

Unit 1: Fruits of the Spirit

Lesson 1.1 What is Holy Spirit? - LOVE

Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

Scriptural Reference: Galatians 5:22-23 (Fruits of the Spirit)

Activities: Choose based on time available. Instructions and supplies listed below.

Opening Activity: Fruit Identification Game (Allow 5 minutes)

Purpose: Distinguish between physical and spiritual fruits.

Craft Activity #1: Flame of Love Lantern (Allow 15 - 20 minutes)

Craft Activity #2: "Holy Spirit Helps Me" cube

Purpose: Create a visual reminder of the Holy Spirit's love shining through us.

Words of the week:

պտուղ - bu-doogh - fruit

Սուրբ Հոգի - Soorp Ho-kee - Holy Spirit

սէր - ser - love

Objective:

Students will understand that the Holy Spirit is God living within them through baptism and chrismation, and will commit to showing the Holy Spirit's love in one specific, challenging situation this week.

Moral Character Focus:

Knowledge: Children will learn that the Holy Spirit is God living within them who produces the fruit of love, enabling them to choose good even when it's difficult.

Understanding: Children will recognize that true love means forgiving, helping, and caring for others even when it costs them something or when they don't feel like it, just as Jesus loved from the cross.

Application: Children will identify specific ways to show sacrificial love in their daily relationships (forgiving friends who hurt them, helping family members without being asked, sharing with those who have less, standing up for others).

Values: Children will develop the character trait of putting others' needs before their own comfort, empowered

Memory Verse:

"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them."

— 1 John 4:16

Lesson

Open with prayer:

Իմաստութիւն Յօր՝ Յիսուս, տո՛ւր ինձ իմաստութիւն, զբարիս խորհել եւ խօսել եւ գործել առաջի Քո՛ յամենայն ժամ. ի չար խորհրդոց, ի բանից եւ ի գործոց փրկեա՛ զիս. եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն:

Eemasdootyoon Hor Heesoos, door eents eemasdootyoon uzparees khorel yev khosel yev kordz arachi ko hamenayn jham. Ee char khorhrtos, paneets yev kordzots prgya zees yev voghormya ko araradzots eents pazmameghees. Amen.

Wisdom of the Father, O Jesus, grant to me the wisdom to think, speak, and do that which is good in Your sight. Save me from all evil and distracting thoughts, words, and deeds. Have mercy upon your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.

**Wisdom Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

Lesson Body: What Is Holy Spirit? - LOVE

Opening Activity: Fruit Identification Game

Instructions: Have students sit in a circle. Assign each child a different fruit name (apple, orange, grape, etc.). When you call their fruit, they must stand and switch seats with another person whose fruit was called. When you call “fruits of the Spirit,” everyone must switch seats.

Have you ever felt especially close to God while singing in church, saying your prayers, or helping someone in need? That warm feeling in your heart might be the Holy Spirit drawing near to you. The Holy Spirit is not just a feeling or mysterious power. Holy Spirit is God Himself, alive and loving, who comes to live within us.

Understanding the Holy Spirit begins with understanding who God is. In the Armenian Orthodox Church, we believe in one God who exists in three different persons, known as the Holy Trinity. God exists as:

- God the Father, our Creator and the source of all life
- God the Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior who became human to rescue us
- God the Holy Spirit, our Helper and Guide who lives within believers

Each person of the Holy Trinity is fully God, yet they work together in perfect unity to show us love and bring us salvation.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians about the beautiful qualities that grow in the lives of those who are filled with the Holy Spirit: “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22-23).



St. Paul the Apostle
c. 5 – c. 67 AD

Words of the Week:

պտուղ - bu-doogh - fruit
Սուրբ Հոգի - Soorp Ho-kee - Holy Spirit
սէր - ser - love

Memory Verse:

“God is love. Whoever lives in love
lives in God, and God in them.”
— 1 John 4:16

But how do we feel the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit comes to live within us through the special church ceremonies of baptism and chrismation. During baptism, the priest sings the hymn of Pentecost, recalling how the Holy Spirit descended from heaven and rested upon the apostles. This special moment is a gift to each person baptized to experience the same event that the apostles experienced and allow them to declare, “God lives here.”

When the Holy Spirit comes to live in our hearts, He doesn’t come as someone just visiting, but as our forever Helper and Guide. He protects us, comforts us when we’re sad or afraid, and slowly changes us to become more like Jesus Christ. This change happens as the Holy Spirit grows His fruit in our lives.

These are not ordinary fruits like apples or oranges that grow on trees. These are spiritual qualities that grow in our character as we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives. Just as you can identify a tree by looking at its fruit, people will recognize that the Holy Spirit lives in us by watching these ways that are like Jesus in how we act.

Love: The Greatest Fruit

Among all the fruits of the Spirit, love holds the first and most important place. The Church Fathers often described the Holy Spirit as fire—not a destructive fire that burns, but a warm fire that gives light and comfort. Saint Gregory of Narek beautifully called the Holy Spirit “the fire of divine love burning in the heart of the faithful.”

But what kind of love does the Holy Spirit grow in us? Biblical love is far deeper than simply liking someone or being kind when it’s easy. The love that comes from the Holy Spirit helps us choose to do good even when it’s difficult. It helps us to forgive those who have hurt us, help people who cannot repay us, and stand up for what is right even when others disagree.

Jesus Christ showed this perfect love most clearly when He hung on the cross. Even while suffering tremendous pain and facing death, He looked upon the very people who had rejected and crucified Him and prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34). This giving, forgiving love represents the kind of love the Holy Spirit wants to grow in our hearts.

We Show Love in Our Life and Worship

Love is so important to our faith that it fills every part of Armenian Orthodox worship. During the Divine Liturgy, the deacons call out to the congregation to greet one another with a holy kiss. This beautiful tradition reminds us that we cannot properly worship God or come together to say what we believe unless our hearts are filled with love for Him and for each other.

The Holy Spirit teaches us to love God with our whole heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves—not just with words, but through real actions that show God’s love to the world around us.

As followers of Jesus Christ who carry the Holy Spirit within us, we are called to be lights in the darkness, showing God’s love through our daily choices and how we treat others. This might mean forgiving a friend who has hurt us, helping someone who is struggling, sharing with those who have less than we do, or speaking kindly even when others are unkind to us.

The apostle John reminds us of this beautiful truth: “God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them” (1 John 4:16). When we choose to love as the Holy Spirit helps us, we become living examples of God’s presence in the world.

Special Prayer to Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, we thank You for choosing to live within our hearts. Help us to understand Your love more deeply each day. Transform us from the inside out, that we might bear the beautiful fruit of love in all our relationships and circumstances. Make us faithful witnesses of Your presence in the world.

In Your name we pray. Amen.

Craft Activity #1: Flame of Love Lantern

Materials per student: Small mason jar (lids pre-removed for safety), pre-cut tissue paper squares in red, orange, and yellow, glue sticks, small paper heart cut outs, crayons or markers, battery-operated tea lights

Instructions:

1. Students glue overlapping tissue paper pieces around their jar to create a flame effect
2. On the paper heart, students write or draw one specific way they will show God's love during the coming week
3. Glue the heart to the jar
4. Insert battery-operated tea light to illuminate the lantern
5. Dim or turn off classroom lights to appreciate the warm glow

Craft Activity #2: Holy Spirit Helps Me

Note: Adult supervision may be needed for younger children during cutting and gluing steps.

Materials Needed: Pre-printed cube template on construction paper, scissors, glue stick or tape, crayons/markers for coloring (optional)

Instructions:

1. Take the pre-printed "Holy Spirit Helps Me" cube template on construction paper
2. Children can color in the images if desired
3. Carefully cut along the outer solid lines
4. Keep tabs intact - these are needed for gluing
5. Fold along all the dotted lines between squares
6. Make sharp, clean creases (the template should start forming a cube shape)
7. Apply glue to one tab at a time
8. Press the corresponding edge firmly against the glued tab
9. Hold for 10-15 seconds until secure
10. Continue gluing tabs one by one until cube is complete
11. Let dry completely

How to Use the Cube:

1. Roll like dice during family time or personal devotions
2. Whatever activity lands face-up is what you focus on that day
3. Discuss how each activity helps us follow the Holy Spirit's guidance

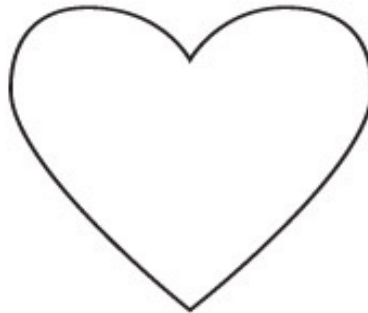
Holy Spirit
Helps Me



Go to church



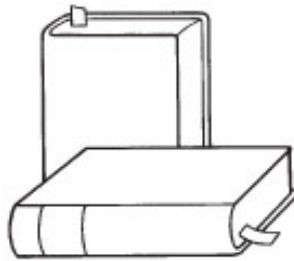
Pray



Be kind



Obey parents



Read scriptures

Review

Memory Verse Review:

“God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them.” (1 John 4:16)

Words of the Week Review:

պտուղ - bu-doogh - fruit

Սուրբ Հոգի - Soorp Ho-kee - Holy Spirit

սէր - ser - love

Lesson Review:

Questions:

1. How does understanding the Holy Trinity help you appreciate who the Holy Spirit is?

(Understanding the Holy Trinity helps us see that the Holy Spirit is not just a force or feeling, but God Himself—equal to the Father and Son, yet with the special role of living within believers to guide and transform them)

2. What does it mean to have “the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit”?

(It means we have received God’s permanent mark on our souls, like a royal seal, showing that we belong to God and that He lives within us as our Helper and Guide)

3. Can you think of a time when showing love was particularly challenging for you?

(Personal reflection—might include forgiving someone who hurt them, being kind to someone who was mean, sharing when they didn’t want to, or helping someone they didn’t like)

4. How might others recognize that the Holy Spirit lives in you through your actions?

(Others can see the Holy Spirit’s presence through acts of love, kindness, forgiveness, patience, gentleness, and self-control—especially when these actions are difficult or costly for us)

5. What is one specific way you can demonstrate God’s love to someone this week?

(Personal application—might include helping a family member, forgiving a friend, being kind to someone at school, sharing with someone in need, or standing up for someone being mistreated)

Life Application

What are we going to do with what we have learned today?

This week, use your “Holy Spirit Helps Me” cube as a daily reminder to invite the Holy Spirit into your everyday choices. Each morning or evening, roll the cube and focus on whichever activity appears face-up. If it lands on “Pray,” spend extra time talking to God about your day. If it shows “Be Kind,” look for specific opportunities to show love to family members or friends. When “Obey Parents” comes up, choose to follow instructions cheerfully without arguing. The goal isn’t to perfectly complete every task, but to remember that the Holy Spirit is your Helper in all these areas. As you practice these spiritual habits consistently, you’ll begin to recognize the Holy Spirit’s gentle guidance throughout your day, helping you grow in faith, love, and obedience to God. Keep the cube somewhere visible as a constant reminder that God’s Spirit lives within you and wants to help you live as Jesus would.

* *Departing Prayer, written by St. Nersess the Grace-filled (Shnorhali).*

Close with prayer:

Պահապան ամենայնի Քրիստոս, աջ Քո հովանի լիցի ի վերայ իմ, ի տուէ եւ ի գիշերի, ի նստիլ ի տան, ի գնալ ի ճանապարհ, ի ննջել եւ ի յառնել, զի մի երբեք սասանեցայց եւ ողորմեա՛ Քո արարածոց եւ ինձ բազմամեղիս: Ամէն

Bahaban amenayn Kreesdos, ach Ko hovanee leetsee ee vera eem; ee dveh yev ee keesheree, ee nsdeel ee dan, ee knal ee janabarh, ee nunchel yev ee harnel, zee mee yerpek sasanetsayts yev vog-hormya Ko araradzots yev eents pazmamyghees. Amen.

O Christ, guardian of all, let Your right hand guard and shelter me, by day and by night, at home and abroad, in sleeping and in waking, that I may never stumble. Have mercy upon Your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen.