

# Back to Church Recap Lessons

## BTC 1. The Cross is Holy, Christ is Lord

### Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

*\* As this is your first lesson of the year, consider creating name tags for the students. You can prepare this ahead of time. Then as you take attendance, you can distribute the name tags to each student.*

*\*\* As a Get-to-Know-Each-Other activity, you can ask students to introduce themselves by saying their first name, age, and something that they like (ex. an activity, food, favorite book, etc.). Feel free to apply your own ice-breaker or introduction method (depending how many students are in the class, try to keep this within 5-7 minutes).*

### For the lesson (for the purpose of demonstration):

Children's Bible, children's prayer book, a cross on a chain (may be an exaggerated example).

### Note to Teachers: Use this text only if applicable

When we return to school from summer break, sometimes we meet new friends who are joining our classroom and sometimes we are the new friend. As we all are faithful and nice family members of our church, we welcome our new friends, and we try to get to know them. We also help them to understand what we learn in school and how to apply it.

*\* Assign a student from the previous year or ask several students through questions to describe what church school is and what we are here for (learning about God, about the church, how to pray, Bible stories, etc.)*

**Audio file:** [God is the Boss \(adapted\)](#)

**Song:** [God is the Boss](#)

**Video Lesson:** [THE BLESSING OF THE CROSS - Orthodox Pebbles!](#)

**For the Activity:** Decorate the Cross with Basil Leave printable, basil leaves cutouts from green construction paper (printable is provided at the end of this document), coloring pencils, glue sticks, sticker gems.

### Words of the Week:

խաչ – khach – cross

նշան – nu-shan – sign, mark

մատ – mad – finger

### Objective and Moral Character Focus:

### Memory Verse:

“Guard us, O Christ our God, under the shadow of your holy and precious cross in peace.”

- Armenian Prayer

# Lesson

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## Lesson Opening & Creating Interest:

As always, let's start our lesson with a prayer and ask God to give us wisdom to learn and speak His word, ask Him to protect us and help us always be good. But before we pray, we must do something important. We must make the sign of cross to shield us with the protection and the blessings of the cross.

With our three fingers together (thumb, index and middle finger) we draw a cross on the front of our body starting from our head, going down all the way to our belly button, then going up to our left shoulder, then the right shoulder, then to the center of our chest.

**Open with prayer:**

**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.**

## Lesson Body:

Some people during summer holidays like to travel to different cities, states or even countries. Sometimes these travels can be for a long time, several months, weeks or just a few days. During this time, we often miss our home, our own bed and cuddly plush animals, dolls and monster trucks. We try to take a piece of our home with us by packing our favorite toy or book.

*Q: What are some of your favorite things to take with you when you are traveling? (answers will vary)*

Our houses or apartments are our homes that we love and live in together with our family members, yet we have another home where we try to come together weekly.

*Q: What is that home, can you guess? (the Church)*

This place we call a church is our spiritual home. It is a place where we get to know God, our Heavenly Father, and create a good relationship with Him by visiting the church every Sunday, participating in church services and praying. It is also very important to keep God in our hearts, invite Him to our family homes and take Him with us when we travel.

*Q: Can you think of ways how to do this? (take a Bible with us, or our favorite prayer book, wear our baptismal cross or another cross, read Bible stories, pray daily, etc.)*

*Optional questions:*

*Q: Why do we need the Bible? (to learn about God and His relationship with people)*

*Q: Why do we need to pray? (to have a conversation with God and make a good relationship with God)*

Having a cross in our homes and wearing one on our necks is also a way to keep God in our hearts and remember that He is always with us.

In the church, just like in our homes, we keep things we treasure the most. The cross is one of them. When the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which has Jesus's tomb and crucifixion, was built and consecrated (opened), the patriarch took the holy cross and raised it up high for all the faithful to see and venerate. This day is called Khatchverats or the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Exaltation means to lift up.

The cross is very important to Christians. In the Armenian Church, we celebrate four feasts dedicated to the cross. This special holiday of the cross is celebrated on the closest Sunday between September 11-17. During this special celebration the cross is decorated with sweet basil as a sign of royalty because Jesus Christ is our king, Lord and Savior. After the Divine Liturgy, we can take some of the blessed basil home to eat or make delicious meals with. Sometimes people can bring basil from home to help the priest and the deacons in decorating of the cross.

**Q:** *What can you share with your friend about the Holy Cross?*

The holy cross is powerful and can protect us. That's why we wear crosses around our necks and make the sign of cross. The cross is a powerful instrument which chases away evil because, through the cross, Christ has given us life and shown us the way to heaven. That is why we make the sign of the cross: to protect us and guide us.

**Q:** *Can you try and remember when we are to make the sign of the cross? (before prayer, after prayer, when we are scared or unsure, during the Divine Liturgy, etc.)*

Let's watch this video, learn more about the blessings of the cross and try to remember how we make the sign of the cross and do it all together as a class.

**Video Lesson:** [THE BLESSING OF THE CROSS - Orthodox Pebbles!](#)

**Note:** *Certain traditions mentioned in this video differ from the Armenian Church's traditions, but many more are the same.*

**Audio file:** [God is the Boss \(adapted\)](#)

**Song:** [God is the Boss](#)

## When to make the sign of the cross:

1. When you hear
  - a. "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"
  - b. During "Soorp Asdvadz" (Holy God)
  - c. The name of Jesus Christ
  - d. Amen
2. Upon entering and exiting the Church
3. At the beginning and the end of the Holy Gospel reading
4. Before and after receiving Holy Communion
5. Before kissing the Holy Gospel
6. Whenever the priest blesses you with the sign of the cross

# GOD IS THE BOSS

\*A section in this song was adapted to align  
with the theology of the Armenian Orthodox Church

When you make the sign of the cross,  
You remember that God is the boss.  
You say: Hallow my thoughts and cleanse my heart,  
Take the heavy weight off of my shoulders.

Hallow my thoughts and cleanse my heart,  
Take the heavy weight off of my shoulders.

Watch my hands as they go,  
up and down, to and fro,  
Hallow my thoughts and cleanse my heart,  
Take the heavy weight off of my shoulders.

Three for the Trinity,  
One is the nature of Christ  
Fully God and fully man,  
Now wouldn't you say that was nice?

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You remember that God is the boss.  
You say: Hallow my thoughts and cleanse my heart,  
Take the heavy weight off of my shoulders.

Watch my hands as they go,  
up and down, to and fro,  
Hallow my thoughts and cleanse my heart,  
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Three for the Trinity,  
One is the nature of Christ  
Fully God and fully man,  
Now wouldn't you say that was nice?

When you make the sign of the cross,  
You remember that God is the boss.

**Memory Verse:**

**"Guard us, O Christ our God,  
under the shadow of your holy  
and precious cross in peace."**

**- Armenian Prayer**

**Words of the Week:**

**խաչ – khach – cross  
նշան – nu-shan – sign, mark  
մատ – mad – finger**

**Activity:** Decorate the Cross with Basil leaves.

**Directions:**

1. Write your name on the back of the printout.
2. Color the cross in your favorite color



Image from [www.armenianchurchsydney.org.au](http://www.armenianchurchsydney.org.au)

## Review

### Memory Verse Review:

"Guard us, O Christ our God, under the shadow of your holy and precious cross in peace." (Armenian Prayer)

### Lesson Review:

True/False Room Game: Separate the room in half, one side is true the other is false. Give the children the statements, such as those below, and have them walk to the side of the room they believe is correct.

1. The sign of the cross is made with your left hand. (False: right hand)
2. The Church is our spiritual home. (True)
3. There are 17 feasts dedicated to the Holy Cross. (False: four feasts)
4. We bless water on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. (False: we bless basil)
5. We take basil home to eat and/or make meals with it. (True)

### Words of the Week:

խաչ – khach – cross

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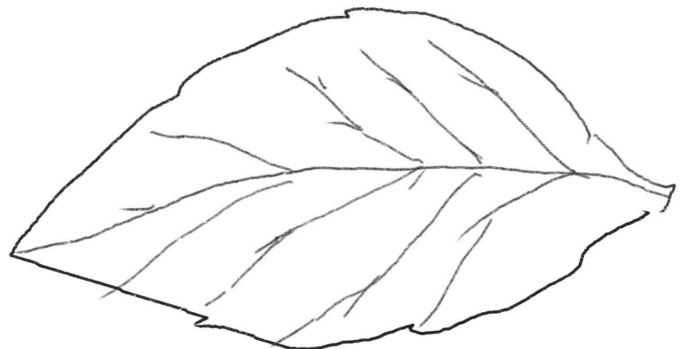
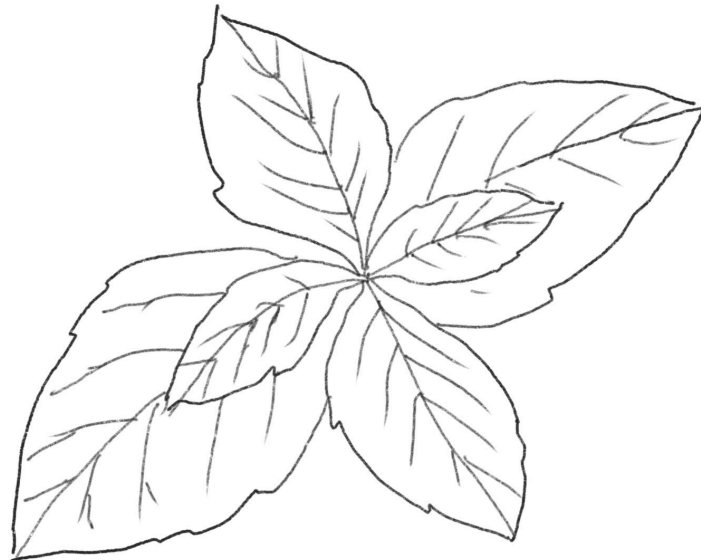
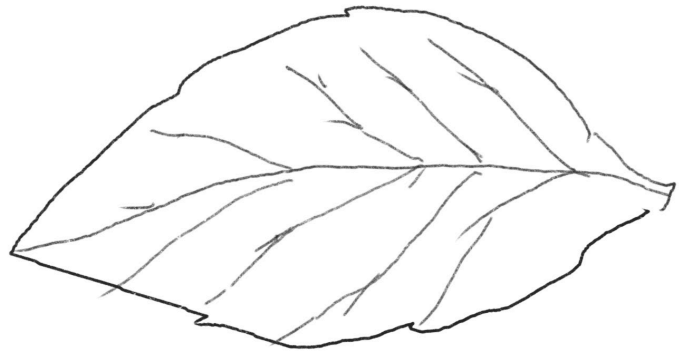
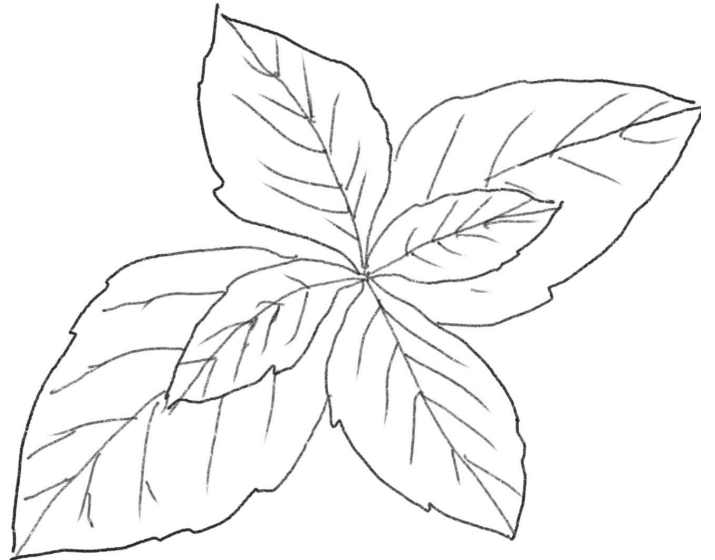
### Life Application:

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

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, practice making the sign of the cross after you wake up, when you pray before and after your meal and before you go to bed.

**Close with prayer:**

**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.**



*Guard us, O Christ our God, under the shadow of your holy and precious cross in peace.*

*- Armenian Prayer*

