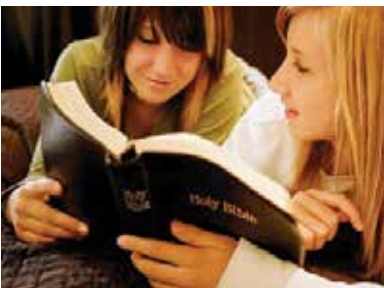


Grade Six

Living the Good Life

Holy People, Holy Time



**We Believe Curriculum
Teacher Manual**

Living the Good Life

Holy People, Holy Time

By order of
Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate

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**Grade Six
We Believe**

Living the Good Life

Holy People, Holy Time

Diane Bairamian

Teacher Manual

Table of Contents

Unit I: A Community Over Time

1. What Is Holy Tradition?	4
2. The Bible.....	5
3. Where Two or Three Are Gathered	7
4. Dogma, Councils, and Canon Law	8
5. Lives of the Saints	9
6. The Writings of the Fathers	11
7. The Sacraments	12
8. Sacred Music and the Arts.....	14
9. Putting It All Together	15

Unit II: Sacred Time-The Church Year

1. We Live in God's Time	16
2. Advent and Great Lent: Preparing for Christmas and Easter	18
3. Easter and the Dominical Feasts	20
4. Feasts of the Cross	21
5. The Feasts of Mary.....	22
6.The Lord's Day and Every Day: Nourished in Christ	24

Unit III: Sacred Living-Saints as Mentors

1. So What Am I Supposed To Do?	25
2. David: God's Success Story	27
3. Jonah, The Reluctant Prophet	28
4. Paul: Champion of the Gospel	29
5. Women of the Early Church: Taking Part in God's Plan	31
6. Taking A Stand	32
7. Where Do I Fit In?	33
8. Putting It All Together	35

Unit IV: A World Church

1. Holy Etchmiadzin.....	36
2. Jerusalem	37
3. The Armenian Church in America I	38
4. The Armenian Church in America II	39
5. The Community As Bedrock	40

Introduction

Welcome to *We Believe Grade Six!* We wish you the very best with your class of sixth graders – so full of youth, energy, hope, and faith. Teach them, yes. But above all, love them and inspire them with your own genuine desire to walk the path of faith with them.

In order to have the most effective and productive year, please note the following:

- **Curriculum in General.** By definition, a curriculum is conservative, reflecting the attitudes of the community about which it is teaching. If the community remains undecided or has multiple answers to an important question, that will resonate in the curriculum. (A classic example is how to teach the Armenian Genocide in Sunday School: as a lesson to prompt forgiveness or justice or both?)
- **Curriculum as Cookbook.** Any curriculum should serve as a *foundation* and cannot take into account your experience and style, your students' maturity or temperaments, your specific parish setting, or unfolding events in the world. Therefore, feel free to adapt – as you would a recipe in a cookbook - to add or replace activities, or shorten or lengthen an exercise. Additional *content* needs to be approved by your superintendent who will consult with your pastor.
- **This Curriculum.** Some flexibility is fine in ordering your lessons. For example, holiday-focused lessons should be taught on or near the holiday itself, not necessarily in the order they appear in the curriculum. Although quizzes do check students' retention from the week before, it's easy to adjust (just turn to the correct quiz). Lessons are designed for one hour and are meant to complement not replace church attendance. Ideally, students should attend church either before or after this Sunday School session and, as often as possible, with their families.
- **The Teacher Manual.** In addition to weekly use in preparing your lesson, use the teacher manual as a reference book for the future; make notes in the margin that can help when you go to teach the same session next year (or when your replacement does).
- **Be Prepared.** Read the entire student and teacher texts. Understand the key concepts and objectives and think of materials and other resources you might want to collect or have ready as the year unfolds. Decide what optional activities you will want to include. Mark on your calendar those lessons that call for special materials, volunteers, visits to other classes, or activities requiring earlier arrival or later dismissal. Make the necessary arrangements well in advance, including emailing parents with special instructions. Never be just one lesson ahead of your class. Be prepared so that you make the most effective use of your hour and so that your mind and heart can also dwell fully on the questions and needs of the students. It may well be the only hour of the week that the children are thinking and learning about God.
- **The First Ten Minutes.** In those first moments of class time, don't wait for students to filter in to begin. Use the opportunity to talk to each child who arrives, asking about their week, how they're feeling, what's new in their lives, etc. You might develop an incentive program for those who arrive promptly, either giving a reward on the spot, or adding points towards an award.
- **Timing.** Timing for each activity has been provided for you as a helpful planning tool. It assumes a prompt start to the hour so if you are generally starting late, you will need to accommodate accordingly. Be aware that every group differs and that you may occasionally need more or less time than indicated, depending on your style of teaching, your class, and any number of other variables. Be flexible. Adjust as you go along.
- **Reading.** If only students could be assigned reading at home and return to class the next week informed and ready to participate in the day's discussion! Unfortunately, the days of assigning homework are long past. Instead, reading must be done during class time. To avoid the inevitable "take turns and let's read aloud" syndrome, alternate how the reading is accomplished. Reading aloud is fine and can certainly be done occasionally. At other times, distribute highlighters or ask students to underline key phrases and words as they read silently or in small groups. Or, ask different students to become "experts" on a particular paragraph and

teach its contents to the class. Or, you yourself can simply “teach” the text, pointing to key words and phrases that students can underline and discuss.

- **Did You Know?** and **Words to Live By** offer interesting information on a lesson concept or topic and pertinent Scripture quotations. They are not always pointedly referred to in the lesson procedure and when not, can be used when and as you wish.
- **Prayer.** The opening prayer time always has a formal prayer in the student text. But be creative here, as well, so that students learn that prayer is their time to literally “speak to God.” Use this opportunity to have them contribute according to the theme of the day. Perhaps they can provide a person they are thankful for, after which everyone can repeat, “Thank you, God” Or something in God’s creation they love, after which they can all repeat, “Your world is wonderful, Lord” Etc.

Always end class with a prayer; occasionally these are provided. But if not, get everyone still, perhaps bowing heads and closing eyes, and you might say something very simple, “Bless us all, Lord, and keep us safe. Amen.” As you develop them, write them in the margins of your teacher text for future reference. Others can be topical, perhaps reflecting something that has happened recently. “Lord, help us keep the people of ____ warm and safe after the recent flood.” Etc. Or simply end with the beautiful Hayr Mer, alternating Armenian and English.

You will not be reminded of these ideas in each lesson, so remember to pray creatively and purposefully.

Review. Always keep earlier lessons in mind to refer to and turn to. Work review into your lesson often.

Love Your Students. Get to know and care about your students. Be guided by I Corinthians 8:1-3: *“All of us possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him.”*

So...more than the curriculum, more than the to-do list, a genuine and heart-felt interest in your students will be the best example to them of what faith in action is all about. *This* is what builds up the body of Christ and opens up hearts to the work that only God can do.

Lesson 1

What Is Holy Tradition?

Key Concepts

1. Holy Tradition is the sum of all the teachings of the Church over time including first and foremost Scripture, the lives of the saints, worship services, canon law, sacraments, the teachings of the Church Fathers, and the evolving life and history of the believing community.
2. This Holy Tradition, guided by the Holy Spirit over time, can help us navigate safely through a confusing world.

Objectives

During the session the students will:

1. Participate in a values continuum.
2. Play an identity game.
3. Read about Holy Tradition and the apostolic basis for the Armenian Church.
4. Read and discuss the story of Nicodemus (John 3:21).
5. Explore Bible verses that stress the importance of God's tradition vs. human traditions.
6. Read about two characteristics of Armenian Church architecture.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens
Lined paper

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together.
2. Ask the students to line up in front of the class. Explain that they must imagine a line going across where they are standing. They will stand on it according to how they would answer the following questions (this activity is called a "Values Continuum"):
 - a. Your room is (left end point of line) clean enough to eat off the floor OR (right end point of line) as messy as if an earthquake had just taken place. (*Students will stand somewhere on the line that describes their room.*) Discuss.
 - b. You never open the Bible except at Sunday School (left end point of line) OR you read from it every day (right end point of line). Discuss.

Now have students choose *either* one end or another, no standing in between (this is called "Either/Or"):

- a. If I had to pick something to eat at a hungry moment, it would be a dessert (one end) OR a meal, i.e. meat and potatoes, etc. (other end). Discuss.
- b. If I could travel anywhere, I would travel around the U.S. (one end) OR somewhere overseas (other end). Discuss.

Conclude by saying that "this was just a fun way of getting ourselves to think about the choices we make that say something about who we are."

15 min.

3. Read the instructions in **Identify Yourself!** to the students. Distribute paper and pencils and tell them this exercise will be part of a guessing game. Making sure they do not write their names on their papers, have them list some of the things that make them who they are. Encourage each child to identify at least five items. When they have finished, collect the papers. Mix them up, then redistribute one paper to each child. Be careful to not give a student his or her own sheet. Tell the class to read the page they have received. In turn, call on each student and have them guess whose paper they hold. Some of them will know each other already and this will be easy, but it should be a fun ice-breaker. 15 min.
4. Teach or have the students read **Identity and the Armenian Church** and **Nicodemus: A Reminder from God**. Read the Scripture verses and discuss questions. (Note: “Born again” simply refers to one’s spiritual as opposed to physical birth; it is also a popular Evangelical Christian term for someone who has suddenly found Christ.) You can read or work together as a class, or give the students quiet time to work alone, in pairs, or in small groups, depending on the size of your class. Review questions as an entire class. 15 min.
5. Read **The Right Road**. Have them complete the exercise. Review the answers with them. The first and third passages are the ones that emphasize the importance of Scripture; the 2nd simply describes a man who has broken the rules of hospitality; the 4th describes the early church living its faith out in beautiful practices of prayer and fellowship; and the 5th shows the Biblical inspiration of liturgical vestments (it comes from a much longer passage that details all the temple vestments). 10 min.
6. Read **Our Armenian Way** and conclude class with a prayer: “Dear Lord, open our hearts to your Holy Tradition and the new ways of living in Christ it can help us discover. Fill us with strength and wisdom and patience this week so that whatever we say and do honors your name. Amen.” 5 min.

Unit One: A Community Over Time

Lesson 2

The Bible

Key Concepts

1. The books of the Bible were inspired by God and collected and canonized by the Spirit-led Church.
2. The Bible is useful in daily life.

Objectives

During the session students will

1. Recall a book that has helped or guided them in their lives.
2. Read a selection about how the Bible is like an owner’s manual for humankind.
3. Write a short skit about handling real-life situations and perform it with their classmates.
4. Explore how God’s Word can help them deal with and avoid problems.
5. Learn about the Gideons’ placement of Bibles in hotel rooms.
6. Make and decorate a bookmark that features Proverbs 1:2.

Materials Needed

Car owner's manual (optional)

Pencils, pens, markers

Lined paper

Bookmark-shaped (2" X 8") thin cardboard, enough for everyone in the class, with a hole punched at top

Glue and glitter or sequins, if desired

Small, colorful stickers, if desired

Colorful yarn cut to seven inch lengths

Color copies of an Armenian miniature from this or another lesson.

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**. Answers: F (Holy Tradition), T, F (No, he would not have wanted them to know about it), F (No, Joseph of Arimathea did), T
2. Read **A World of Books** with the students. Poll students and have them describe a book that was important to them. Be prepared to answer this yourself (aside from the Bible, of course). 5 min.
1. Teach the **The Greatest Book of All** (if you were able to bring in a car manual, hold it up!) and pause to point out key sentences. Students can be asked to underline these, e.g. "God" and "Bible" in the third paragraph. 5 min.
2. Read the first paragraph of **Scripture at Work in the Real World** to the class. Form groups of 2 to 4 depending on the size of your class and have the students choose one of the three scenarios and write a four or five line skit about what they would do in that situation. (If your class is small, work together on one or more, as time allows.) After ten minutes, have each group "perform" their skit for the rest of the class. Discuss as appropriate after each skit. 25 min.
3. Teach or have the students read **When Your Warning Lights Come On, Check the Owner's Manual**. The verses from James refer to the damage we can do with things we say and the importance of controlling our tongues. The verses from Romans are concrete guidelines for authentic Christian living.
4. Have students read **A Lifeline Away from Home** silently. 5 min.
5. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Distribute the posterboard bookmarks, miniatures, and any other craft materials you have chosen for this project. Have the students write the Bible verse from **Our Armenian Way** on the bookmark, color and then glue on the miniature, then have them decorate and embellish it as they choose. Allow a few minutes to help them attach a tassel through the hole. Talk about the blessing of God's Word for the Armenian people and end class with a prayer bringing these thoughts together: "Thank you God for the blessings of a language invented for our people to know you better through your Word and worship. Help us to be grateful for the Spirit-filled origin of the Armenian language and to be determined to grow closer to you, whatever language we may speak. Amen." Dismiss the class. 20 min.

Lesson 3

Where Two or Three Are Gathered...

Key Concepts

1. God asks us to come together to worship him.
2. Communal worship helps us to strengthen each other in faith.
3. Worshipping together according to our established doctrine keeps us from straying into false ideas.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Recall something that makes them feel part of a group.
2. Perform an experiment showing that staying together makes us stronger.
3. Read a selection about why we worship together.
4. Recognize how Paul's care of the early church shows we have always needed the encouragement and guidance of church leaders.
5. Fill in their Christian Life Pyramids.
6. Read Hebrews 10:23-35.
7. Practicing encouraging each other in faith.
8. Read about the Armenian monastic worship cycle.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

As many 18-inch lengths of pre-cut sewing thread necessary to illustrate the example of how we are stronger when we stand together. (See procedure #3.)

Scissors

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: 1.c, 2.a, 3.d, 4.c, 5.b
2. Read and discuss **Symbols of Belonging**. Answers might include going on trips together, group projects, training (for sports), etc.
3. Take out your sewing thread. Place them on the desk and have a volunteer come forward and break a single thread by pulling it apart. Put several strands together and have the student attempt to break them. Before class, you may need to play around with the number of threads a bit to see how many you need to make the strand unbreakable. 10 min.
4. Have the class take turns reading **Where Two or More Are Gathered** aloud. 10 min.
5. Read **Send in the Reinforcements**. Look together at the map of Paul's missionary journeys. 5 min.

6. Have the children read the list of items that guide us in our Christian walk, then have them rank each one in their pyramids. Instruct them to place the items they feel are the most important on the bottom of the **Christian Life Pyramid**, with the least important being on top. When they have finished, invite them to share their responses. There are no right or wrong answers, since you are asking for their personal impressions. Discuss questions in the text. 20 min.

7. Have the students read Hebrews 10:23-25 in **A Helping Hand**. When they have finished, call on students to come up to the board and write a way they can encourage their classmates and/or families in their Christian life. (Some ideas if students draw a blank: For classmates: help them know or use the Bible better, practice kindness and patience, help with a problem, explain something they don't understand at Badarak. For families: pray before meals, practice kindness and patience, keep a Bible out and open at home, encourage everyone to come to church together).

8. Have the students silently read (or you simply "teach" the text) **Our Armenian Way**. Conclude with a prayer by asking each student to contribute his or her idea of a "noisy attraction" in life. Write them on the board. Pray: "Lord, we thank you for the worldly pleasures of..... (list the ideas on the board; skip anything inappropriate). But help us to see the even greater pleasure in the gathering of believers who draw closer to you in worship." Dismiss the class. 15 min.

Unit One: A Community Over Time

Lesson 4

Dogma, Councils, and Canon Law

Key Concepts

1. Rules are everywhere in our lives and are essential for survival.
2. God tells us that his rules are good.
3. The Armenian church developed rules from Scripture, councils of priests and bishops, and special meetings.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Discuss rules and their place in the world.
2. Create a set of rules to govern a new skate park.
3. Read and discuss Psalm 119:97-104.
4. Examine the Nicene Creed and the circumstances of its development.
5. Read a brief selection on Catholicos Aristakes.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens
 Chalkboard, large sheet of paper, or dry erase board
 Chalk, markers, or dry erase markers

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
 Answers: 1.b, 2.c, 3.d, 4.c, 5.a 5 min.

2. Read **Law and Order** and discuss questions. Accept all answers, of course. For the last question, it might be important to conclude that all Christian communities struggle to understand their faith (with the help of the Holy Spirit). This can be compared to how societies struggle to define their values and develop constitutions and laws that reflect them. Our values are defined by God first (through Scripture and the church teachings that interpret Scripture and the life of Christ) and then lived out in conscious ways by the community of believers. And so we develop canon laws, regulations for sacraments, for the priesthood, for worship, etc. 20 min.
3. Tell the students to imagine their town is going to open a new skate park and they are responsible for setting the rules for the park. They must consider the following:
The park is in a quiet residential neighborhood.
The rules must consider safety.
Who should be allowed to use the park?
What happens to someone who breaks the park regulations?

Write the responses on the board or large sheet of paper taped to the wall. When you have accumulated an adequate number of rules, have the students vote on each one with a show of hands. Put a check next to the rules that are adapted. Point out to the class that if it was this much work to come up with simple rules for an imaginary skate park, picture how difficult it must have been to set church doctrine long ago. 15 min.
4. Read Psalm 119:97-104 and have students answer the text questions. Review the answers with them. The correct responses are love, enemies, elders/teachers, path/way, honey.
5. Have children take turns reading **The Nicene Creed - Our Statement of Belief** aloud. When they come to the Creed itself, have them hold their hands in the way we do when the Creed is read during Badarak. 15 min.
6. Read **Our Armenian Way** with the students. Dismiss class with a concluding prayer: “Lord, thank you for the gift of exemplary people in our church history, saintly men and women. We are grateful for all those who have helped us understand God’s story - through the decisions of Councils and the traditional rules and laws of the church - and have made it easier for us to live out that story in our own daily lives. Amen.” 5 min.

Unit One: A Community Over Time

Lesson 5

Lives of the Saints

Key Concepts

1. Role models have special qualities that make them attractive to us.
2. The Bible and the Armenian Church have many heroes and heroines.
3. Their loyalty to Jesus Christ often cost them their lives.
4. We can look to these men and women as models for our own behavior.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Examine role models and their special qualities.
2. Read about God's role models and complete an exercise.
3. Read and discuss Colossians 3:12-17.
4. Explore the hymn "Here I Am, Lord."
5. Review the story of St. Hripsimeh.

Materials Needed

Pencils
Lined index cards
Chalkboard, large sheet of paper, or dry erase board
Chalk, markers, or dry erase markers

Note to the Teacher

Next week, your class will make a presentation to the 5th grade (or the grade grouping before your own). Plan accordingly.

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: 1. read, 2. canon, 3. Constantine, 4. Nicene Creed, 5. St. Gregory. 5 min.
2. Distribute the lined index cards to the class. Have the students write the name of their favorite role model, as well as their own names. Collect the cards. Have the class brainstorm various qualities that role models should have. List their responses on the board. Try to come up with at least 6 or 7 suggestions. Discuss each answer as it is given. If someone says a role model is someone who is "successful," ask them to define success and make sure the discussion focuses on *God's* idea of a successful life. Return the students' cards to them. Have them jot down the qualities possessed by the role model they named at the beginning of the exercise. Ask them if their choice of a role model is still a good one, as well as why or why not. 20 min.
3. Read **Who's Your Role Model?** to the class. Have the students complete the accompanying matching exercise. The answers are Stephen - forgiveness, John the Baptist - humility, Vartan Mamigonian - courage, centurion - faith, Mary - obedience. 5 min.
4. Have the class read Colossians 3:12-17. Discuss the questions as a class. Guidelines: 1. "God's chosen ones" are all Christians 2. No, the key is that if the word of Christ is indeed in us, then we know *how* to wisely and appropriately "correct" one another; suggest to students that perhaps the best way to admonish others is through our own Christian behavior. 3. There can be a great discussion here about the many ways the virtues outlined in verses 12 – 17 would impact behavior in these groups. Look at the specific virtues: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bear with one another, forgive one another, etc. and apply them to these specific professions. 15 min.
5. Read **Here I Am, Lord** in "reader's theater" style, by assigning one student the first stanza, one the second, and one the concluding question (have them stand to read). Everyone reads the chorus together. Or have all students stand and read line by line. Once they are seated, ask what they feel God might be calling them to do right now in their lives. Grow closer to him? Come to Sunday School and church? Follow him in their daily lives? Be a good brother or sister? Etc. If they ask: "how do we *know* what God wants us to do?" suggest that it's easier than it seems: by learning about his ways through the Bible and church and our own prayers, there's a lot we can know!

6. Have students read **Our Armenian Way** aloud line by line, pausing after each line. As the reading is being done, students may fill in the answers in their text. As a concluding prayer, ask each student to write in the quality they are praying for (you participate as well). Pray together by having each student read his or her line. Then have everyone say: “*Lord, hear _____’s prayer.*” Dismiss the class.

15 min.

Unit One: A Community Over Time

Lesson 6

The Writings of the Fathers

Key Concepts

1. The work of holy men of the past helps us understand Scripture and the teachings of the church.
2. These holy fathers gave up comfortable lives to pursue knowledge of God and teach others about him.
3. These writers and teachers endured great hardships, sometimes even giving their lives for their faith.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Explore the role of the important teachers of the early years.
2. Read Scripture passages on how the written word was used to teach believers.
(Acts 1:1, Romans 1:1-6, and 1 Corinthians 15:1-3)
3. Examine mini bios of some of the greatest Christian teachers.
4. Make masks of their particular church father.
5. Present introductions of each to a younger class.
6. Review “Jesus, Wisdom of the Father.”

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens
Index cards
White posterboard pre-cut into face-sized masks (large ovals)
Markers
Paint stirrers, one for each mask, or other sturdy handle for the masks
Strong tape or fast-drying glue to attach the handles to the masks
Scissors for cutting tape if necessary

Note to the Teacher

Today’s activity requires preparing for and then presenting information to another class. You might want to extend this into the next lesson.

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: stones, Persian, any two: compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, John the Baptist, Gayaneh.

5 min.

2. Read **Teachers of Treasure** and the accompanying readings. 10 min.
3. Assign one of the people in **God's Special Helpers** to each student. If you have more than ten students, you will need to provide mini bios of other saints so each child has an assigned person. Have the children read their individual bios to themselves. Provide each student with a mask. It will probably save time if you cut out the masks before class. Instruct them to use markers to create a mask of their designated saint (the text illustrations may be helpful). When they have finished, tape or glue the handles onto the masks so they may be held in front of the students' faces. When this is complete, give each student an index card. Have them write a brief introduction of their saint, then attach the card to the back of the mask. Rehearse them a couple of times, then have them present their saints to a younger class. They do not need to memorize their information, but may read it from the card. After the presentation, collect the masks and keep them in a safe place, because the students may want to re-use them in the unit roundup in Chapter 9. 40 min.
4. Read **Our Armenian Way** to the students. Review the prayer a few times and use it as the concluding prayer. 5 min.

Unit One: A Community Over Time

Lesson 7

The Sacraments

Key Concepts

1. The sacraments serve to unite us with our Lord in concrete ways.
2. The sacraments mark special milestones in our lives.
3. We can look to Scripture to see the origins of the sacraments.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Compose a timeline of significant events in childhood.
2. Review the seven basic sacraments of the Armenian Church.
3. Complete an exercise matching the sacraments with the corresponding Bible verse.
4. Play Sacrament Jeopardy.
5. Briefly review baptism in the Armenian Church.

Materials Needed

- Chalk or dry erase board
- Chalk or dry erase markers

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have students take the **Quick Quiz**. Answers: 1. c, 2. a, 3. d, 4. d, 5. a 5 min.
2. Read **Milestones in Our Christian Life**. Guide their milestone chart by saying: "Well, what would you start with as the given point? (Your birth, of course, when you became a new member of your family) Then what's the next milestone marker? (Your baptism, when you became a member of the church family)"

Other milestones could be: first steps, first word, first day of school, graduation from elementary school (many end at 5th grade), etc. For the specific sacrament questions, allow free discussion. Guidelines for 1) baptism: community involvement might be important since the child is now part of a large church family and with everyone involved and witnessing, this might reflect the reality of baptism better than a small family celebration. 2) The parts of the body are symbolic: by anointing the forehead, the Holy Spirit is prompting righteous thinking, the eyes, righteous vision, etc. The ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, heart, back and feet are all symbols of what we hear, what we smell or “take in,” the work we do, our feelings and love for God and one another, our strength (back), our path or direction (our feet). 3. This creates self-awareness so that we can live more mindfully about what we think, say, and do. It is spiritually healthy (and actually essential) to let God in to help us get back on track. But you can’t fix something if you don’t know it’s broken! 4. The lower orders afford young people the opportunity to serve, to be part of a larger, more meaningful world – the church; ordination to the diaconate or priesthood offers exciting, meaningful work – helping others, leading the church, celebrating liturgy, teaching, etc.

3. Have the students read **Back to the Bible** and complete the accompanying matching exercise. Bookmark your own Bible and be prepared to check their verses.

The answers are 1. Penance (the loosing of sins refers to the forgiveness of sins through confession to the priest), 2. marriage, 3. chrismation (confirmation), 4. holy communion, 5. holy orders, 6. baptism, and 7. anointing of the sick. 20 min.

4. Divide the students into three teams. Tell them they are going to play Sacrament Jeopardy. They must answer in the form of a question, and they must raise their hands to answer. You will call on the first person who raises his or her hand. Award 100 points for each correct response, and deduct the same for each incorrect answer. Keep score on the board. Each participant should get a snack or small gift as a prize. The questions are:

This sacrament was established by Jesus at the Last Supper.

(What is holy communion?)

Known as the sacrament of crowning.

(What is marriage/matrimony?)

The one sacrament a priest cannot perform.

(What is holy orders/ordination?)

The three main orders of the Armenian Church.

(What are deacon, priest, bishop?)

They are known as the “sacraments of initiation.”

(What are baptism, chrismation, communion?)

Group or private confession is an integral part of this sacrament.

(What is penance?)

Of the three major orders, only this one can perform the sacrament of holy orders.

(Who is the bishop?)

The miracle at Cana relates to this sacrament.

(What is marriage/matrimony?)

This sacrament includes the laying on of hands.

(What is holy orders?)

The only sacraments that cannot be repeated.

(What are baptism and ordination?)

This sacrament has a dove as its symbol.

(What is chrismation/confirmation?)

A narod (braid) and cross are placed around the neck in this sacrament.

(What is baptism?)

We experience these two sacraments in every Divine Liturgy.

(What are penance and holy communion?)

15 min.

5. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Conclude with a prayer and dismiss the class.

5 min.

Unit One: A Community Over Time

Lesson 8

Sacred Music and the Arts

Key Concepts

1. The Armenian Church has a rich history of religious art and music.
2. Our Christian artists and composers sought to reflect God's glory with their work.
3. Scripture gives instructions for making colorful vestments and other religious items.
4. The Bible encourages us to make music for the Lord.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Explore Armenia's tradition of religious art and music.
2. Read Scripture verses that underlie these traditions.
3. Participate in a class discussion of the role of art and music in worship and in the secular world.
4. Create their own illuminations.
5. Examine a brief selection and poem about khachkars.

Materials Needed

If possible, have on hand a sample of an ornate vestment piece, a khachkar (small replica), an Armenian manuscript illumination, a piece of Armenian church music. These are all illustrated in their texts, but anything you can pass around is always helpful.

Regular pencils

Gold metallic markers or colored pencils, as well as other colors

Pictures of illuminated manuscripts

Calligraphy book (optional)

Construction paper slightly larger than their drawings, for mounting and display

Double-stick tape

Illuminated letter handout from the back of this manual

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: 1. F (sacraments), 2. F (in Scripture), 3. F (holy orders), 4. T, 5. T 5 min.
2. Take turns reading **Reflections of God's Glory** aloud. Have the students read Psalm 150 to themselves or you might read it aloud together. 20 min.

3. Read **Our Armenian Way** and review the distinct elements of Armenian Church art. Tell students they are now going to create their own manuscript illumination. Distribute hand-out, which is a text of the famous “parable of the sower” from the Gospel of Mark. Show them pictures of illuminations. Have them design and decorate a large initial letter (make calligraphy books available in case they wish to copy a style) and then add small illustrations in the margin for elements of the story. When they have finished, mount each illumination on the construction paper with double-stick tape. Post the work around the classroom. 30 min.
4. Conclude with a prayer and dismiss class. 5 min.

Unit One: A Community Over Time

Lesson 9

Putting It All Together

Key Concepts

1. All concepts from the last eight sessions.
2. A consolidation of what students have learned is helpful before they proceed to the next unit.

Objectives

During the session the students will design and display a triptych depicting what they have learned thus far.

Materials Needed

- Large three-panel display board (often used for science fairs; available at office supply stores)
- Markers
- Lined index cards
- Color copies of some of the illustrations from prior lessons
- Scraps of fabric and unusual paper
- Appropriate stickers or any other material you think will be helpful
- Scissors
- Glue (“Tacky Glue” might be useful since it is not runny)

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: 1. c, 2. d, 3. a, 4. c, 5. b 5 min.
2. Read **Putting It All Together**. Tell the students they are going to create a triptych displaying what they have learned in the past eight sessions. Explain to them that a triptych is a three-paneled picture and that they have long been a favorite way to illustrate religious themes (they may have even used one already in school). Have the students title each panel of the triptych. One should be titled “Scripture, Worship, and Law.” Guide the students’ thoughts to themes from the first four chapters. Some suggestions might be to show an Armenian Church building, scenes from the Bible, depictions of monks at prayer, scenes from the Badarak, or the Council at Nicaea. The middle panel might be titled “Our Saints,” and may show different saints and church fathers: St. Mary, St. Hripsimeh, Gregory in Khor Virab, Mesrob Mashtots dreaming of letters, the Battle of

Avarayr, Soorp Hagop of Medzpin alone with nature, St. Polycarp entering a Roman stadium, or a young St. Justin hearing the Gospel as a child. The third panel should be titled “Our Church Life.” Depictions of the sacraments might be appropriate here. Divide the work by assigning two or three students a panel each. They will need to come up with the titles, draw pictures, write some copy on lined index cards. Distribute color copies of some of the illustrations in the first 8 sessions as additional resources to put up on the display.

3. Clean up and end with a prayer: “Thank you Lord for the gift of all this knowledge! Help us remember what we read in 1 Corinthians 8:1, that it isn’t knowledge that builds up the church but love. Amen.” 55 min.

Unit Two: Sacred Time – The Church Year

Lesson 1

We Live in God’s Time

Key Concepts

1. The Armenian Church has its own calendar that helps keep us in sync with God and his eternal nature.
2. The church calendar commemorates events in the life of our Lord and the Church as well as the lives of the saints.
3. We need to keep God at the center of our lives.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Compare the church calendar with a secular calendar.
2. Explore the major categories of feasts in the Armenian Church.
3. Participate in an activity using a church calendar to identify feasts, Scripture readings, etc.
3. Complete an exercise that helps them evaluate where God fits into their lives.
5. Do a Scripture search to identify 4 feasts.
6. Review prayers from the Armenian *Book of Hours*.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens
Diocesan calendars – one for each student and one for you
Strips of white paper about 15"x4," enough so each student has two
Markers or colored pencils
Chalkboard or dry erase board
Chalk or dry erase markers

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. As students sit, ask them to tell you in their own words what the Bible verse they just quoted is about. (Those who drink in God’s word, living his ways 24/7, like a tree nourished around the clock, will prosper.) Ask for reactions. Ask: “Do you believe that all people who follow God’s ways will prosper?” (Clearly, the key is

our understanding of “prosper.” Many good Christians suffer. The martyrs gave their very lives. “Prosper” needs to be understood in God’s context, in an eternal picture. In *that* sense, good people can be said to be, indeed, *very* prosperous as they have God’s favor for eternity.) 10 min.

2. Hold up a Diocesan calendar. Ask: “I’m sure you know what this is...I know before this year, one of your teachers held up this calendar and explored its use and what was in it with you all. You know what a regular calendar is, right? In fact, this has all the features of a calendar because it will give you all the holidays we celebrate as a nation. For example?” Have students describe what’s found in a calendar. (national holidays commemorating events such as...July 4th, Memorial Day..... commemorating people: Martin Luther King Day, Presidents’ Day...commemorating values such as ...Mothers’ Day, Fathers’ Day, etc.....) “In the same spirit, the Church marks the season with its significant values, events and people. How about an event? (Vartanantz, in February; April 24, the onset of the Genocide). People? (all the saints’ days) Foundational values? (Holy Translators, in October). Of course, above all of this are the events and values as reflected in the life and teachings of Jesus, and connected to him, his mother Mary, first of the saints, and then subsequently the Cross and the Church. Let’s read **Sacred Time - The Church Year** to find out more.” Have them answer the questions in the text and discuss (summer feast days are Transfiguration and Assumption). List a few of the feast days that students hadn’t known about and plan to come in next week with some information. 25 min.

3. Write the following phrases on the board: church, school, sports/other organized activities, family, friends, leisure activities, prayer/reading Bible. Distribute the strips of paper and instruct the students to place them horizontally. On the first strip, have them divide the strip of paper according to how much time they devote each week to the topics on the board. In other words, the thing they spend the most time doing should occupy the largest space, and so on. Have them use different colors to differentiate each resulting block of time, so they can really see how they allocate their days. They should probably experiment in pencil first, then finalize it with colored marker and label each block. With the second strip, have them do the same thing, only this time the colored areas should reflect how much of each week they think each activity *should* use. Discuss these questions as a class:

Was there a big difference in your use of time – between how you spend it now and how you think you would *better* spend it?

What could help you bring things more into sync? (And if there is little difference – which might just be the case for most 6th graders - remind them of the opening Bible reading and how important it is to keep God at the center of their day....) 15 min.

4. Read **God Calls Us To Celebrate Together**. Have them read the four Scripture passages, then answer the questions. The answers are Passover, Christmas, Transfiguration, Pentecost. 10 min.

5. Teach **Our Armenian Way**, choosing prayers to review as time allows. Dismiss the class. 5 min.

Lesson 2

Advent and Great Lent: Preparing for Christmas and Easter

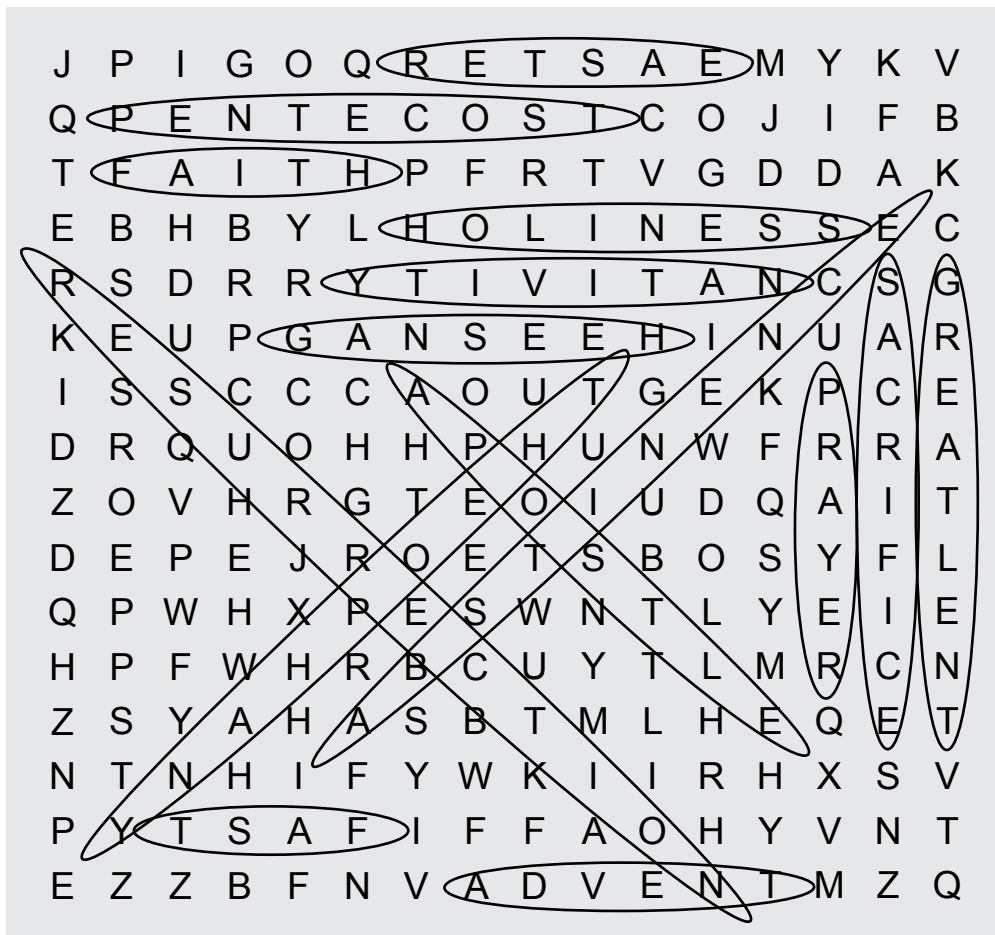
Key Concepts

1. Important events in our everyday and spiritual lives require preparation beforehand.
2. The Armenian Church has specific rituals that spiritually and physically prepare us for our feast days through fasts and special observances.
3. We can draw closer to the Lord during these seasons of preparation.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Discuss the importance of preparation, using real-life events as examples.
2. Reflect on activities associated with Christmas and Easter as well as the periods of preparation that precede each, Advent and Great Lent.
3. Explore Bible passages on prayer and fasting.
4. Complete a word search puzzle.
5. Learn about an unusual Armenian Lenten custom.



Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

Enough small pieces of paper so each student may have one

Stopwatch or watch with second hand

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: a, b, a, a, d 5 min.
2. Read **Let's Get Ready!** Discuss preparations for these events. List events on the board and write preparation ideas under each one. For receiving Holy Communion, be sure to include fasting and prayerful reflection on how we fell short of God's ways. Conclude by noting that there are different elements of preparation: special equipment, special food, special procedures such as practice, study, etc. and that students will now see how we can see the same elements in our preparation periods for major feasts. 15 min.
3. Read **It's Not Just About the Party**. Give students a few moments to jot down thoughts *and* simple pictures in their texts. Write "Christmas," "Easter," "Advent" and "Great Lent" on the board. Then call volunteers to the board to write their ideas or draw them. Some ideas that might appear: Christmas: family gatherings, church services, blessing of the water, blessed water to take home, wreaths, gifts, special foods; Easter: family gatherings, eggs, special foods, church services, special greetings: Krisdos haryav ee merelotz; Advent preparations: "secular": sending cards, buying gifts, decorating house, setting up tree, lights, baking; church: fasting, prayer, reading Bible regularly; Great Lent preparations: secular: cleaning house, dyeing eggs, cooking and baking; church: prayer, fasting, reading the Bible, attending church, focusing on charity and service. 10 min.
4. Assign students one or two of the Bible verses on fasting and prayer (depending on size of class) in **What's the Story?** Once they've read them, have them stand up and sum up the story, adding a single sentence at the end summing up the message (as indicated in the student text). 15 min.
 1. Matthew 4:1-4. Jesus goes into the wilderness for 40 days. The devil tempts Jesus in his hunger to turn stones into bread. Jesus' response is the message: The word of God is as important to life as bread.
 2. Matthew 6:5-6. Jesus is preaching about prayer. The message is: don't pray ostentatiously but pray in secret and God will reward you.
 3. Matthew 6:16-18. Message: Don't look somber when you fast; act happy, like you're enjoying it!
 4. Mark 2:18-20. When the Pharisees ask Jesus why his disciples aren't fasting (as strictly as the Kosher laws prescribe), he tells them that they need to celebrate while he is with them. Message: The fasting laws are different in light of Jesus.
 5. Mark 9:14-29. The disciples were unable to heal a convulsing boy. Jesus said to them that this situation required prayer. Message: prayer can help us be more successful.
 6. Luke 2:36-37. The prophetess Anna spends her time in prayer and fasting at the age of 84! She is then given the privilege of seeing the baby Jesus presented to the temple by his mother and Joseph and blessed by Simeon. (This is celebrated as the Feast of the Presentation.) Message: Prayer and fasting can open our eyes to miracles.
 7. Luke 11:5-10. A man gets up in the middle of the night to respond to a friend's need because the friend is bold and persistent. Message: God too, will give you what you *need*. (The verses continue to say that God will give you the good gifts you ask for, so knowing what God can do for us is important. Prayer is not a list of "gimmies." That's where knowing his nature and growing closer in relationship is so important.)

8. Luke 18:9-14. A Pharisee prays arrogantly, happy he is not like others. A tax collector nearby prays as a humble sinner. Message: God will lift up those who humble themselves.

5. Have the class do the **Special Times Word Search Puzzle**.

6. Conclude with **Our Armenian Way** and a closing prayer. “Lord, help us keep you close to our hearts as we celebrate the feasts of the church and as we prepare with prayer and fasting. Let each day be the special gift from you that it is. Amen.” 15 min.

Unit Two: Sacred Time – The Church Year

Lesson 3

Easter and the Dominical Feasts

Key Concepts

1. Jesus’ conquest of death is the most important event in the life of a Christian.
2. The Resurrection is important because it demonstrates God’s ability to keep his promises.
3. The Resurrection gives purpose to the other dominical feasts.
4. The incident with Daniel in the lion’s den is an early demonstration of God’s power to defeat death.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Read about the importance of the Resurrection.
2. Contribute to a discussion about Easter and God’s power.
3. Examine Scripture verses that show the basis for the other dominical feasts.
4. Complete a matching exercise about the dominical feasts.
5. Participate in an imaginative recreation of Easter morning based on the Gospel accounts.
6. Learn how the prophet Daniel prefigures Jesus.
7. Reflect on a specific Armenian custom during Vigil Service.

Materials Needed

- Pencils/pens
- Something that can serve as a fake microphone
- A video recorder and laptop computer

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: 1. feast, 2. Heesnag/Advent, 3. pray 4. Medz Bahk/Great Lent, 5. ”michink” 5 min.
2. Read **The Greatest Day of All**. Discuss questions. Guidelines: 1. Direct students to the information in their text; 2. Accept reasonable answers; if there are few, remind them about the power of family love, the sacrifice people make to help others (they either have heard or read about), the amazing beauty of the natural world, etc; 3. Perhaps people would be very moved in these difficult times; or cynicism might make them think it was a “trick.” 10 min.

3. Have the students read the Scripture passages in **Celebrations of the Life of Our Lord** and complete the accompanying matching exercise. The answers are: Palm Sunday, Naming of the Lord, Easter, Ascension, Theophany/Nativity/Christmas, Transfiguration, Presentation of our Lord at the Temple, Baptism of Jesus, Pentecost. 15 min.
4. Have the students read John 20:1-18, 24-29, and John 21:1-14 in **Breaking News from Jerusalem..** Assign each student a character from these readings and one student as the reporter. Have the reporter interview each of them about what they saw when Jesus rose. For fun: Record the exercise and show it to a younger group at a later date. 20 min.
5. Teach **Hints of Jesus: Daniel**. As you teach, have students underline or highlight key phrases. 5 min.
6. Teach **Our Armenian Way** and ask students to complete the following when you've finished: "I learned that...." (they can refer to their text as they do this). Dismiss the class with a prayer. 5 min.

Unit Two: Sacred Time – The Church Year

Lesson 4

Feasts of the Cross

Key Concepts

1. Our debt of sin is so great it required nothing less than the punishment of Jesus to redeem it.
2. After the Resurrection, the cross – once a symbol of shame and death - became a sign of Christ's victory over death and our forgiveness.
3. We are instructed that if we are to belong to Jesus, we must emulate his example of service and sacrifice.
4. The Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross is one way the Armenian Church celebrates the power of God to cleanse us of our sins.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Explore the meaning of the cross and its message of service and sacrifice to us.
2. Participate in a class discussion about how we can serve the Lord.
3. Review the history of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross.
4. Set up and decorate a food collection box.
5. Read about the Holy Cross of Varak and recall two facts about the reading.

Materials Needed

A large cardboard box
 Cross form from back of this manual
 Basil
 Miscellaneous pieces of gift wrapping paper
 Scissors
 A few sheets of plain white paper
 Markers

Note to the Teacher

This lesson is best taught in September, on the Exaltation (or as soon after as possible if your Sunday School opens later). In advance of the session, obtain permission to set up a box to collect non-perishable food for the needy, as well as to put up a few signs in the building about the food collection. It's a *great* way to start the school year!

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: F (the Virgin Mary did not accompany the women when they went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body; Mary Magdalene and others went), T, T, F (Daniel was a famous prophet), F (the Vigil Service is not on Palm Sunday. It is the Thursday evening service, a "vigil" recalling the agonizing hours leading to Jesus' crucifixion) 5 min.
2. Read **Our Symbol of Victory** and **Friends of Jesus**. Discuss questions as a class. Guidelines:
1. Answers might include time, possessions, loving company, our talents and skills (which can be further discussed). 2. By granting us strength, patience, understanding, a desire to help and serve. 3. Words of encouragement and support, kindness, etc. are all echoes of Christ's love for us. 4. Many: problems between friends or family members, world issues of poverty, war, human rights. 5. Humbly and quietly – God is the only important witness! 20 min.
3. Review the information in **Exaltation of the Cross**. Tell the students that they are going to collect food as a way of serving Jesus and answering the true call of the cross. Have the class decorate the box with the wrapping paper or other materials. Post a sign on the box: "The Exaltation of the Holy Cross – Khachveratz. Jesus Calls Us to Share Our Abundance!" Have them tape on crosses adorned with basil. Have the students make and put up a few signs telling where the box is and what foods should be deposited (no glass, perishables, etc.). When the box is filled, arrange for its delivery to a homeless shelter or soup kitchen. 30 min.
4. Read or teach **Our Armenian Way**, calling on students to provide two facts from memory before concluding with a prayer: "Lord, thank you for the saving power of your holy cross. Let it be more than an empty symbol for us. Help us serve as you did, Lord, selflessly and with great love." Dismiss the class. 5 min.

Unit Two: Sacred Time – The Church Year

Lesson 5

The Feasts of Mary

Key Concepts

1. Mary and Joseph were wonderful examples of faithfulness and obedience.
2. Mary is revered as the first saint and Mother of God.
3. Mary's body went to heaven through a miracle called the Assumption.
4. We recall Mary's bearing of the first fruit of God, the Lord Jesus, by blessing grapes, which had an important part in the harvest from Old Testament times.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Contribute to a class discussion about motherhood.
2. Read about the faith and obedience of Mary and Joseph and retell their story.
3. Participate in a values-defining exercise and discussion.
4. Look up Scripture verses about Mary's life and identify the event they describe.
5. Review the story of the Assumption of Mary and the way our church celebrates it.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: 1. c, 2. c, 3. b, 4. a, 5. d 5 min.
2. Read **God's Wonderful Choice**. Discuss questions. Guidelines: 1. Love, energy, compassion, intelligence, considerateness, emotional and mental vigor, etc. 2. More contribution to parenting by father, easier caretaking via technology, but more isolation as a parent, loss of extended family 3. Societies always seem to value motherhood although there have been shifts, at times less valued. 10 min.
3. Read **Unswerving Faith and Obedience**. Conclude with: "There is a very important and powerful lesson in this story for all of us – about following God no matter what the circumstances. Let's take a moment to remember it well." Have students retell the story by building it sentence by sentence in turns. If anything important has been left out, prompt the next student. 10 min.
4. "We don't have angels or voices prompting us so dramatically anymore - that ended with Jesus' appearance in our history. But we usually *do* know what to do. Let's talk about how Mary and Joseph's decisions pop up in our own daily lives." Have the class line up at the back of the room. Tell them "I will read each of the statements that appear in your book. If you agree with them, stand still. If you disagree, take a step forward." Read from **Where Do You Stand?** and discuss each one and see what happens! This will be an interesting way of having them think about certain situations they may encounter. 15 min.
5. Have the students read the Bible verses in **What's Happening?** and answer the questions. They may work alone, in pairs, or in whatever size groups you choose. The responses are: Mary's song after hearing she would be Jesus' mother, prediction from Simeon, birth of Jesus, Jesus is missing after the Passover, Jesus calls believers his mother and brothers, miracle at Cana, placing Mary in disciple's care at Crucifixion. 15 min.
6. Teach **Our Armenian Way** directing students to important words or phrases in the text. Ask for volunteers to complete the sentence (you can write it on the board): "I learned that....." Conclude with prayer and dismiss class. 5 min.

Lesson 6

The Lord's Day and Every Day: Nourished in Christ

Key Concepts

1. At the Divine Liturgy, we renew and strengthen our relationship with God.
2. Through Holy Communion, prayers, hymns, and Bible readings during the Liturgy, we relive Jesus' sacrifice.
3. The concept of worship comes directly from God.
4. We need to carry the spiritual strength we receive in church into other parts of our lives.
5. The monastic prayer cycle shows us how to keep God in mind around the clock.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Explore how they are strengthened through the words and actions of Badarak.
2. Discuss their own worship practices.
3. Read about how the call to worship comes directly from God.
4. Examine and discuss Scripture verses that describe ways to worship.
5. Make a robe according to instructions in Exodus 28.
6. Read how Armenian monks have prayers for each time of the day and night, as well as a sample of the Mid-Day Prayers.

Materials Needed

Chalkboard or dry erase board
Chalk or dry erase markers
Index card
Pen or marker
Scissors
Fabric glue
1 square yard of royal blue fabric
Gold jingle bells (available in craft stores or online)
Blue, purple, and red pompoms (made from yarn or purchased online)
About 2 feet of fabric ribbon

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: 1. F (Sts. Joachim and Anne), 2. T, 3. F (the angel Gabriel), 4. F (Mary was taken up to heaven shortly after she died to be with her Son; this is remembered on the Feast of the Assumption, one of the five major feasts of the Armenian Church), 5. T 5 min.
2. Have the class take turns reading **Blessings of the Badarak** aloud. Discuss questions, accepting all reasonable answers. Guidelines: 1. Through preparation, prayer, singing, crossing oneself, receiving Communion, etc. 2. Perhaps a sense of satisfaction, belonging,

peace 3. Concentrate, pray, sing, think about meaning of prayer and hymns. 4. Going to church and Sunday School, being with family, enjoying God's world, relaxing from the usual preoccupations/ excessive computer, TV, sleeping late to avoid church(!) 15 min.

3. Read **A Call to Worship**. Call on students to read aloud Psalm 95:6, 1 Chronicles 16:29, Psalm 100, and Matthew 26:26-30 to get an idea of some ways to express worship. Discuss Psalm 100: What are the verbal phrases? (Shout for joy, worship, come before him, enter his gates with thanksgiving, etc.) What are the nouns? (joy, gladness, joyful songs, etc.) How does this Psalm make you feel about worship? 10 min.

4. Tell the class they are going to make a priestly robe from instructions in Exodus 28:31-35. Explain to them that the priest wore many layers of garments, and this robe is to be worn with the ephod, which was an apron-like vestment worn in the days of the Old Testament. Cut the fabric into as large a circle as possible (the robe is constructed like a poncho). Cut a hole in the middle for the head. Glue ribbon around the opening for the head, as dictated in Exodus. Pompoms will serve as the pomegranates from Scripture. Blue, purple, and red pompoms are necessary, about a dozen in all. Around the hem of the poncho, alternate the pompom pomegranates with the gold jingle bells. Make a sign on the card explaining the robe ("Our class created this robe based on instructions given by God to priests in Exodus 28: 31-35. This Biblical vestment and many others described in the Book of Exodus are the ancestors of our beautiful Armenian vestments. Signed, the ____ Grade") and display in a suitable place. Plan the division of labor in advance. 25 min.

6. Read **Our Armenian Way** and conclude the class with this prayer. Tell the class it is based on a prayer the priest prays during his vesting: "Lord, through the symbolic beauty of vesting, you strengthen your priests against the ways of the world that might separate them from you. Clothe us also, this week and always, with salvation and gladness, just as you did at our baptism. May our faith surround us like a priestly vestment. Amen." 5 min.

Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

Lesson 1

So What Am I Supposed To Do?

Key Concepts

1. There is a difference between intellectual and spiritual knowledge of God.
2. Good works are an essential part of the Christian life.
3. St. Gregory of Narek used his talents to seek God.
4. We can look to mentors to guide us in our walk with God.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read about the place of good works in Christian life.
2. Paraphrase Scripture verses about faith and deeds.
3. Review the good work of St. Gregory of Narek.
4. Discuss Christian mentors and what makes them good role models.
5. Explore Psalm 46 and answer questions about it.
6. Learn about the canonization process in the Armenian Church and recall some of our saints.

Materials Needed

- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Chalk or dry erase markers
- Psalm 46 exercise from the back of this manual

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: Holy Sacrifice, holy, forgiveness, Exodus, Holy Communion. 5 min.
2. Discuss the questions in **What Do I Really Know About God?** Guidelines for discussion: 1. Head knowledge has to do with facts and information. Heart knowledge is about *transformation* – being and feeling different because of the knowledge you have. An example might be drawn from 6th grade friendships. If the students were to think of the first day they met their best friend, what they knew about them were simple facts. But as love grew, those facts acquired a different meaning. 3. Getting to know God better is accomplished through being at church with other believers and learning from each other; reading Scripture; prayer; attending church so we might pray as one body of believers; reading spiritually helpful books; being with strong believers who can be mentors. 10 min.
3. Read **Actions Speak Louder than Words**. Have the students read Matthew 5:16, James 2:14-19, 1 Peter 2:12, and Psalm 34:12-16. Tell them they are going to rewrite - in the space provided in their texts - each Scripture reading in a way that would be understandable to kindergarten-age children. The class may work individually, in pairs, or small groups, according to your class size. Have each student or group report to the whole class by first reading the actual passage and then the simple message they created from it. You may wish to leave them in their groups for the Psalm 46 exercise. 15 min.
4. Read **Revisiting St. Gregory of Narek**. Assign students the task of looking further into St. Gregory online and make note of a favorite line in one of his prayers. (Be prepared next week to provide your own favorite.) 5 min.
5. Ask the students to look at and think about the questions in **Hey, Coach!** While they are doing that, write the headings “Who” and “Why” on the board. Ask the students for their responses and write them on the board. Discuss. 10 min.
6. With a segue of “Let’s look now at a very powerful example of God himself mentoring to us through words of encouragement and promise,” distribute the handout and have the class silently read Psalm 46 and answer the questions. They may work alone in pairs, or in small groups. The answers are 1) refuge, strength, ever-present, 2) bow, spear, and shields, 3) be still, 4) can mean finding quiet time each day to be with God, cutting out the “noise” of life, i.e. social media, entertainments, too much chatter, 5 and 6) discuss. 10 min.
7. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Ask the class to name some saints. If there is no answer ask a few questions as prompts: Who is the first saint of the Christian church? (St. Stephen was stoned to death for his faith). Who was the first Armenian saint? (St. Santookht, who was converted by the apostle Thaddeus in the 1st century) What saints invented the Armenian alphabet and began the process of translating the Bible? (Sts. Sahag and Mesrob) etc. Conclude with this prayer: “Dear Lord, keep the example of your saints before us this week; help us to remember their courage and faith in far more difficult circumstances than our own. Strengthen our faith so that we may love you and one another. Amen.” 5 min.

Lesson 2

David: God's Success Story

Key Concepts

1. The young David had a strong and active faith in God, and he was special to the Lord.
2. Even though David at times failed to do what he knew was right, he repented and was forgiven.
3. We can see from David's example that God's forgiveness is profound.
4. We all have gifts and talents that we can put to the Lord's work.
5. God and the world have different ways of measuring success.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Read about David and Goliath.
2. Discuss Saul's reaction to David's success.
3. Read about the remainder of David's life and discuss two of his psalms.
4. Reflect upon what we learn from David's example.
5. Discuss the various talents that people have and how they may be used in God's service.
6. Discuss the world's standards of success versus the Lord's.
7. List two facts about David's feast day in the Armenian Church.

Materials Needed

Chalkboard or dry erase board
Chalk or dry erase markers

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: heart, cross, glory, St. Gregory of Narek, melt. Ask for feedback about their online look at St. Gregory of Narek's prayers. Provide your own favorite line from his work. 10 min.
2. Read **No Fear of the Philistine** and discuss the questions. Saul was, of course, angry because he was jealous. 10 min.
3. After reading **Beyond Goliath** with the class, have them read Psalms 55 and 133 and discuss questions. You may want to assign the class into pairs or small groups for this exercise so they may help each other understand the psalms. (Psalm 55: fear, anguish, horror; Psalm 133: a harmonious, peaceful time of life) 10 min.
4. Teach **Is Your Heart in the Right Place?** and ask the students to brainstorm different abilities that various people have. Next, ask the class how those gifts/talents could be used by God. List their answers on the board. (Examples: someone who can sing well might teach others, sing in a choir, etc.; someone who loves and understands animals might teach others to be sensitive to all living creatures, could open a shelter, etc.) Discuss. 15 min.

5. Continue with **What Is Success?** Ask them how they would define success; have a volunteer record responses on the board. Then ask them how they think God would measure success. Record these answers as well. Discuss. Allow for all answers but certainly conclude that while the world often counts such things as wealth, fame, advancement in a profession, good looks, and other superficial and accidental elements as elements of success, God has a much deeper standard: a successful person is someone who loves God and others with his or her entire heart, mind, and soul and bears the fruit of the Holy Spirit: (Galatians 5:22) love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, generosity, faithfulness, self-control. 10 min.
6. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Ask the class to recall two facts from the reading. Dismiss the class with a prayer. 5 min.

Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

Lesson 3

Jonah, The Reluctant Prophet

Key Concepts

1. Jonah's story is *our* story; it is a reminder that we are all called to be God's enthusiastic messengers.
2. Carrying out God's Great Commission is sometimes difficult.
3. We need to fully trust in God's ways and purposes.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read and discuss the Book of Jonah.
2. Review the Great Commission.
3. Discuss sharing faith in varied scenarios.
4. Examine the role of the Bible and prophets in our Liturgy.

Materials Needed

Chalkboard or dry erase board
Chalk or dry erase markers

Note to the Teacher

Next week features a reading that you might wish to share with another class (see procedure #4 of the next lesson). If so, consult with that teacher in advance.

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: b, c, d, b, a 5 min.
2. Have the class take turns reading Jonah 1 aloud. Discuss the questions in **He Didn't Listen the First Time**. Guidelines (accept reasonable answers): 1. He was afraid, not up to it, maybe knew that God was merciful (since he was a prophet, he would know God's nature) and didn't want the Assyrians to get away with anything 2. Similarities: Jonah and Jesus were sleeping/ a storm/ sailors and disciples look to their Lord for help; Difference: disciples were not sure that Jesus could help them and were accused of having no faith/sailors immediately prayed, trusting in their gods. 3.

Jesus' resurrection; he rose from the grave in three days 5. Jonah was disobedient, unforgiving, and apparently unaware of the extent of God's mercy. Answers can be written on the board by students (or you can write them during the discussion). 15 min.

3. Read **The Great Commission** to the class. Conclude by discussing the question.

Sports event: being enthusiastic but courteous fans (verbal abuse of players is *not* necessary or acceptable); not littering; refreshments in moderation

Hospital emergency room: in a place of anxiety and perhaps pain - being helpful, saying a prayer for everyone there

School cafeteria where someone is being bullied; discretely calling a teacher's attention

Nursing home: visiting, putting on a talent show or skit, "adopt a grandparent"

Animal shelter: volunteering

Scene of natural disaster: providing food and water for rescue workers

Playground fight: calling for an adult to intervene

Wedding: giving a spiritual gift

At the airport during a massive flight delay: being patient; assisting others

In a public garden: weeding, picking up trash, thanking God for beautiful flowers 10 min.

4. Have the class read Jonah 2 aloud together. Guide a discussion as follows: "What is Jonah doing here from the belly of this great fish? (Praying) What was it like to have been thrown into the ocean (point out the terrifying description)? Was he grateful? (Seemed so!) What was he saying in those last 2 verses (Those who don't know this powerful God and worship worthless idols, don't know what they're missing. I get it, though, and I will do what God asked me to do). Well, let's read on and see if he does." 5 min.

5. Now have students take turns reading **Jonah, You Just Don't Get It!** and Jonah 4:9-11 aloud. "What was God really telling Jonah by asking him these questions? (I am merciful and compassionate, saved you from the belly of the fish and the heat of the sun, even though you ran away from me; yet you have not stopped complaining and you now resent my mercy towards others. You really still don't know who I am, do you?) What might this be saying to all of us? That maybe just as Jonah was a prophet by profession and we are church members with our pious habits, that it might still mean we haven't grown close enough to God to know who he truly is?" 20 min.

6. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Review by asking students to complete the sentence: "Today I learned that..." Conclude with prayer: "Thank you, Lord, for the story of Jonah and the lesson of your great mercy. Help us to remember that all who turn to you in true repentance and commit to a new way of living will be rewarded with your merciful love. Make us good messengers of your love. Amen." 5 min.

Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

Lesson 4

Paul: Champion of the Gospel

Key Concepts

1. Paul turned from being one of the church's chief persecutors to her greatest missionary.
2. He bore his sufferings with good cheer for the sake of the Gospel message.
3. The story of our faith from its beginnings is the story of believers courageous in their faith.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read about Paul's history and the Scripture verses describing his conversion.
2. Discuss how to generate changes in bad behaviors.
3. Examine Paul's handling of the persecution he received.
4. Explore 2 Corinthians 11:16-33 and answer questions about Paul's "boasts."
5. Participate in a "reader's theater" reading of various individuals important in the life of the church.
6. Learn about mission parishes and define two things about them.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: F (in the Great Commission – Matthew 28: 16-20 – Jesus instructs his disciples to make disciples of all people), F (Christian missionaries are persecuted even today), T, F (Jonah was furious that the Ninevites had been forgiven), T 5 min.
2. Read **Zeal, Enthusiasm, and Persistence** and the embedded Bible verse (Acts:3-19) aloud. Discuss the questions. Some guidelines: procrastinating (prayer, thinking about why you procrastinate, planning, breaking down tasks, making lists), laziness (prayer, spending just ten minutes at a time doing a task you don't like, breaking down arduous tasks into more doable components), not getting along with siblings (prayer, talking things over, making agreements about things that bother you, spending more time with them), arguing with parents (prayer, learning to listen and be respectful, doing your share, talking things over), dealing with bullies (prayer, talking with teachers and parents about the problem). 10 min.
3. Read **Content in all Things** to the class, and allow them time to read the embedded Bible verses. When they have finished, have them read 2 Corinthians 11:16-33 and answer the accompanying questions. The answers are: 3 (v. 25), lowered in a basket (v. 32-33), the Jews (v. 24), says he must be out of his mind (v. 23), rivers, city, country, the sea (v. 26), bandits, his own countrymen, Gentiles, false brothers (v. 26), to show God's strength or similar response. You may have the students work alone, or in pairs or small groups. 10 min.
4. Have the students arrange their chairs in a circle. Tell them they will go around and read the parts in **Studies in Faithfulness - A Reader's Theatre**. Encourage them to read with expression. If another group is available to listen, invite them into your classroom. Or, have students rehearse and then perform it for another class. 30 min.
5. Read **Our Armenian Way** to the students. Ask for volunteers to complete "I learned that...." from this reading alone. Dismiss the class with a prayer. 3 min.

Lesson 5

Women of the Early Church: Taking Part in God's Plan

Key Concepts

1. Even though women in Jesus' time served in marginal social roles, Jesus welcomed them into his life and ministry.
2. In both Biblical and Armenian Church history, women had an essential role in God's plan.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read about Jesus' welcoming attitude toward the women he encountered.
2. Differentiate the roles of some of the women in Scripture.
3. Read about the lives of the Biblical women Lydia and Phoebe and explore their dynamic contributions to the early church.
4. Write an acrostic poem in the style of Sahagtookht.
5. Learn about the Armenian saint Shushanik.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens
Lined paper

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: a, d, c, c, b 5 min.
2. Read **Lifted Up by Jesus**. Have them read the Scripture verses. You may wish to have the students work singly, in pairs, or in small groups. The answers are helper, receiver, helper, receiver, receiver, helper, receiver, helper, receiver. 15 min.
3. Read **Lydia and Phoebe: Two Among Many**. Discuss questions: A. Business leadership qualities may include: having a vision, persuading people to share your vision, being enthusiastic, working productively with others, perseverance, courage to make a risky decision. B. (You may have to provide students with some of the information not apparent in the verses) 1. Priscilla, fellow worker, risked her life, hosts church at her home (she's Aquilla's wife) 2. Junias (considered a woman, Junia), was imprisoned with him, a convert before he was, outstanding apostle 3. Mary, a hard worker for the community 4. Tryphena, another hard worker for the Lord 5. Tryphosa, another hard worker for the Lord. Also: Persis, another hard worker; Rufus' mother, whom Paul considers a mother to him, Nereus' sister. 15 min.
4. Read **A Woman of Prayerful Poetry**; then distribute lined paper and have students write their poems. Call on volunteers to read theirs aloud. Collect them, make copies, and then return them to students with this assignment: to type their poem and email it to you. Print them out to post on a Bulletin Board display. 20 min.

5. Teach **Our Armenian Way** to the students. Dismiss class with a prayer: “Lord, thank you for today’s insights into the dedicated women of our Christian story. Hold close those who are no longer with us; continue to inspire all people, men and women, to love you and one another. And may we all, girls and boys alike, aspire to serve you in your holy church. Amen. 5 min.

Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

Lesson 6

Taking A Stand

Key Concepts

1. The Christian life involves taking stands of all kinds.
2. Choosing Christ is choosing what is worth living for as well as worth dying for.
3. Our faith is not worth much if we do not persist in trials.
4. The Armenian people look to the Genocide martyrs as examples of unflagging faith.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Discuss what one might consider important enough to devote or even give up one’s life for.
2. Read that God’s promise of a meaningful life now and life with him forever inspires love and sacrifice.
3. Examine Matthew 10:16-31 to hear God’s warning of persecutions.
4. Read about the Armenian Genocide and discuss their feelings about it.
5. Participate in a discussion about practical application of faith principles.
6. Explore what Hebrews 11 has to say about faith.
7. Learn about the Mamigonians.

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: T, F (she was a seller of dyed goods or cloth), T, T, F (a great many women were among his followers and supporters). 5 min.
2. Discuss the question in **The Ultimate Sacrifice**. This might be a difficult concept for 6th graders. Suggest the ideas of freedom (for which our soldiers are ready to die), religious freedom (for which our martyrs died).
3. Teach **Looking Above**, having students underline important phrases.
4. Have students take turns reading Matthew 10:16-31 along with the final paragraph of **Well, We Were Warned!** 10 min.
5. Read **An Awesome Faith**. Then help students fill in **The Armenian Genocide: Who, What, When, Where, Why**. Brainstorm answers, then write or dictate a final answer on the board for students to copy. Guidelines for answers:

Who were the victims? **Who** was responsible?

Armenians living in historic Armenia. Perpetrated by the Young Turks, a nationalist group that had taken control of the Ottoman government in 1908. Their leaders were Enver Pasha, Talat Pasha and Djemal Pasha.

What happened?

Non-Turkish minorities such as Armenians and Greeks were persecuted. Armenians in particular, who had been successful in business, agriculture *and* government, were rounded up. The men were killed, the women, children and elders driven out of their homes and sent away for a supposed “relocation.” During these forced marches through the Syrian desert, countless people died of exhaustion and starvation or were murdered by roving bands of Turks and Kurds. More than one and a half million Armenians perished. The Armenian Church, normally a great protector of its people, was decimated; priests were tortured and killed; churches were destroyed.

When did this happen?

Although pogroms against Armenians were in existence for years, an especially vicious one having taken place in 1895-96 under Sultan Abdul Hamid, the Armenian Genocide was launched on April 24, 1915, when Armenian intellectual, business, and church leaders were rounded up and killed. The ethnic cleansing then expanded into the provinces, virtually emptying the Turkish plateau of Armenians.

Where did this happen?

Throughout what is modern Turkey and was then part of the Ottoman Empire. Armenians had lived across the Anatolian plateau for many centuries, so much of this territory is referred to as Historic Armenia.

Why did this happen?

As the Ottoman Empire was collapsing, a group of extreme nationalists known as the Young Turks took control of what was left of the huge Empire with the rallying cry “Turkey for the Turks.” The Turks used the fact that the Russians were advancing into Turkey from the East to accuse Armenians of sympathizing with the enemy; this accelerated the attacks on Armenians. Isolated on the east of the Ottoman Empire, the Armenian tragedy was easy to hide from public scrutiny, until missionaries and ambassadorial staff began to send horrendous reports to Western governments. 20 min.

6. Read **Did You Know?** Discuss questions in **Faith in Action** and read **Words to Live By.** 15 min.
7. Read **Our Armenian Way.** Call on students to complete “Today I learned that...” and conclude with the prayer: “Dear Lord, we are so inspired by the courageous lives and the brave sacrifice of so many who chose their faith over even life itself. Help us to live our lives for your glory, honoring their memory and living the life that they valued more than their own well-being. Amen.” Dismiss the class. 10 min.

Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

Lesson 7

Where Do I Fit In?

Key Concepts

1. God has gifted us all with special gifts and abilities.
2. One of our Christian duties is to discover these gifts and put them to use for the church, for others and for our own true fulfillment.
3. All things done for God’s glory will bring satisfaction and joy.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Explore the role of specific talents for the good of the church and others.
2. Reflect on their own Spirit-given abilities and then brainstorm their practical use.
3. Read Colossians 3:17 and discuss how doing everything for the glory of God can make even unpleasant jobs more pleasant.
4. Explain how individuals can address their challenges and share their talents to serve God by serving others.
5. Learn about some of the special abilities of St. Nersess Shnorhali and share two favorite facts about him.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

Lined paper

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: wolves, like/teacher, convert, Great Lent/Medz Bahk, Avarayr 5 min.
2. Read and discuss **Many Parts, One Body** and the embedded Scripture passage. Discuss the question. Have the students brainstorm as you write their answers on the board under each category. Good head for business: act as church treasurer, help fundraise, chair a committee, help the community plan its financial future, seek help from the business world; great cook: give lessons in Armenian cooking, help at dinners, make things to sell; knows the Bible really well: can help with Bible studies, teach Sunday school, do special Bible assemblies or presentations; musical: sing in the choir, play the organ, organize a choir or choral group, sing at programs, teach music; good writer: write for the church paper, help students with essays; patient: can visit the sick, the elderly, can work with little children, be a Sunday School aide where extra help is needed; likes children: help with Sunday School, set up a day care; physically strong and good handyman skills: can help with tasks around the church. 15 min.
3. Now ask students to look at **What Are My Gifts?** and consider some of their qualities and strengths. These might include: sense of humor, patience, intelligence, good memory, physical strength or speed, musical, computer whiz, good writer, etc. Give students a few moments to think about them and write them down in the space provided in their text. Then let them call out their answers as you or a volunteer records them on the board. Then say: "Wow, what a fantastic collection of gifts. So, how can we take your God-given gifts and put them to use...here in Sunday School? In the world?" Discuss. 20 min.
4. Have the students read Colossians 3:17. Discuss the questions in **Do Everything As Unto God**. Of course, all the answers have to do with the pleasure that can be found in any task if done as if for God.
5. Read **Feed My Sheep** to the class. Ask the students to consider the profiles and discuss. Some possible answers: 1. Give me patience; help me learn tolerance for other people's challenges; enlighten others about my own challenges; 2. Teach others tolerance and understanding; help as a leader or organizer for a church or school group; 3. Learn empathy for the new people in other situations; teach others acceptance; help me buddy up with another new student; teach me courage when I'm not yet in a group of friends; 4. Be a tutor, help siblings; 5. Cheer people in hospital or nursing home visits; help with a school play; be a cheer-giver at home; help others to approach challenges with humor. 10 min.

6. Explore **Our Armenian Way** by having students read silently and underline facts that particularly struck them. When they finish ask them to share two. End with one of St. Nersess' prayers (from *I Confess With Faith*): "Jesus, wisdom of the Father, help me think, speak and do that which is good in your sight. Save me from evil thoughts, words, and deeds. And have mercy upon all your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen." Dismiss the class. 10 min.

Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

Lesson 8

Putting it All Together

Key Concept

Christian role models from the past are helpful guides for life today.

Objectives

During the session the students will

1. Read about an incident in the life of Catholicos Hovhannes of Otzoon and identify two facts from the reading.
2. Write and present a skit that shows mentors of the church encountering modern times.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens
Lined paper

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: c, d, c, a, c
2. For today's lesson start with **Our Armenian Way**. As in last session, have students read silently and underline what strikes them about the story. Then ask for volunteers to share two of their interesting facts. 10 min.
3. Read the instructions for **A Guessing Game Review**. Allow 20 minutes for students to prepare and 30 minutes for the review exercise. Come prepared with 2 of your own (don't let students choose these) in case there is time left. Also, at the conclusion of some guesses you might ask: "Okay, so how does this person inspire *you*? What does what he (or she) did have to do with *you*? (and be prepared with answers)." 50 min.
4. Conclude with a prayer. 50 min.

Lesson 1

Holy Etchmiadzin

Key Concepts

1. Holy Etchmiadzin serves as the center of the worldwide Armenian Church.
2. St. Gregory founded the church there after receiving a vision.
3. A parish church is like Etchmidazin in that it is a center of faith and worship, providing fellowship and direction.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read a brief history of Etchmiadzin.
2. Discuss any impressions of Etchmiadzin they may have.
3. Reflect on their present and future connection with the Armenian Church.
4. Review 1 Kings 6:2-10 and quickly visualize Solomon's temple.
5. Build a 3-D model of Gregory's vision.
6. Learn about the office of the Catholicos.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

For St. Gregory's Vision display (see Procedure #5):

Oak tag poster board

One copy of Jesus descending with hammer (from the back of this manual)

Construction paper, orange and red tissue paper for flames

Cotton balls for clouds

Markers, glue sticks, tape, scissors

Optional: Gold foil or gold marker

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together.
2. Read and discuss **Spiritual Heart of the Armenian Church**. Importance of visiting Etchmiadzin might include: to strengthen your faith by seeing these ancestral places and by learning more about the heart of our world-wide church; meeting other pilgrims from across the globe. 10 min.
3. Read **Your Own Etchmiadzin** to the class. Discuss questions. Some guidelines: 1. If parents are not involved, brainstorm ways they can be: becoming members by paying dues, joining committees and programs that interest them, starting up a group or making a presentation in an area of their interest; 2. Attend regularly; be at fellowship and get to know other church families; invite the pastor for dinner; 3. Visit your area Armenian church if away from home; go online to the Diocesan website. 10 min.
4. Have the class read 1Kings 6:2-10 in **The Architect of our Faith**. Ask students to quickly list characteristics of the temple according to its description (have a volunteer record on the board;

prompt answers to keep things moving). These should include (explain that a “cubit” was an ancient measuring guide that was equivalent to about the size of an adult’s forearm from fingertip to inner arm crease): a vestibule and large nave area, recessed windows, three stories, supports to the outside wall, small rooms lined the structure, built with stone quarried elsewhere, winding staircases inside, cedar roof, cedar-lined walls with carvings of flowers and gourds, inner sanctuary which housed the ark of the covenant (the Ten Commandments) and was lined with gold, gold chains roped off the sanctuary, the entire house was lined with gold; the altar was overlaid with gold. Conclude with: “And that was just the basic structure, the Bible continues with a detailed description of the furnishings!” 10 min.

5. Tell students they are going to create a poster (or bulletin board display if your School has these in the hallway or office) about St. Gregory’s vision. Help them divide the work and share supplies accordingly. Things needed:
- The illustration of Jesus descending with the golden hammer cut out and colored (a golden hammer, please!)
 - One pillar with a base of gold, made of fire, topped by a cloud, above which was a cross
 - Three other pillars of cloud, with red bases topped by fire and a cross.
 - A dome of clouds to go above the four pillars, and above that a throne of fire topped by a cross
 - The title (in large letters) and first two paragraphs on page 89 written out by students.
 - The title **St. Gregory’s Vision** to go above their reconstruction of the vision.

These can be separately prepared in the first 15 minutes and then assembled and put together (on poster or bulletin board) in the final 10. 25 min.

6. Teach **Our Armenian Way** and direct students’ attention to Vehapar’s long official title as a point of interest. Dismiss class with a simple prayer: “Lord, thank you for appearing to St. Gregory and sharing with him your vision of a sacred place and a sacred space which would someday by our own Holy Etchmiadzin. Amen.” 5 min.

Unit Four: A World Church

Lesson 2

Jerusalem

Key Concepts

- The Holy Land is sacred to Christians because it is the place where Jesus lived, taught, died and rose to heaven.
- Jerusalem is a holy city for Christians, Jews, and Muslims.
- The Armenian Church plays an important part in the care of the holy sites in Jerusalem and its environs.
- Jerusalem is mentioned in many places in Scripture.

Objectives

During this session the students will

- Explore the importance of Jerusalem and the history and role of the Armenian Church in that region.
- Complete a Bible matching exercise about Jerusalem.

3. Create a Jerusalem-style tile.
4. Learn about the Armenian tile makers.

Materials Needed

Fired white bisque tiles (available from Home Depot or Lowe's)
Acrylic paints
Brushes, one for each student

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: b, d, b, a, c 5 min.
2. Read and discuss **The Spiritual Epicenter** and **The Armenian Church and Jerusalem**, and remaining text on pages 94 and 95. 10 min.
3. Have the class complete the exercise in **O Jerusalem**. Call on volunteers to read each Bible excerpt aloud and select correct answers together. The answers are: 1. c (point out the feminine image of God here as a mother hen, providing another dimension to the traditional view of God as Father), 2. a (In the Gospel of John, Jesus describes himself as the living water – once someone drinks it, he will never thirst), 3.g, 4. h, 5.d, 6. b, 7. f, 8. e. 15 min.
4. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Distribute tiles, paints and brushes. Have students write their names on the back of the tile in pencil. Instruct students to paint an Armenian-style design by copying a miniature from elsewhere in the student text; there are Jerusalem tile motifs on page 59, but these need not be what students use. While they paint, review the information on Jerusalem. Put tiles to dry in a safe place and then distribute to students the following week. 25 min.
5. Clean up and conclude with a prayer: “Thank you, Lord, for the gifts of the Armenian tile makers and for the pleasure we had in imitating their exquisite work. Bless the Armenian Patriarch, priests, teachers and families of Jerusalem and may all its people live in peace and harmony. Amen.” Dismiss the class. 5 min.

Unit Four: A World Church

Lesson 3

The Armenian Church in America I

Key Concepts

1. The Armenian Church of America was officially born in 1898.
2. Persecution in Turkey drove many Armenians to flee to the US.
3. The first fifty years of our church history was marked by effort, accomplishment, dramatic events, and persevering faith.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read and discuss a cartoon history of the first one hundred years of the Armenian Church in the US.

2. Draw a cartoon about their family's story.
3. Analyze the ACYOA pledge.

Note to teacher

This and the next lesson will be devoted to reading and discussing *The First Hundred Years: A Cartoon History of the Armenian Church in America*. Read through the history yourself prior to this first session. If there's anything *you* don't understand, consult your pastor or superintendent.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: b, a, c, d, d. 5 min.
2. Distribute the cartoon histories, have students put their names in their books (you should collect them at the end of this session; students may take them home next week), and have the class take turns reading **The First Hundred Years - A Cartoon History of the Armenian Church in America** aloud. Make sure you allow time for a close look at each cartoon – they're very funny! Stop reading in the middle of page 20, just before **Growth, Stress, and Polemic**.

Pause and pose questions as follows (use the opportunity to review famous people - such as St. Gregory aka Krikor Loosavorich and Thaddeus and Bartholomew, etc.):
 - a. Intro: Before students even open their books, ask: "When can we say that the Armenian Church began its life in America?" There will probably be few guesses, so open and read! We always need to trace our beginnings to the beginning itself.
 - b. At the end of page 2, pause and ask students to summarize what has happened so far. Use the board to create a running outline. Pause at the end of each mini-chapter for a quick summary. You might want to ask students to be underlining key phrases, events or people as they go along. 30 min.
3. Have the students draw a cartoon history of their family's story so far in the three boxes provided. The first might be about when and where their ancestors arrived in America. Tell them they may add captions in bubbles or outside the boxes. 20 min.
4. Review the ACYOA pledge in **Our Armenian Way** with the students. Discuss questions. Conclude with a prayer and dismiss class. 5 min.

Unit Four: A World Church

Lesson 4

The Armenian Church in America II

Key Concepts

1. The second half century of the Armenian Church in America was marked by division and tragedy as well as achievement and growth.
2. Each believer is called to grow in faith and share that faith with the world.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read the second half of the cartoon history.
2. Discuss the divisions within the Armenian Church.
3. Read Luke 13:18-20.
4. Draw a cartoon about their experience in the Armenian Church.

Materials Needed

Pencils/pens

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have them take the **Quick Quiz**.
Answers: c, b, a, c, c 5 min.
2. Have the class take turns reading the remainder of **The First Hundred Years - A Cartoon History of the Armenian Church in America** aloud, following the same procedure as last week. Use the board to create a running outline. Pause at the end of each mini-chapter for a quick summary. You might want to ask students to be underlining key phrases, events or people as they go along. 30 min.
3. Have the students draw a cartoon history of their personal experience in the Armenian Church in the three boxes provided. Tell them they may add captions in bubbles or outside the boxes. Allow time to share results.

If students are stumped, discuss how they *are* currently part of the church – they go to Sunday School, attend Badarak, are at social gatherings with their families, perhaps even their family prayers at home could count as a way they are part of the church. 20 min.
4. Review **Our Armenian Way**. Before you read, tell students they will be asked to provide one fact they learned about this third of the three important centers of the Armenian Church. Then after reviewing the information, call on students to fill in: “I learned that...” Conclude with a prayer and dismiss the class. 5 min.

Unit Four: A World Church

Lesson 5

The Community As Bedrock

Key Concepts

1. Our faith community helps keep us steady in an unpredictable world.
2. The direction and solidarity of our parish community can be a refuge no matter where we are.
3. Members of a faith community are responsible for its stewardship.

Objectives

During this session the students will

1. Read a selection about the steady influence of our church fellowship.
2. Discuss different aspects of being part of a church/Sunday School.
3. Examine some of the benefits of our corporate worship.
4. Write a short prayer for reflection during the week.
5. Read Acts 2:42-47 and answer questions about the Bible reading.
6. Interview other churchgoers about their parish experience.
7. Read about some of the things that make our spiritual experience so rich as well as some of our responsibilities to our parish.

Materials Needed

- Pencils/pens
- Lined paper, enough for at least 2 sheets for each student
- Optional: Special refreshments for an end-of-the-year party.

Procedure

1. Welcome the students and stand to say the opening prayer together. Have students take the **Quick Quiz**. Answers: d, c, b, c, d
2. Read **Holding the Ladder**. Discuss questions freely. Some guidelines for 3 and 4: The community is paramount in Christian faith. Jesus did not write a textbook, but gathered people around him, forming a *community*. Christian thinkers have compared the faith of a single Christian away from a church community with a hot coal that is taken away from the fireplace – it cools and grows cold. Believers help each other through loving support and their own examples of strong faith. 10 min.
3. Discuss **We're All in This Together**.
4. Have the class read **Bringing the Peace Wherever You Go**. Ask them to write the prayer; call on volunteers to share their work. 10 min.
5. Have the class read Acts 2:42-47 in **A People Belonging to God** and answer the questions. You may want to break them up into pairs or small groups for this activity. The answers are: the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, prayer; wonders and miraculous signs; sold and given to those in need; daily; it increased. 10 min.
6. Conclude with **Our Armenian Way**. And now celebrate the last day of class! 30 min.

Mark 4:1-9



gain Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times."

Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

The first word in this passage is "Again." The "A" is left out. Draw your own, large decorative letter "A." Decorate the margins with single elements or small pictures from the story. This is what the ancient manuscript illuminators did. Then cut off these instructions to have a beautiful finished page.



PSALM 46

A song

- ¹ God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
- ² Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
³ though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.[c]
- ⁴ There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy place where the Most High dwells.
- ⁵ God is within her, she will not fall;
God will help her at break of day.
- ⁶ Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;
he lifts his voice, the earth melts.
- ⁷ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.
- ⁸ Come and see what the LORD has done,
the desolations he has brought on the earth.
- ⁹ He makes wars cease
to the ends of the earth.
He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;
he burns the shields[d] with fire.
- ¹⁰ He says, “Be still, and know that I am God;
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth.”
- ¹¹ The LORD Almighty is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress.

1. *What three qualities of God assure us that he will save us?*
2. *What three things will God destroy so that war may cease?*
3. *How does God say we can best know him?*
4. *What does this mean?*
5. *What would you put as a title to this song?*
6. *What instrument(s) would you use to accompany it?*





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Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern)
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