"an indescribable and glorious joy"

If faith is the foundation of our Christian life, then **Յոյ/Hoys**, or **Hope**, is the brightness that fills it. Hope is a powerful virtue that reorients our lives toward patience, confidence, and goodness. A life without hope is one of darkness and despair, but hope fills the soul with joy and mercy. Despite any pain that we might experience on earth, hope assures us of the promises of heaven.



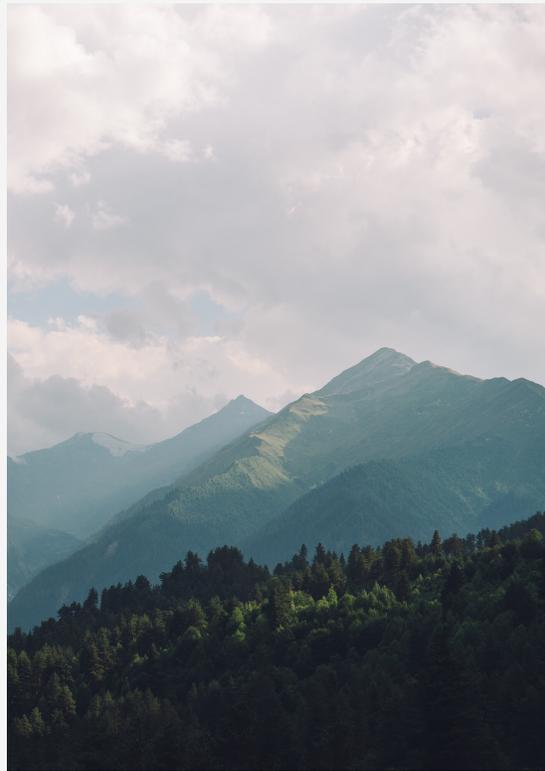
Hope is the virtue that gives us endurance in life. Hope is more than just "wishful thinking" -- it is the unwavering conviction that God works all things out for the good of those who love Him (Romans 8:28). As Armenian Christians, hope is nourished through participating routinely in sacraments, learning from faithful friends and family, and spending time with God each day through prayer.

Read **1 Peter 1:3-9** and discuss the following questions:

- 1. What sort of things do you hope for in your daily life? Describe what it feels like to receive what you've hoped for, and what it feels like when you don't.*
- 2. Picture the most optimistic person that you know. What have you learned from the things they say or do that makes you know they look for the good in all things?*
- 3. What words does St. Peter use to describe the "inheritance" that Christ gives us? What can you tell about heaven from these words? What work do we have to do on earth to make hope more visible and achievable?*
- 4. What is St. Peter trying to tell his readers in verses 6-7? Is it possible to feel joy even while you are going through something difficult? Explain.*
- 5. In what ways is it tough to have hope through trials? Who or what can you turn to when your hope is running low?*

"we abide in him and he in us"

At the very core of our Christian life is **Ար/Տեր**, or **Love**. God's unconditional love for His creation is revealed through His Son, Jesus Christ, and through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus tells us, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). The love God has for us is deep and selfless, and it is the foundation for how we learn to love and serve others.



Love is the virtue that brings us wholeness in life. As Armenian Christians, to recognize, cherish, and spread God's divine love is the holiest of callings. True Christian love is not a "fuzzy feeling" in our hearts -- it is an action, a chance for us to do everything we can in order to make someone else's life better. Love is about showing kindness and generosity even when someone is not kind or generous with us. God's love for us knows no bounds, and it is this endless love that we should strive to give to others.

Read **1 John 4:7-21** and discuss the following questions:

- 1. Name some things in life that you often say you "love." What makes you love these things? How might that love be different than the love described in this passage? Explain.*
- 2. Is there a difference between saying "God is loving" and "God is love"? What does that tell you about God, about creation, and about yourself?*
- 3. Describe some of the things that you fear in life. How does knowing you are loved by God change the way you live with those fears?*
- 4. What is challenging about loving someone you disagree with? What example has Jesus Christ set for us in loving someone who disagrees with us?*
- 5. What does it look like to "abide" in God? What sort of habits can you create for yourself to help you grow closer to God?*