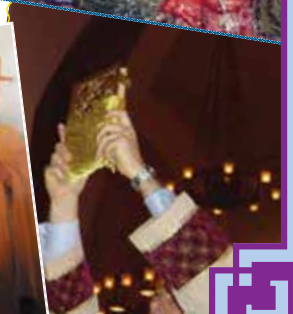
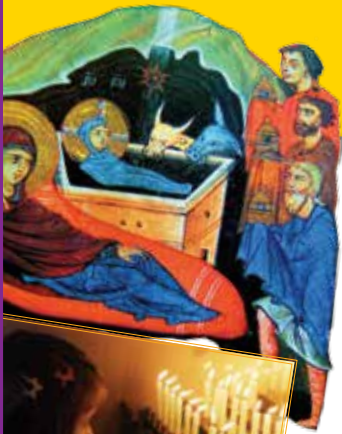


Grade One

God and Me Together

We Believe Curriculum

Teacher Manual



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God and Me Together

Teacher Manual

By order of
Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate

We Believe Curriculum
A publication of the Department of Christian Education
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern)
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Introduction

Welcome to the exciting world of first graders! If you are new to teaching Grade One, you will find your students curious, enthusiastic, full of energy and fun, and yet ready to listen and discover. As God's little ones, they express their faith in fresh and often inspiring ways. You will find that you'll learn as much from *them* as they will from *you*. But you have to be *listening*.

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?) The approach to Scripture, prayer, and worship will be simple, appropriate for first graders, and kept at a literal level. The world was created in 6 days and God rested on the seventh. In later years, students will learn that a 24-hour day might not necessarily have been what the poets of the Torah meant to emphasize.
- **This Curriculum.** As in Kindergarten and Grade Two, Grade One is also designed as separate newsletter lessons to be distributed one at a time. *You* keep all student envelopes, and give out single lessons each week. Holiday-focused lessons should be taught on or near the holiday itself, not necessarily in the order they appear in the curriculum. Lessons are designed for *one hour* and are meant to complement not replace church attendance. Ideally, students should attend church with their families either before or after this Sunday School session.
- **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.
- **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 (for example, in Unit Two, Lesson 1, magazines for a collage will be needed), volunteers, visits with the pastor or attendance at church 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 as possible.
- **My Badarak Book.** Lesson 5 features a little booklet about our Divine Liturgy that children will put together. This should be a resource you use throughout the year and there are suggestions for its use in the teacher instructions for that lesson.
- **The First Ten Minutes.** In those first moments of class time, don't wait for children 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.
- **Snack Time.** The curriculum is designed to be taught in 60 minutes with snack time built in. If you feel refreshments aren't necessary, this can certainly be eliminated. Or, if you have more than 60 minutes for class, that additional time can allow for a more relaxed snack time or one that you insert later in the class hour. Snacks are usually provided by the school or by the children's parents.

- **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.
- **Prayer.** The opening prayer time always has a formal prayer and specific directions for gathering in a circle or standing up to pray. Children might not be able to read the prayer, but can follow as you do. Have them repeat important phrases after you. But be creative here, as well, so that children 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. Get children to be still, bow their heads, and you might say something very simple, “Bless us all, Lord and keep us safe, amen.” Or “Help us be your heart and hands this week, Lord.” Or anything else lesson-related. 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.
- **Bible Story.** This year’s curriculum uses the storybook *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children* from which they were read to last year. They now each get a copy of their own to follow along with you as you read each Sunday. The books should be kept in the classroom; at the end of the year, they may take them home. Then parents can continue to read the stories with them as they become even better readers and eventually take over themselves. Stories were generally selected according to their connection to the day’s lesson but they may also be read in consecutive order from beginning to end as a way of reinforcing the important life events and teachings of Jesus. Or those that pertain to specific feast days (i.e. Christmas, Easter) can be read on those Sundays. If you don’t have time or feel there was too much reading done already, you may choose to skip the story that day. It would be nice for an older student or a parent volunteer to be the story teller (see next bullet point).
- **Reading.** Since first graders are just learning to read, you will be reading *to* them more often than reading together. In order to make it more interesting, plan to have regular reading volunteers. Perhaps a parent or parishioner can dress up in biblical-type garb or folk Armenian-style and come in to read the snack-time Bible story. Some lessons have more than a few stories and it would be wonderful to alternate the voices and inflection children hear. Older grades might be asked to prepare a little “reader’s theater” version of a story, with students taking different parts.
- **Moving Around.** The teacher manual often refers to moving from desks or tables to form a circle (for prayer) or moving to a “rug area” where children can sit down. Movement is important for children this age and for some learners (who favor a kinesthetic style of learning and need to move). If there is not ample room for an activity, rearrange some of the furniture so that a workable space becomes available.
- **Music.** The curriculum includes a few excerpts from our beautiful Armenian Church hymns. Please make use of the joy that comes from singing. If you don’t enjoy singing yourself or feel inadequate to the task, get a cheerful, capable volunteer.
- **Hearts and Hands.** This part of the lesson involves crafts and hand-outs. Since it’s a proven fact that all of us retain much more of what we learn through hands-on activities, please don’t decide to forego these because you feel incapable or unprepared. Although all the crafts are designed to be simple and foolproof, enlist a volunteer if you feel that would help. Some of the crafts might require an assistant to help the children cut or paste. If the craft calls for color

copies or heavier stock paper, plan in advance to ask a parent or friend who has access to a color copier or a machine that can get card stock copies done. Don't stint on quality because you haven't looked ahead to see what you will need!

- **For My Family.** The parent information at the end of each lesson is a way to focus parents on the heart of the lesson and how it might be extended and enriched through activities at home. With the increasingly secular lifestyles of our families, this could be a wonderful opportunity. Follow up occasionally by emailing parents to ask if they are reading this section and attempting any of the simple suggestions. Talk about this as well with students.
- **Review.** Always have earlier lessons handy to refer to and hold up. Work review into your lesson often. You might say: "Remember this lesson, when we had a great conversation about our grandparents?" (At which point, hold up the lesson and point to the pertinent picture.) Or, if the lesson is on Jesus' resurrection (Easter), you can point back to the story of Christmas.
- **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.

Unit One* All About God* Being Holy Knowing God* The Holy Trinity

Lesson

1

Key Concepts

1. The Trinity is three persons in one – God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
2. The Holy Trinity was present at the Creation, Jesus' baptism, and his transfiguration, as manifestations of the fullness of God.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Participate in a getting-to-know-you exercise.
2. Explore how one person can have three roles, just like the Holy Trinity.
3. Listen to a story about a grandfather and his granddaughter and take part in a discussion about the presence of the Trinity at Creation.
4. Learn about and reflect on Jesus' resurrection and his instruction to his disciples.
5. Consider the role of the Trinity at Creation, Jesus' baptism, and his transfiguration.
6. Read "This Is My Son" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children* and discuss questions.
7. Repeat the words – Armenian and English – to the hymn sung in honor of the Holy Trinity. Memorize the words for making the sign of the cross.
8. Make a cross out of twigs.
9. Participate in an activity involving the twig crosses.

Materials Needed

1. Twigs and twine (If twigs are hard to find or too sharp, craft stores may have smooth sticks you can use.)
2. Camera or cell phone (for class picture)

Note to the Teacher

Prior to the lesson, gather twigs, approximately six inches long, two for each child, to be made into the cross.

Here are some suggested activities in which the children can participate:

- a. Go outside and have a procession with children holding the crosses and singing.
- b. Have a procession indoors in the Sunday School area – perhaps at an Assembly.
- c. Take the children to church with their crosses. Arrange with Der Hayr to have the crosses blessed.

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter. Have children stand in place or in a circle to pray. Before the prayer, announce that you will be starting class every Sunday that way. Ask: “Why is it important to pray?” (To share our thoughts and wishes with God, to get to know God, to get into the habit of talking with the most important Person in our lives – what would it be like if we never spoke to the people we love?)
2. Once they have gathered, write their names on the board and ask fun, get-to-know-you questions: Who here has a pet? Find out what they have and write it under their name; continue to do so for everything you discover about the children. What are your parents’ names? Who has a brother or sister? What are their names? What town do you live in? What’s your favorite thing to do? What’s your favorite food? Etc. End with a happy comment about your class! Take a class picture; if someone is absent, take another on a day everyone is present. Make a poster with the information you have gathered called “Our Class” and post it at the front of the room. 15 min.
3. Distribute lessons and direct them to the pictures of grandfathers. Read **Let’s Talk** and conclude by saying: “Today we are going to see that God is like that: one loving Person known in three different ways!” Continue with **Listen to This**, reviewing how the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were present at the creation. 5 min.
4. Direct children’s attention to the picture of Jesus in **God Speaks to Us**. Tell the story from Matthew 28 as follows: “After the crucifixion, Jesus was taken down from the cross and placed in a tomb. A large stone was rolled to seal the entrance. The next morning when Mary Magdalene and another woman called Mary arrived at the tomb, there was a strong earthquake. The stone rolled away from the entrance, and an angel appeared, telling them, ‘He is not here. Hurry and tell the disciples that Jesus is on his way to Galilee.’ The women were afraid and yet very happy. They did as they were told.” Now continue with the text in the lesson – Jesus’ last instruction to his followers. Conclude with “So, this is why we come to Sunday School, because Jesus wants us to learn about him and then tell others! Who can you tell? And how does Jesus describe God? (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). Discuss.
5. Now read **We Learn About God**. Read the stories, emphasizing the presence of the Holy Trinity. Ask children to identify the illustrations. 10 min.
6. Distribute snack and read “This Is My Son” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Discuss questions. 10 min.

7. Have children stand and sing (or have your volunteer sing with them) the verses from “Amen. Hayr Soorp.” Explain that it honors the Holy Trinity and is sung during Badarak. Review words to say when making the sign of the cross. 5 min.
8. Distribute twigs and twine and assist children in making crosses, by wrapping the twine where the twigs intersect. Follow with one of the activities suggested above. 15 min.

Unit One* All About God* Being Holy God Sent Us His Son

Lesson

2

Key Concepts

1. Jesus is God’s Son.
2. Jesus was sent to remind us of God’s great love.
3. Jesus is also known as the King of Glory.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Discuss the similarities of the roles of a king and that of Jesus.
2. Analyze the miracle of the Healing of the Two Blind Men.
3. Examine Psalm 24.
4. Recognize what happens during the Presentation of the Gifts.
5. Review the words and gestures of the priest and deacon during the Presentation.
6. Read “Jesus Shines Like the Sun” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
7. Listen to three more Bible stories (below) to identify Jesus’ role as teacher, healer, miracle worker or story-teller and match stories to illustrations in their text.
8. Color and decorate a picture of Jesus’ ascension.

Materials Needed

1. Pencil, crayons, thin markers, a few iridescent gold markers
2. Handout from teacher’s manual
3. (Optional) Glue, gold glitter

Note to the Teacher

If possible, tell the following stories to the children rather than read them.

Bible references:

Jesus Feeds Five Thousand: Matthew 14:13-21
Jesus Heals Two Blind Men: Matthew 20:29-34
The Lost Sheep: Matthew 18:10-14
Lord’s Prayer: Matthew 6:5-14

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Distribute lessons and direct children's attention to the man with a crown in **Let's Talk**. Briefly discuss a king's job. Start with those descriptions in the text: that he is like a father to his people, takes care of them, makes rules to help the people live safely and justly; additionally: a good king is loved, respected and followed – why? Because he has proven his love and service to them; his rules and teachings lead to a better life. Connect the responses with Jesus who was also known as a king – the King of Glory. 10 min.
3. Say: “While Jesus was traveling around Jerusalem, he did many things to help the people understand who he was, the Son of God. Now, I am going to tell you a story from the Bible. We are going to decide together whether Jesus was a teacher, miracle worker, healer or storyteller in this story.” Tell the story (Healing the Two Blind Men) in **Listen to This**, pausing to ask and discuss these questions: What did the two men call out to Jesus? What does it mean to “have mercy? (asking for kindness and forgiveness, often from someone who has the power to help you) Why do you think the crowd told the men to be quiet? Why do you think they kept calling out to Jesus anyway? (they knew he could help them, they believed in his power) Once Jesus had healed them, why do you think they followed him? Discuss its meaning and decide on the category. “Jesus was a healer in this story; he healed the blind men so people would believe that he was the Son of God.” 10 min.
4. Have children stand in a circle. Read **God Speaks to Us** and explain Psalm 24 from the Old Testament. Read the psalm again. Repeat the psalm and ask the children to say the last line with you “He is our God, the All-Powerful.” Conclude with **We Learn About God**. Say: “So, Jesus, the Son of God is his gift to us. That’s a gift we remember at Christmastime, right? (Point to the miniature of the nativity). Just as Jesus, born in a manger and worshiped by wise men and shepherds, was a gift for us, so we give each other gifts at Christmas...But let’s see how the gift of Jesus is something we receive every Sunday at church.”
5. Have students return to their places and look at the illustration in **Our Armenian Way**. “Teach” this section by first asking the children to identify the people in the picture (priest and deacon). Explain how the deacon presents the gifts of bread and wine to the priest. Read the text and responses in English and Armenian. Teach the children the words of the response in English. Have children take turns coming forward and acting out this exchange (even lifting and extending their arms with an imaginary chalice). 15 min.
6. Read “Jesus Shines Like the Sun” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snacks and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. Now focus children's attention on the four illustrations from the life of Jesus in **Hearts and Hands**. Say: We have already looked at the healing of the two blind men. What did we decide about that story? Was Jesus a healer, a teacher, a story-teller or a miracle worker? Yes, a healer.” Continue with the other stories (Lost Sheep: storyteller; Lord's Prayer: teacher; Feeding the Five Thousand: miracle worker) Have children draw a line from the text to the corresponding illustration.
8. Distribute the hand-out for children to color and decorate. They may use iridescent markers or put glitter on Jesus' halo once they've decorated the picture.

All About God* Being Holy

The Holy Spirit Helps Us Grow In Faith

Lesson

3

Key Concepts

1. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity.
2. The Holy Spirit helps us share God's love with others.
3. The Holy Spirit listens to our prayers.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Identify the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how we share them with others.
2. Repeat the Bible verse, John 14:16.
3. Retell the story of Pentecost.
4. Read "The Holy Spirit" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Participate in a chant dedicated to the Holy Spirit.
6. Learn about the priest's prayer to the Holy Spirit during Badarak.
7. Review the first measure of "Hokee Asdoodzo."

Materials Needed

1. A sheet of yellow and orange construction paper with four tongues of flame already traced on them; use sample at back of teacher manual
2. Envelopes; reproduce instructions below and glue onto envelope
3. Scissors

During this week, on each tongue of flame write an act of kindness done by your child to a friend or family member, e.g. "I helped my grandfather rake his back yard. I helped my dad with the dishes. I sent my aunt a get-well card." Also put your child's first name. **Send them back to Sunday School** for us to post on a Bulletin Board!

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Once children are seated again, say (and you can hold up earlier lessons while you do),"So far we have thought about God in two different ways. We looked at God as Father, who created the world, and at Jesus, his Son, King of Glory and a great gift of salvation. Today, we'll look at God the Holy Spirit who comes to us first when we are baptized and chrismated, or blessed with holy oil, which is a symbol of the Holy Spirit." Teach from **Let's Talk**. Pause for discussion questions: "What kinds of things do *you* pray for or about?" Have children come up to the board to draw the things they pray about (as a group if the class is small, or a few

volunteers as the rest of the class discusses). Accept all answers but suggest: good weather, the safety and health of the people we love, peace in the world, food for the hungry pets. “How can we help God make some of these things happen through the love of the Holy Spirit?” (donate food and money to charity, be a good friend or neighbor, be helpful to our parents, brothers and sisters, and take good care of our pets). 15 min.

3. Continue with **Listen to This**, first asking children what they think has happened in the illustration. Ask if any students remember a time when they helped someone. How did the person they helped feel? How did *they* feel? Conclude by emphasizing that when we reach out and help others, we are doing the work of the Holy Spirit. Direct children’s attention to the verse in **God Speaks to Us** which recalls the very important promise Jesus made about the Holy Spirit. Have children repeat the verse a few times.
4. Teach or read the first two paragraphs in **We Learn About God**. Then have children sit on the rug as you continue teaching them the rest of the story. Be very animated in telling the story of Pentecost, imitating the wind. You might want to ask children what that must have sounded and felt like. Were they ever at home in a big storm and heard the roar of the wind? What might it have been like to have a flame rest overhead? (You could demonstrate with one of the pre-cut construction paper flames.) Etc. 10 min.
5. Reinforce the story by reading “The Holy Spirit” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Return to their desks to continue with the questions as you distribute snacks. 10 min.
6. Point out to children the illustration of the children holding hands around the globe in **Hearts and Hands**. Then have them come to the front of the room and stand in a circle holding hands. “We are going to learn a chant to the Holy Spirit. I will say the part in bold letters, and you will respond by saying your part. (It can also be sung to the tune of Yev unt hokvooyt koom; p 27 of the Divine Liturgy book). You will say “Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with love. After we practice the chant, you can draw a heart in the blank space.” 10 min.
7. Read **Our Armenian Way** and have fun with a fast-paced run-through of “Hokee Asdoodzo” (just the first measure). 5 min.
8. Distribute construction paper sheets and help children cut out flames. When they are done, have them come forward, place them in an envelope. Conclude with a prayer. (“Holy Spirit: thank you for being with us today and every day. You came to the apostles as tongues of fire; you came to us at our chrismation, blessing our bodies with your power. Guide us this week in all we do and fill our hearts with love for God and others. Amen.) Dismiss the class. 10 min.

Unit One* All About God* Being Holy Sunday* The Holy Day

Lesson

4

Key Concepts

1. Sunday is a special day.
2. Sunday is known as the Lord's Day or Giragi.
3. God rested on the Sabbath and made it a holy day.
4. Jesus rose to heaven on a Sunday.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Post their "acts of kindness" flames on a display.
2. Talk about how they spend their Sundays.
3. Learn that Sunday is known as the Lord's Day or Giragi in Armenian.
4. Examine the reasons Sunday is a special day.
5. Review the Bible passage, Genesis 2:1-3.
6. Discuss ways we can take care of what God has created for us.
7. Read "Winds and Waves Listen" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
8. Name the Armenian word for Sunday.
9. Identify what St. Gregory said about the Lord's Day.
10. Create a prayer with pictures thanking God for his creation.
11. Plant a bulb (optional but recommended).

Materials Needed

1. Pencils, colored pencils, crayons
2. Copies of prayer template
3. *How Armenia Became the First Christian Nation* (optional)
4. Optional: Bulbs, large plastic cups, bag of potting soil (sufficient to fill each cup $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way); you should have an assistant for this activity; alternative: bring in a Christmas cactus for observation and care each week.

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer. Collect last week's "acts of kindness" flames to post on the Bulletin Board under the title "Our Class Is Filled With the Holy Spirit!" Discuss their acts of kindness. If all are not in, collect the rest next week.
2. Have children remain standing and ask: "What are some things we do on Sunday? Please think of something you do and share it with us. As each of you answers, you may sit down." Write the word 'Sunday' on the board and as children answer make sure you record their answer on the board under 'Sunday.' Accept all answers and discuss, but make sure coming to church and Sunday School are included. On the board, write Monday-Friday and Saturday. Discuss with children what they do (school, homework,

play, and special lessons) Monday-Friday and then Saturday. Have them note the difference in their activities and how Sunday stands out for church attendance and Sunday School and perhaps a good family day together. “Today, we will be learning about why Sunday is such a special day.” Read **Let’s Talk**. 15 min.

3. Direct children’s attention to **Listen to This** and have them repeat the two important reasons Sunday is a special day for us. Read the verses from Genesis and Exodus in **God Speaks to Us** and review with children by asking: “What did God create? (heavens and the earth) Can you name some things in the heavens and on earth that God created? (keep going until children are exhausted by the abundance of what God created!) Was he happy with what he had created? Was it good? And when he finished his work, what did he do? And so, he asks us to rest, also, to rest in *him* on Sunday together. Close your eyes and think about God’s creation. How can we thank God for all his gifts?” 5 min.
4. Direct children’s attention to **We Learn About God** and discuss text and their own suggestions. 10 min.
5. Read “Winds and Waves Listen” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children* and discuss questions. Distribute snacks. 10 min.
6. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Remind the children that St. Gregory the Enlightener was the man who brought the Christian faith to Armenia a long time ago. Also, in a dream, God told St. Gregory to build Holy Etchmiadzin (if you have time, show some of the pictures in the coloring book *How Armenia Became the First Christian Nation*). The answer to the question might include: going to church and Sunday School, being at home with family, inviting friends and family to be with you, *not* watching TV too much but spending time with loved ones, helping others in quiet ways, reading God’s Word – the Bible, praying.
7. Distribute “Thank You God” template and tell children: “Today you are going to write a prayer to thank God for his beautiful gift of the world. Write down the names of the gifts you are thankful for. And if you need help, tell me and I will write the word on the board for you to copy. When you are finished, draw a picture, with detail, of one of the things you thanked God for.” When the prayers and drawings are complete, display them in the classroom or a bulletin board. They can be sent home after a few weeks. 10 min.
8. Optional: Plant a bulb to honor God’s creation. Or present a Christmas cactus to the class, explaining that it blooms (hopefully) around Christmas time. Conclude with a prayer and dismiss the class. 10 min.

Unit One* All About God* Being Holy

My Badarak Book

Lesson

5

Key Concepts

1. Jesus established the first Holy Communion at the Last Supper by sharing the bread and wine as his body and blood.
2. We remember and share in Jesus each Sunday at the Divine Liturgy.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss the symbolic items of chalice, bread, and liturgy book.
2. Read “A Special Night” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
3. Review the basic gestures and actions of worship.
4. Assemble their own liturgy guidebook, *My Badarak Book*.

Materials Needed

1. Pencils, thin markers, crayons, stapler, scissors
2. A finished sample of *My Badarak Book*, chalice-like cup (or actual chalice), nushkhar, a pita bread, and liturgy book. The chalice can be from a church or Sunday School supply catalogue; arrange for a nushkhar from your pastor in advance. Have these on your desk when children arrive

Note to the Teacher

The format of this lesson is very different from the others in Grade One. *My Badarak Book* is the student text. It will be assembled by the students and used throughout the year to help the children understand the basic words and gestures of the service.

The information and photographs will provide the children with the background and visual connections to follow the liturgy.

To staple the booklet down the center seam, you might need a special stapler. If one is not available, you can staple the outside edge of the book. It would be advisable to have an assistant to help children assemble the booklet.

Attend the Divine Liturgy to give the children practice and experience with their own liturgy books. Prior to these visits, use *My Badarak Book* with the children to read and explain what is happening. Keep it in class until the end of the year when they may take it home. Email parents about this activity. If you wish to use the following, adapt accordingly.

Dear First Grade parents: This week, your child assembled a wonderful little booklet called *My Badarak Book*, a handbook on the Divine Liturgy for little ones (*Badarak* is the Armenian word for the Divine Liturgy). We will be using it throughout the year to help students understand Sunday worship. At the end of the year, they will be bringing it home to share with you. If you'd like to see what *My Badarak Book* looks like, ask me at the beginning or end of class and I'll be happy to show you a sample!

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer. Pray as follows: “Dear Lord, thank you for this day, for our friends and parents and teachers, and for life itself. Help us to know you better through Sunday worship and for your gift of the bread and wine of Holy Communion which is our way of sharing in you. Amen.”
2. Ask children to identify the three items on your desk. If your class is small enough, have children gather around so they can touch and handle the items. If the group is large, you can pass each around as you discuss them. Hold up the chalice and ask children what they think it is. Many will say a cup, which it is. Tell them that it is and that Jesus shared a cup with his disciples at the Last Supper (you’ll be reading the story with them in a few moments) when he gave thanks and shared it. “He also took bread and after giving thanks, divided it among them. Today, for Holy Communion, we use a wafer, called a *nushkhar*. Jesus explained to his disciples that this bread and wine were his body and blood, and that sharing in them was like sharing in him. Let’s read about it.” 10 min.
3. Read “A Special Night” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Discuss questions. 10 min.
4. Continue: “So, every Sunday, we remember Jesus as he asked us to by praying together, listening to his word through the Bible readings, and sharing in him once again in the bread and wine of communion. It’s as if we are at the Last Supper with Jesus every Sunday!” Now pick up the liturgy book and ask what children think *this* book is. Explain that it is the Divine Liturgy or Badarak Book and that it is our guidebook whenever we attend church. Show the children that it is in two languages so everyone can understand, that there is music, and prayers, and even explanations and pictures (make sure the children see these things). Tell them that today they will be making their own liturgy book. “But first let’s think about some of the things we do in church (review with children and have them repeat your gestures): we cross ourselves, we bow, we pray, we say the creed with our hands in a special position, we kneel, we light candles, we kiss the hand cross, and we kiss the gospel. You do all these things on Sundays when you attend church together with your family. Now let’s make our own personal guidebook.” 10 min.
5. Distribute student lessons (*My Badarak Book* pages) and have children turn to box 16 which depicts the Last Supper. Remind them of the story once again (Ref: Luke 22: 14-20). Then have them write their names on the front and color in and decorate the first box (which will be the cover). Then assemble the booklet as per the simple cut and fold directions.
6. Once assembled, begin to review the pages together. Here are some suggested questions for many of the boxes: 2. What did Jesus say and do at the Last Supper? (use Scripture as a reference) 3. Why do you think the priest washes his hands before going to the altar? Are they dirty? (a symbol of his heart and soul being clean) 4. What do we do when the priest walks through the church, blessing the people? (kiss the small hand cross he carries and ask him to remember us to God during the liturgy) 5. What special book do we hear read? (Bible) What do we sing right before it is read? (“Aseh Asdvadz” - God is speaking- Have them practice saying it) 6. How do we hold our hands when we say the Creed? 7. What does the deacon carry to the priest? What do we hear them say? (“This is the King of Glory” – Have them say it) 8. Why do we share the kiss of peace? (because Jesus asked us to live in peace; you might want to go through it); at boxes 9 and 10, remind children of the Last Supper story once again. 11. Review the Lord’s prayer in English and Armenian. 12. What are some of the things we might want to ask God to forgive us for? (angry words, hurtful words or actions, being mean) 13. What are some ways Holy Communion can make us strong? (to do or say the right thing even when it’s hard, to take the time to help others) 14. How can we be like Jesus all week? 20 min.

7. If there is time, take children up to church with their liturgy books and be ready to point out anything taking place in church that is depicted in their books. Dismiss from there, collecting their booklets first. OR, simply spend the last few moments preparing for dismissal and conclude with the prayer from the liturgy (box 14) “Lord, we will bless you at all times this week, your name will always be on our lips. Amen.” This makes a great closing prayer that can be recited or sung at the end of class each week (especially when no specific prayer is provided). 10 min.

Unit One* All About God* Being Holy The Holy Book

Lesson

6

Key Concepts

1. The Holy Bible is made up of the Old and New Testaments.
2. The Bible is God’s story written by people who wanted to share what God had done for them.
3. In Armenian, the Bible is called *Soorp Keerk* or *Asdvadzashoonch*.
4. Jesus taught us how to pray the Lord’s Prayer.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Look at Bibles and discuss their characteristics.
2. Review why the Holy Bible was written and what it is about.
3. Hear the story of Daniel from the Old Testament.
4. Hear the story of the shepherds’ visit to the manger.
5. Read “A Way To Live” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Describe how Jesus taught people to pray.
7. Review the Lord’s Prayer and recognize that Jesus used the Lord’s Prayer to teach us how to live.
8. Complete an Armenian miniature prayer card of the Hayr Mer.

Materials needed

1. Pencils, colored pencils, glue
2. Copies of Hayr Mer miniature – copied on a color copier
3. Copies of Hayr Mer (as above, from student lesson)
4. Strips of heavy colored construction paper, 18" X 12" folded in half and then each folded again 3" from the end. These ends will be folded under to create a stand-up prayer display for the table
5. Two Bibles – adult and children’s version; optional: picture book versions of Daniel in the lion’s den and shepherds’ visit to Jesus

Note to the Teacher

- a. A color copier is essential for the children to have an attractive craft!
- b. Having guest storytellers, one to read the story of Daniel and one to read the story of the shepherds, is *highly advisable*. Even better, work with an upper grade teacher in advance to see if her students can prepare the reader’s theater version at the end of this lesson with different students taking different parts. Invite them to make a special presentation.

- c. An alternative to engage the children is to ask their participation as *you* read. For the shepherds' story: Instruct them to baaa like sheep when they hear the word shepherd (you will always have to prompt them), go ooooo and point upward when they heard the word "angel" and shout a "hosanna" when they hear the word God. For the Daniel story, they could shout out "hail!" whenever they hear the word King, "man of God!" when they hear the word Daniel, and roar when they hear the word lion.

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Show the children the two Bibles and ask if they know what they are. (Bibles – one for grown-ups and one especially for children) Show them the two sections – Old and New; have them notice things about each book – perhaps smaller type in the adult Bible, pictures in the children's, etc. Read through the Bible poem in **Let's Talk** and have children repeat each line after you. 10 min.
3. Jump ahead to read **Listen to This** and then back to the first paragraph of **God Speaks to Us**. Then have children enjoy the story of Daniel 6:1-23 as presented by your volunteers. See below for a script.
4. Continue with the rest of **God Speaks to Us** and the story of the shepherds' visit to the manger at Jesus' birth (Luke 2:8-18). 20 min.
5. Tell children that the story they heard from the New Testament was about Jesus' visit by the shepherds when he was born but that the Bible is full of all of his teachings and his miracles and his healings about which they have already been learning. Read "A Way To Live" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. After clean-up, teach **We Learn About God** and review the Lord's Prayer, teaching the first line today; plan to continue learning and reviewing on subsequent Sundays. 5 min.
7. Distribute color copies of the Lord's Prayer miniature and prayer. Have children center and glue both on to construction paper as per the diagram so that it can stand.



Conclude with **Our Armenian Way** and closing prayer. Dismiss class with a reminder to place their prayer card on their kitchen or dining room tables and use it to pray with their families. 15 min.

Reader's Theater: The Story of Daniel (Daniel 6:1-23)

Cast: Narrator, King Darius, Daniel, governors, messenger

Although there are just 5 characters, speeches can be divided among students. The skit can also be "performed" and if you do this, instruct cast to act out what's going on. Lions and angels can also be added if you perform the scene of Daniel's release as he narrates it.

Narrator: *(The governors are gathered to one side as if having a meeting.)* In the days of King Darius, his kingdom was divided into states. Daniel was the governor of such a state. This means he took care of the king's properties. King Darius was pleased with Daniel. He was faithful and responsible. So the other governors looked for ways to get Daniel into trouble with the king. They wanted to get rid of him.

The Governors: We have searched but we have found nothing against Daniel's character. He is honest and faithful. The only way we can get rid of him is to make a plan where Daniel has to break the law of his God. Come, we will present our plan to the king.

Narrator: The governors go before the king and bow and begin to present their plan.

The Governors: *(bowing)* King Darius, live forever! We have met and agreed that you should establish a rule that whoever prays to anyone, divine or human, for thirty days, *except to you*, O king, shall be thrown into a den of lions. Now, O great king, make this a law; sign this *(they hold out a document)* immediately so that it cannot be changed.

Narrator: King Darius signed the document. It was officially a law. Daniel knew that the document had been signed. Yet, he continued to go to his house to get on his knees three times a day to pray to his God.

The governors went to Daniel's home and found him praying to his God. They returned to the king.

The Governors: O great king, did you not sign a law that anyone who prays to anyone but you will be thrown into a den of lions?

King Darius: The law still stands.

The Governors: Daniel pays no attention to you or to your law. He is saying his prayers three times a day.

Narrator: The king was distressed. He tried to save Daniel. He waited until sundown and tried everything to save him.

The Governors: O king, this is a law and any law that you make cannot be changed.

Narrator: Then the king gave the command and Daniel was brought before him.

King Darius: May your God, whom you faithfully serve, protect you!

Narrator: Daniel was put in the lion's den; a huge stone was rolled and covered the opening of the den. The king sealed the mouth of the den with his official ring. Then he went to his room and spent the night fasting. He could not sleep. At daybreak, the king went to the lion's den. To his surprise and joy, he found Daniel alive and well!

King Darius: Daniel, servant of the living God, your God whom you faithfully serve has been able to deliver you from the lions.

Daniel: O king, God sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths. They did not hurt me because I was blameless before my God and also before you, o king. I have done no wrong.

King Darius: I am so happy. Remove Daniel from the den.

Narrator: Those who plotted against Daniel were punished. King Darius wrote a note to all people of all nations of every language throughout the whole world. This is what the note said:

Messenger: May you have abundant prosperity! May it be known by everyone that in my kingdom people should know the God of Daniel. For he is the living God, enduring forever. His kingdom shall never be destroyed!

Unit One: How the Armenian Alphabet Helped Us Grow Closer to God

Lesson

7

Key Concepts

1. Sts. Sahag and Mesrob worked together to create the Armenian alphabet.
2. The Holy Bible was the first book translated into the Armenian language.
3. The Holy Bible illuminates our lives.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Review the role of Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew and St. Gregory as enlighteners of Armenia.
2. Learn why the Armenians wanted an Armenian alphabet.
3. Hear the story of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob.
4. Describe the vision of St. Mesrob.
5. Memorize Psalm 119:105 and discuss the way the Bible “lights” our path.
6. Trace and color Armenian letters.
7. Read “The Ten Girls With Oil Lamps” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
8. Learn to sing the short verse sung before the Bible is read (Aseh Asdvadz).
9. Make a Gospel bookmark.

Materials needed

1. An Armenian Bible, if possible
2. Flashlight
3. Thin markers, crayons, stickers
4. Copies of the Gospel bookmark on heavy paper if possible
5. Hole punch
6. Six-inch piece of yarn, one for each student

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Once children have settled down ask them to imagine what it would be like to never be able to write anything down in the language they speak. Could they write a letter? Send a note? Write a book or newspaper? What a strange world it would be!
3. Distribute lessons and read **Let's Talk**; pause to discuss the questions. You might have to prompt children to imagine themselves meeting two people from a faraway land bearing amazing news. Meeting the two saints, they might have felt interested, curious, scared, amazed, uninterested, happy, etc. Questions might be: Where are you from? How was your trip? What will you do here? What is your news? Etc. Have the children look at the Russian for "love one another." Ask: "Can anyone read it?" Explain that that was what it was like for people to see verses from the Bible in other languages – they couldn't understand a word. 10 min.
4. Direct the students' attention to the illustration of St. Mesrob experiencing his vision in **Listen to This**. Read the story. Pause to comment and ask questions: Why do you think people wanted to understand what was in the Bible? (The Bible taught them about God, about what Jesus taught, about many, many people who lived in a godly way and from whom we have so much to learn, how to live, what was important.) If you were able to obtain one, hold up the Armenian Bible and let children examine it.
5. Read **God Speaks to Us** and have the children repeat the Psalm verse until they can say it easily from memory. To creatively discuss the question in **We Learn About God**, turn off the lights (even on a cloudy Sunday morning, the room will still have plenty of light) and say: 'Let's pretend the room is dark. I'm going to pass this flashlight around. Whoever has it, turn it on and tell us one way that light is helpful. What can light help us do?' (see our way – and it might not show us our way a mile off, but our immediate steps will be safe, point out or spotlight things, show things in their full color since in the dark everything looks gray, etc.) Compare this with the way the Bible lights up our life (shows us what steps to take to do the right thing, shows life's "true colors," points us in the right direction, etc.) 10 min.
6. The first three letters of the Armenian alphabet are ayp, pen, keem, just like our own "ABC." Have the children trace the letters and color and decorate the "Ayp" with stickers and markers. 10 min.
7. Read "The Ten Girls With Oil Lamps" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
8. Read **Our Armenian Way**. Refer back to the Lesson 4 on the Holy Bible as you teach about the readings in church. Teach the children "Aseh Asdvadz." Have them repeat its meaning: "God is speaking." You might want to explain what this means (that in the words of the Bible the readers and the deacon read, God is giving us an important message he wants us to hear). 5 min.
9. Tell the class that they will be getting a special bookmark to use in their Bibles or storybooks. Distribute the Gospel bookmarks and explain that these four symbols stand for the four Gospel writers Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (it's not important for them

to know which is which at this age, but FYI: angel: Matthew; winged lion: Mark, winged bull: Luke; winged eagle: John). Have students color the bookmark with marker or crayons. When they have finished let each come to you for the top to be punched. Help them thread the yarn through and tie a knot. Conclude with a prayer: “Lord, thank you for your gift of words. Thank you for the Armenian alphabet that helped our people grow in faith and read the Bible in their own language. Every time we put this bookmark to mark our place in the Bible or Bible storybook, let us mark a place in our hearts for you, too. May your words light our path! Amen.”

15 min.

Unit Two* God & Me Together ***God Made Me To Know Him***

Lesson

1

Key Concepts

1. God has placed his Creation into our loving care.
2. God never stops loving us.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss Creation and photographs showing elements of the natural world.
2. Hear the story of how it happened that Adam and Eve disobeyed God.
3. Explore Psalm 148 as creation’s praise song and chant it together.
4. Learn to sing the hymn “Orhnetseets uzDer” (I will bless the Lord).
5. Read “Birds and Lilies” from *Jesus: Stories for Children*.
6. Prepare a mural entitled – **“God Made The World. We Take Care Of It!”**

Materials Needed

1. Pencils, scissors, glue sticks, a sheet of heart stickers for each student
2. Magazines that will have pictures of animals, people etc.
3. Large sheet of newsprint or mural paper for the mural with bold title as indicated in procedure #8

Note to the Teacher

1. For this session, you will need to bring in magazines from which the children can cut pictures of people (all ages), animals, bugs, insects, birds, underwater life and environments. Have a picture already cut (or printed from the internet) for each child.
2. Tell the children to put a heart sticker next to each picture they place on the mural.
3. If there isn’t time to complete the mural, keep magazines, scissors and glue on hand for the next week or two and allow time to continue the work.

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Distribute their lesson and begin with **Let’s Talk**, emphasizing God’s great love for us. Say: “In fact, he loved us so much that he wants us to care for his Creation.” Discuss the photographs.

Ask children how they can take care of some of the things pictured (by protecting animals' natural habitats, not wearing fur, not polluting land or water, etc.).

3. Read **Listen to This** and talk about the photographs. Explore other ways we can all take care of the earth. 10 min.
4. Direct children's attention to the illustration of the tree and Adam and Eve. Teach the story in **God Speaks to Us** and discuss the question (mention as a concluding answer that they probably felt bad because they had disappointed their loving God who had given them so many gifts to enjoy).
5. Direct children's attention to Psalm 148 (**We Learn About God**) and its beautiful praise of creation. Read each line animatedly (make up your own hand gestures) and have children repeat after you. 10 min.
6. Relate the information in **Our Armenian Way** and teach (or have a choir volunteer do so) the first two lines only (in Armenian, naturally, since this is the language of the hymn). Explain the meaning: "I will bless the Lord at all times." Then sing the whole hymn together. If it's repeated over the year, the children will learn it. As mentioned in Unit 1, Lesson 5, this could be a great end-of-class prayer for future Sundays. 10 min.
7. Read "Birds and Lilies" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children* while distributing snacks. 10 min.
8. Now explain that together the children will be making a large mural collage: "The mural is called **"God Made The World. We Take Care Of It!"** The pictures can be of people, animals, birds, insects, fish and environments. I have started out with some pictures already cut out for you. For each picture you place on the mural, you should place a small heart sticker next to it." Have children begin to look through the magazines for more pictures. Volunteers can help cut out pictures. Tell children to bring pictures and hearts up to you and then direct them to mural where they can be affixed with glue sticks.
9. Clean up and dismiss class with a rousing rendition of "Orhnetseets uzDer," beginning first with the English translation as a prayer. This translation is easily sung to the melody and is from the CD "We Sing Armenian Church Songs" by Nvair Beylerian and the Hye Family Children's Chorus. (Find it on iTunes, Spotify, Amazon Music and Apple Music.) 20 min.

Unit Two* God & Me Together ***Our Special Day* Name Days***

Lesson

2

Key Concepts

1. On our Name Day, we give thanks to God for his many blessings.
2. We celebrate our Name Day with our families and our church family.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Talk about the meaning of their names and the Armenian expression “anoonovut dzeranas.”
2. Read about how Biblical and Armenian saints’ names were traditionally used to name new babies.
3. Hear the Bible passage Genesis 2:19-20.
4. Compare Name Day and birthday celebrations.
5. Read “The Baby Is Blessed” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Make a nameplate for a special wall display.

Materials Needed

1. Crayons, colored pencils, thin markers, glitter, stickers, Elmer’s glue
2. Diocesan calendar
3. Optional (for discussion of birthdays): birthday hats, cake candles, a wrapped gift, a birthday card – all in a bag for children to reach in and pull out
4. Special snacks – see below
5. 8½" X 11" sheets, preferably slightly heavier paper stock; see procedure #8

Note to the Teacher

In advance of class, be prepared to have the meanings of all your students’ names (can be googled on the computer or in a book on Armenian names). Traditionally, saints’ names and biblical names were used to name babies. Children whose names derive from neither a saint nor the Bible will celebrate their Name Day on All Saints Day in the Fall or on Vartanantz Day right before Lent. Identify what feast day would be each child’s Name Day – you might want to review this with your pastor.

1. Keep the decorated name sheets on display in the classroom.
2. Snack can be a mini Name Day Party, with fruits (dried and fresh), cookies, and juice. See Procedure # 6.
3. In **For My Family**, it is suggested that parents encourage their children to talk with a relative about the origin of his/her name. For the next several weeks, ask the children if they have had such a conversation they would like to share.

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Once children have returned to their places, say: “Today we are going to talk about something special – your name!” Read **Let’s Talk** about parents choosing names for their children. Have them repeat the Armenian phrase. Discuss the meaning of this - that if a child were named after his or her grandmother, for example, they should always remember her and honor her name, never doing anything that would make her unhappy. As children write their names in their books, write them up on the board. Discuss the meaning of the children’s names. (They should still ask parents how they chose their names – see **For My Family**. Follow up on this next week.) 15 min.
3. Now continue to read **Listen to This** about the Armenian Church calendar and how, in the past, people used it to choose names for their children. Hold up the Diocesan calendar and point out some famous feasts in different months.

4. Direct students' attention to the pictures of animals in **God Speaks to Us**. "We recalled in our prayer that God created all the creatures and worked with us to give them names. Naming is a very special thing – it shows that whatever we name is very important to us and we want to pick just the right name. Listen to how the animals were named (read from the Bible, even though the words are in the lesson)." Explain that "the man" is Adam who did not have his partner, Eve, yet. To conclude, discuss what children would name a pet cat? Dog? Fish? Bird? What would they name the imaginary animal shown?

5. Now direct children's attention to the picture of the priest anointing a baby in **We Learn About God**. Explain that it is the moment during baptism and chrismation, when the priest anoints the baby with holy oil – a symbol of the Holy Spirit. This concludes their second birth - into the church! Review why a Name Day, like a birthday, is a time of celebration but also a day of thanks (for life, for our families, for the beautiful world, for our special name). 15 min.

6. Read "The Baby Is Blessed" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Discuss questions as you sit for a brief snack. This can be a traditional Name Day feast with such goodies as cookies, dried apricots, one or two fresh fruits and an orange with a candle – it does not have to be lit. 10 min.

7. Direct students' attention to **Our Armenian Way** and teach the information there, concluding with: "Do you know that you can celebrate your Name Day just like a birthday?" Then have children share ways they celebrate their birthday (with gifts, a cake, a special song, the presence of family and friends – if you have the objects hold them up or have children reach into a large bag and select them and ask what they are as a means of launching the conversation). Suggest that they can have the same festivities on a Name Day. Tell each child what day that would be (share this in an email with parents).

8. Distribute the paper and the materials for the children to design a name card to be put on display in the classroom. Help them write their names in big letters and decorate the space around the letters with pictures or designs. Perhaps there can be pictures of things that tell us something about them, a cat, for example, if they have a pet cat. Tape name plates up on the wall or on a large poster board with the title "**Anoonovut Dzeranas**" "**May You Grow Old with Your Wonderful Name!**"

9. Conclude with a prayer. 20 min.

Unit Two God & Me Together* *Spirit Gifts/Special Gifts*

Lesson

3

Key Concepts

1. The Holy Spirit helps us to share God's love with others.
2. The Holy Spirit helps us understand God better.

3. The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Objectives

During this session, the students will

1. Review how the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives.
2. Recite a special prayer to the Holy Spirit.
3. Explore the fruits or gifts of the Holy Spirit with the Bible verse Galatians 5:22.
4. Participate in a discussion of the gift of joy in their own lives.
5. Read “His Loving Touch” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Learn about the presence of the Spirit in Baptism and Chrismation.
7. Complete a handout on the gifts of the Spirit.

Materials Needed

1. Thin markers, crayons
2. Copies of “Fruit of the Holy Spirit” handout

Note to the Teacher

If possible, arrange with the priest to bring the children to the baptismal font after church ends. If you choose to do this, email parents in advance that dismissal will be slightly later that day and it will be directly from church (if parents are in church, they may choose to join the class at the font).

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer. Ask if anyone has information about their names they would like to share (assignment last week).
2. Distribute lessons and begin by saying “Today, we’re going to talk about the Holy Spirit. If you remember, whenever Armenians pray, we often begin or end with what words? (In the name of... Hanoon Hor...) And we end with the Holy Spirit, because Jesus promised the Spirit would continue to be with us forever and ever. How does the Holy Spirit work in our lives?” Read **Let’s Talk** and discuss the photographs. Ask children what each one is all about; notice details together. 15 min.
3. Now direct children to **Listen to This**. This is almost the same activity as in Unit One, Lesson 3 but it is a great way for children to remember how the Holy Spirit is with them. Repetition is good! Say: “Well, we’ve seen that the Holy Spirit does so many things! In fact he is often called our Helper, our Counselor, our Guide. Let’s read this special prayer together.” Read it through once yourself and then repeat, but this time have the children repeat the refrain. Discuss with children when they might be sad or lonely (if they are away from home, or on the first day of school), tired (many answers), afraid (of the dark, of thunder), helpless or with questions (if someone asks them to do something they don’t know how to do), angry, etc. Then repeat the chant with the children again, repeating the refrain. “Remember to say: Holy Spirit, fill my heart with love.” Stand to recite the prayer. Then ask children to sit, distribute markers or crayons, and draw a heart around the words “heart” as a special reminder of how the Holy Spirit helps us. 10 min.
4. Announce that you are now going to read from the Bible about the beautiful gifts we receive in our lives when the Spirit is with us. Say: “In the Bible, these are called “fruit,” like the fruit of a tree. It’s really very beautiful when you think about it, because it means that these blessings

from the Holy Spirit are like the delicious fruit that grow on a tree.” Read Galatians 5:22 and then point to the verse in **God Speaks to Us** and read again. Discuss examples of each blessing. “One of the gifts from the Holy Spirit is joy. Look at the photographs (in **We Learn About God**). Seems like these are very happy people.” Discuss what each might be about. Then ask: “When have you and your family felt joy and excitement? Look at the pictures to help you remember some joyful times you have shared with your family.” Discuss. 10 min.

5. Read “His Loving Touch” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and continue discussing story questions. 10 min.
6. Now comment: “You know, there’s a very special moment when the Holy Spirit begins his work in our lives. You won’t remember it because you were too little. But it happened at your baptism. Look at the picture of the priest pouring oil into the baptismal font.” Read or teach **Our Armenian Way**. “And then you are sealed in the Holy Spirit right after your baptism, during chrismation. The priest makes a sign of the cross with oil on 9 parts of your body (forehead, lips, back, heart, hands, feet, eyes, ears, and nostrils), praying for things like strength, faith, and goodness.” (It would be wonderful if you could stay after church to see the font or if your pastor could show them how oil is poured into the font and how one is “sealed” in the Spirit.)
7. Direct the children’s attention to **Heart and Hands**. “We have learned that the Holy Spirit blesses us with gifts. Let’s make something to remind us of these wonderful gifts, something we can hang up at home.” Distribute handout, “Fruit of the Holy Spirit.” Have them color the page and copy a different gift on each fruit. Some of the words won’t fit neatly inside a fruit. That’s okay! Let the children simply write across the fruit. After supplies are put away, conclude with a prayer: “Holy Spirit, thank you for the wonderful things that can happen when you are with us. Help us be fruitful all week and be a blessing to others. Amen.” 15 min.

Unit Two* God & Me Together

The People of the Bible Had Gifts Too

Lesson

4

Key Concepts

1. The Bible has many stories about people who became devoted followers of God.
2. The intercessions are prayers said every Sunday for a special purpose.
3. We must be faithful to Jesus and never get discouraged or give up.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Review the special gifts of 5 people from the Bible.
2. Match brief descriptions of these figures with their respective names.
3. Discuss Hebrews 12:1-3.
4. Perform a chant about persistence in faith.
5. Read “Lord, We Have Faith!” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Learn about the Intercessions and the response, “Heeshya Der,” to the intercessory petitions in Badarak.

7. Create their own list of intercessory petitions.
8. Complete a maze “We Follow Jesus.”

Materials Needed

1. Pencils, crayons, colored pencils
2. “We Follow Jesus” hand-out

Note to the Teacher

1. Have a Badarak Book on hand so you can refer to the Intercessions when it comes up in the lesson.
2. Try to attend church services to participate in the service when the intercessions are being chanted.

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer. Review with children as they’re standing: “What gifts of the Holy Spirit did you use this week?” Hold up a “Fruit of the Holy Spirit” hand-out and discuss. Write answers on the board.
2. Read **Let’s Talk** and **Listen to This**. “Now I will read about each person, and you will tell me who you think it is. We will write that person’s name on the line provided.” Then discuss how each child might be able to glorify God with their gifts. It might be hard for first graders to understand what “glorify” can mean. Explain that it simply means living in a way that would make God happy. Answers can include: helping parents and siblings, being a good friend, being a good neighbor, coming to church and Sunday School; etc. Write these on the board with answers to the previous discussion. 20 min.
3. Read the passage from Hebrews in **God Speaks to Us**. Then have children stand as you read “The Race” in **We Learn About God**. Read it through one time; and then repeat it slowly once more before you ask the children to repeat it line by line after you. You can assign witnesses and followers. 5 min.
4. Read “Lord, We Have Faith!” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and continue to discuss questions through clean-up. 10 min.
5. Return to the table. Say: “Now we are going to talk about a special part in the Badarak when the priest and the congregation pray for others. This part is called the Intercessions (Hee-sha-da-goo-tyoon-ner).” Read **Our Armenian Way**.
6. Say: “Each time the priest remembers a certain group of people during the Intercessions, the congregation sings, ‘Heeshya Der yev Voghormya’ (Be mindful, Lord, and have mercy).” Practice this hymn response several times. This may be the time when you would like to refer to the Divine Liturgy book (beginning on page 35) and mention some of the people who are remembered. Now ask children who or what they would like remembered. Work together on a list; they will probably mention family members, pets, good weather, etc. – help them with ideas. Then run through these intercessions by following the model in the liturgy book, i.e. “For the well-being of our mothers and fathers, we pray to the Lord.” Response sung by all: Heeshya Der... 15 min.

7. Now distribute crayons and the “We Follow Jesus” maze as pictured in **Hearts and Hands**. Have them find Jesus. Ask: “Where are *you*? Where you find the X, please draw a small figure of a child. That will be you. Then you may begin your journey to Jesus.” Conclude with a prayer asking God to keep in his heart all the people (itemize them) the children thought of and then mention each child in the class. 10 min.

Unit Two* God and Me Together ***We Share God’s Love***

Lesson

5

Key Concepts

1. God is love itself; his love for us is infinitely great.
2. God sent Jesus to us to tell us of his love and forgiveness.
3. The Kiss of Peace is shared every Sunday during Badarak.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Explore and discuss the story of the Good Samaritan. (Luke 10:30-37)
2. Review the Great Commandment. (Matthew 22:37,39) and discuss ways to show God that we love him.
3. Discuss the Bible passage 2 Corinthians 13:11-13.
4. Read “Who Is My Neighbor?” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Repeat the Kiss of Peace in Armenian and English.
6. Practice giving the Kiss of Peace in Armenian and English.
7. Visit another grade to share the Kiss of Peace.

Materials Needed

1. Children’s Bible
2. Band-aids to mark the students’ left hands

Note to the Teacher

Pre-arrange with the Kindergarten or Second Grade teacher to take your class in towards the end of the hour and practice the Kiss of Peace with their newly-acquired skills.

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Distribute lessons and read **Let’s Talk**. Then ask children to look at the picture of the man hurt and being carried in **Listen to This**. Read the parable of the Good Samaritan from the children’s Bible (Luke 10: 30-37). At verses 31, 32, and 33 stop before you reveal what each one did in response to the injured man. Ask: What do you think happened? Did he help the man? At verse 36 stop and ask the children to answer Jesus’ question, before reading further. At the end, ask, “How can we do what Jesus told us to do?” 15 min.

3. Direct children's attention to the pictures of children praying and doing acts of kindness. Read the Great Commandment in **Listen to This**. Ask the children to repeat it three or four times. Then read the question and have a discussion about ways we can show our love to God. (Prayer is one example; what other things will please God?) To get kids "thinking on their feet" have everyone stand and sit down only after they've come up with a suggestion and shared it with the class.
4. Go through the Bible passages in **God Speaks to Us**, explaining, in particular, the reference to "holy kiss." Ask the children if they have ever seen people in church greeting each other. 15 min.
5. Read "Who is My Neighbor?" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions through clean-up. 10 min.
6. Read about the "holy kiss" of the early Christians in **Our Armenian Way**. Say: "Please stand. We are going to practice the Kiss of Peace (**Hearts and Hands**). I am going to put a band-aid on your left hand. This will help you as you give the Kiss of Peace. First, you bow to the left (use your band-aid hand to remind you) and then to the right over the shoulder of the person you are greeting." Repeat the greeting and response in Armenian and English several times.
7. Visit Kindergarten or Second Grade to end the day by passing the Kiss of Peace to them. Introduce your students by announcing that "the First Grade learned about how Christians would always greet each other with what they called a 'holy kiss' of friendship as fellow Christians. We still do this today at Badarak. And we would like to share it with you as Sunday School is ending for the day." Line up students and match them with students in the class you're visiting. When you return to your own classroom, conclude with a quick prayer: "Thank you God, for helping us share this special Christian greeting. Keep our love for you and one another in our hearts all week. Amen." 20 min.

Unit Two* *God and Me Together* *Thanksgiving*

Lesson

6

Key Concepts

1. We thank God for sending us Jesus Christ.
2. Thanksgiving Day is set aside to celebrate God's blessings in gratitude and fellowship.
3. We should live gratefully every day.
4. God wants us to live together in peace.
5. During the Badarak, we give thanks to the Holy Trinity.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss what they feel thankful to God for.
2. Hear and talk about the story of the first Thanksgiving.
3. Compare the message of Colossians 3:15-17 with the story of the Pilgrims.
4. Read "Only One Says Thank You" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.

5. Identify Biblical and saintly people expressing their gratitude to God.
6. Review the prayer following communion recited by the priest.
7. Create a poster on the people and things they thank God for.

Materials Needed

1. **Kohanamk Uzken** title (from Appendix)
2. Thin markers
3. Large index cards
4. Oak tag poster (optional; see Procedure #7)

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. After students are seated, distribute their lessons and read and discuss **Let's Talk**. Be creative about what children can be thankful for, using each answer as a springboard for something else. For example, if an answer is "water," questions might follow: Why is water important? (To swim in, bathe in, rain, for the plants and trees, animals, we all need water). You can write answers on the board, or draw pictures. An alternative activity is to invite children up to draw something on the board for which they are thankful. 15 min.
3. Read about the Pilgrims and their journey of faith in **Listen to This**. Save the discussion until you read Colossians 3:15-17 in **God Speaks to Us**. Then ask: Did the Pilgrims and Squanto live in peace as the Bible says? Did Squanto teach the Pilgrims about surviving in a new land? Were the Pilgrims thankful to God? Discuss the children's Thanksgiving plans. 15 min.
4. Move to the rug area and read "Only One Says Thank You" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions during snack and clean-up. 10 min.
5. Direct the children's attention to the illustrations of Biblical and Armenian saints in **We Learn About God**. Remind them that there are many people who have said thank you to God. "These are just a few of them. But let's see if we can guess which one goes with each thank-you phrase." Play the guessing game by reading each statement and then going through the list of names to get a show of hands for the right answer. All the saints will be somewhat unfamiliar to children so they will need prompting; the last one, Anna, will certainly not be recognized so simply tell the children: "Well, since we have selected all the rest, who's left? Yes, you can see Anna, next to the prophet Simeon. They were both there at the temple when Mary and Joseph brought the baby Jesus to be blessed. It was the custom of their time to do so."
6. Review the material in **Our Armenian Way**. Say: "Let's stand up as though we were in church. Repeat the words of the priest's prayer after me. While we can't hear his prayer from where we are sitting, these are the important things he's praying about." Say the words line by line. 10 min.
7. Hold up the sign **Kohanamk Uzken** and then tape it to the board, bulletin board, or poster. Now distribute index cards or paper and say: "Please draw something you're thankful for. Or you may just want to write a word. You can do more than one. I will help you write the words." Give one or two examples before beginning the project. As children complete a card, tape it to the poster or board. Have children do at least two and when time is up, conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving: "Thank you, God, for this day together and for... (read each item children have written)!" 15 min.

Unit Two* God and Me Together

Home Blessing

Lesson

7

Key Concepts

1. Armenian churches and homes are blessed.
2. Incense, water, bread and salt are the four things used during a home blessing.
3. Homes are blessed usually at Christmas and Easter.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Hear about the consecration of churches.
2. Explore ways of living that are pleasing to God.
3. Review Psalm 141:2.
4. Learn about how the early church gathered to pray.
5. Analyze the elements of a Home Blessing (bread, water, and salt).
6. Read “In My Father’s House” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
7. Learn and sing the refrain “Amen Alleluia.”
8. Create a Home Blessing Cube using words and pictures from the Home Blessing Service.

Note to the Teacher

Have on hand the three elements used during the Home Blessing Service – water, bread, salt. The wafer and some incense can be obtained from your priest. Place these on a table in the classroom. Let your pastor know that you will be discussing the Home Blessing Service. Perhaps he or the deacon can be available to stop by the classroom and talk about the service.

Materials Needed

1. Thin markers
2. Salt shaker, slice of bread, glass of water, incense/incense holder/lighter/nushkhar
3. Pre-cut prayer cubes (copied on sturdy paper)
4. Scotch tape

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Distribute today’s lesson and say: “Today we are going to talk about the blessing of Armenian homes. Before we do that I want you to look at the picture of the bishop doing something special. What is he doing?” Read about the church blessing in **Let’s Talk**.
3. Read and discuss **Listen to This**. Spend some time talking about how our homes are special. (The place where the people we love live, where happy things happen, where we eat together, share good and bad times, where we sleep safely at night, where we play, etc.). The children can write one of their own ideas. Some may require that you do the writing for them. Discuss as a class what the children have offered. 15 min.

4. Have the children look at the beautiful verses from Psalm 141 in **God Speaks to Us** which is recited during the Home Blessing Service. Read it through once and then have them repeat each line after you. If you were able to bring in incense, light it and show the children how the smoke rises just as our prayers do.
5. Now teach or read from **We Learn About God** about the early church.
6. Place the bread, salt, and water next to the incense on your desk and have the children gather around. Read through the text in **Our Armenian Way**, pausing to discuss the information about each element. Discuss with children: “Who here eats bread? What do you do with bread? (Sandwiches, toast, etc.) Why is bread important? (a staple of life, important for our nutrition) Why is water so important? What do we do with water?” (clean things, bathe, swim, need it to live, etc.) As children love this kind of information, you might add: “Do you know that most of the earth is covered with water (70%)? And most of the human body consists of water (60%)?” 15 min.
7. With children back at their desks, read “In My Father’s House” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
8. Teach children the simple and beautiful refrain sung during blessing services (if you would like to enlist the help of a choir member or capable volunteer, do so!), “Amen, Alleluia.” Have them stand for the final round. 10 min.
9. Distribute Home Blessing cubes, pre-cut. Have children color the pictures in bright colored marker. Help them fold the cube, tape with Scotch tape, and instruct them to place the cube on their table when they have their homes blessed. Email parents with a suggestion to arrange for their homes to be blessed in the post-Christmas (or Easter) season, in the Armenian tradition.
10. Conclude class with a prayer: “Lord, help us keep our homes and our families holy; bless every corner and every room so that we might live in it as holy people. Amen.” 10 min.

Unit Two* *God and Me Together* *Christmas*

Lesson

8

Key Concepts

1. We celebrate the birth and baptism of Jesus Christ on January 6.
2. We prepare for this celebration during the season of Advent.
3. The *Churorhnek* service recalls the baptism of Jesus and is celebrated immediately after the Christmas Badarak.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Review the meaning of Advent.
2. Learn why some Christian churches changed the date for Christmas to December 25.

4. Read and discuss a story about the gifts we treasure and how we can thank God.
5. Read “Jesus is Born” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Do a Christmas puzzle.
7. Examine the Christmas *Churorhnek* Service and learn the Armenian Christmas greeting.
8. Make an Armenian Christmas miniature wall hanging.

Materials Needed

1. Thin markers, colored pencils, crayons, scissors, single hole punch
2. Calendar
3. ADVENT printed on a card or on the chalkboard
4. Crèche or flannel board figures of the nativity
5. Copies of Nativity coloring picture from back of this manual (on heavier paper, if possible)

Note to the Teacher

Armenian Advent can begin to be marked off on November 18, since from that day to the 6th is 50 days. It is recommended that on the first Sunday of Advent in November, you mark a calendar as in Procedure #2 and use the brief information in **Let’s Talk** to prepare them for Advent. Continue to remind them about Advent until Christmas!

Procedure

1. Greet children warmly as they arrive and then have them stand in place or in a circle for the opening prayer.
2. Once students are seated, distribute lessons and read **Let’s Talk**. Point to the word on the board. On a calendar, mark the 50 days that precede Armenian Christmas and point to today’s date. If you were able to talk about Advent back in November, discuss their Advent journey to date. 10 min.
3. Then continue by saying “Now some of you might already know that we in the Armenian Church experience not one, but *two* Christmases. Our own day of celebration is January 6. But know that most of our Christian brothers and sisters celebrate December 25. It’s wonderful to participate in all the beautiful customs of the season, but it’s nice to remember that our Christmas comes *after* New Year and is really the first big feast day of the year! Listen as I read about why the Armenian Church celebrates Christmas on January 6.” Read **Listen to This**.
4. Follow-up the last line of the text with “And do you know *why* we celebrate? “ (Because Jesus, the Son of God, was born.) Let’s hear the story right from the Bible.” Read **God Speaks to Us** or, even better, tell the story using the crèche or flannel board figures (or both). Enlist children’s aid in moving crèche and flannel board figures. 5 min.
5. Read and talk about the story in **We Learn About God**. Treasures might include: a favorite toy (Which? What makes it a treasure to you?), a pet, a parent, a book, a souvenir from a special trip. Gifts from God might include: family, a brother or sister, the sun, rain, a great friend, school, TV, computers, etc. How we can thank God might include: in prayer, being at church or Sunday School, respecting and loving parents, being a good friend, etc. 5 min.
6. Read “Jesus is Born” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. After clean-up, distribute crayons (allow children to use different colors). Announce that there is

a special message in **Hearts and Hands** and that they should color the x's to help the message stand out. Read the message to the children and ask them to repeat it.

8. Explain that this message is shared at Christmas time from the altar and among the parishioners. Teach the information in **Our Armenian Way** and then have children stand to repeat the Christmas greeting in Armenian and English. Have them review it a few times, as a group and singly. 10 min.
9. Distribute Nativity handout and markers. When children have finished coloring, have them apply glue stick to the halos of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. Help them use gold glitter for Mary's and Joseph's halos; gold for the Baby Jesus' except for the three cross bars which should be red (they should probably come to your desk to use glue and glitter). When finished, punch two holes at the top center (about three inches apart) and tie with a red or green ribbon. As a prayer, conclude class with the happy exclamation: "Christ is born! Kreesdos dzunav!" 20 min.

Unit Three* *Following Jesus* *The Saints*

Lesson

1

Key Concepts

1. The church celebrates the special followers of Jesus, the saints.
2. St. Vartan Mamigonian fought a war for religious freedom.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Explain what makes a saint a saint.
2. Recall some facts about Vartan's life.
3. Retell the story of the Battle of Avarayr.
4. Read "Mary and Joseph" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Make and decorate a shield, honoring St. Vartan.

Materials Needed

1. Copies of the shield in the back of the Teacher's Manual on card stock. Cut out the shield, one for each child.
2. Handle for back of shield (optional) 1 ½" x 5"
3. Crayons; thin markers; glue; twine

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then have them stand in place or in a circle to pray.
2. Once they are seated, ask the children "Do you know the names of any saints? Why are they called 'saint'?" After a brief discussion (include such ideas about saints as people who love God, who value his ways, who want to be like Jesus, who let love guide all they do, etc.), distribute the lesson and direct students to look at the picture of St. Vartan as you read to them about saints in **Let's Talk**. 10 min.

3. Read **Listen to This**. Review the facts presented by the students. Do the activity that will reveal the name of St. Vartan’s mother (Sahaganoosh).
Read the passage from I Thessalonians in **God Speaks to Us** and discuss things children can do to be pleasing to God. These might include: doing things to grow closer to him, i.e. pray, attend church, read the Bible, help others, love others; take care of the earth (discuss ways); helping others (a sibling, a parent, a friend, a grandmother), etc. 10 min.
4. Go to the rug area to explore more about St. Vartan. Read in an animated voice (an outside reader dressed as St. Vartan—just requires a red cape and a Roman-style helmet and shield! – would be a great touch). Begin to read **We Learn About God**, stopping to discuss questions and Ghevont’s statement of faith. Continue with the story of Vartan in **Our Armenian Way**. Go back to their desks to read the last paragraph; explain the last sentence to your students and discuss questions. 10 min.
5. Segue with: “Let’s spend snack time talking about two other very important saints, Mary and Joseph.” Read “Mary & Joseph” in *Jesus: Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. As shown in **Hearts and Hands**, distribute pre-cut shields. Say: “This a shield that you can hang in your room to remind you not only of St. Vartan but all the saints who made decisions to please God. What are some symbols that would describe St. Vartan and the Vartanians (those who fought with St. Vartan)?” Encourage responses. Symbols that might be considered are a cross, a sword, Mt. Ararat and the date of battle. The children can decorate/color the shield. Then they will draw and color the four symbols on the shield. A handle can be glued on to the back of the shield (optional). Twine can be attached at the top of the shield for hanging at home.
7. Conclude with a prayer. You might want to have students participate by starting with: “Lord, help us be your saints in the world this week. Let us try to live in the spirit of St. Vartan by being....” (look for such answers as brave, devoted to you, strong in our faith, happy to serve you, unafraid, happy to serve our church and people, willing to do the right thing), and dismiss class. 20 min.

Unit Three* Following Jesus ***Poon Paregentan***

Lesson

2

Key Concepts

1. Lent in the Armenian Church begins on a Monday. Poon Paregentan (Good Living) is a celebration held on the day before.
2. On Poon Paregentan, we remember the happy days spent by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss the creation and our role as the earth’s stewards.

2. Participate in an imagining exercise about the Garden of Eden.
3. Draw their favorite thing in God’s creation.
4. Read “Feeding 5,000 People” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Learn about Poon Paregentan.
6. Create a mask that might be worn at a Poon Paregentan celebration.

Materials Needed

1. Plain, inexpensive party masks from a party or costume store
2. Crayons, markers, glitter, feathers, glue, scissors, stapler

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter. Have them stand in place or in a circle to pray.
2. Once children are seated, say: “How many days did it take for God to create the world and the universe?” You might want to hold up and remind students of the contents of Unit Two, Lesson 1 where Creation was looked at from a slightly different angle. Distribute lesson and continue with **Let’s Talk**. “Yes, it took six days. And what did God do on the seventh day?” Gradually lead the children to the answer that God was pleased with what he had done, and he rested. 5 min.
3. In **Listen to This**, discuss ways we can keep the earth clean. Examples: recycling, picking up litter, caring for pets and helping animal rescue organizations, re-using things. Record them on the board.
4. Continue with **God Speaks to Us** . Have children stand in their places. They may sit down only when they’ve answered a question. Use these and add or repeat questions if you have more students: 1. What would *you* have named the first two people God created? 2. What animal would you have created *first*? 3. What’s your favorite animal? 4. Do you think it rained in the Garden of Eden? Why? 5. Name a tree you think would have been in the Garden. 6. Would you have been happy living in the Garden? 7. Who would you have liked living in the Garden with you? 8. What do you think was God’s favorite creation? (whatever the answer, say: you know what? He may have indeed loved *child’s answer*, but the Bible tells us that *people* were his favorite. He made them in *his* image!) 15 min.
5. Read **We Learn About God** and allow time for children to draw their favorite thing in God’s beautiful world. Have them hold up their drawings and share comments. 10 min.
6. Read “Feeding 5,000 People” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. Teach the material in **Our Armenian Way**. Distribute masks and have students decorate them with feathers, sequins and ribbons. Conclude class with a prayer and remind students to give their masks to parents with an explanation of Poon Paregentan. 20 min.

Unit Three* Following Jesus

Great Lent

Lesson

3

Key Concepts

1. During Great Lent, we recall the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness and all that he did for us.
2. We prepare for the greatest Feast of the Church, Easter, the Resurrection of our Lord.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Learn about the meaning of Great Lent.
2. Explore two scenarios about temptation and discuss them.
3. Listen to Matthew 4:1-11, then discuss the 40-day period Jesus spent on a mountain.
4. Review the Lord's Prayer in English, emphasizing the following lines:
"and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."
5. Read "Lost Sheep" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Learn and recite the chant, "Children of God."
7. Complete a Lenten cross to be used at home during Lent.

Materials Needed

1. Copies of the Lenten cross (have a finished sample on display)
2. Scissors, pencils, ruler

Notes to the Teacher

Make copies of the cross hand-out on heavy paper stock. You may choose to cut out the crosses before class. Finish a cross for display in the classroom.

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then have them stand in place or in a circle to pray.
2. Before the children sit down, play a little "temptation" game. Have them all come to the front of the classroom. Tell them: "Today we are going to talk about Great Lent and about Jesus' time in the wilderness when he faced temptation. Who knows what temptation means? Well, we'll be talking about that today. Meanwhile, let's play a temptation game. I'm going to ask you a few questions and depending on your answer, you will go to this spot or that (designate the two opposite sides of the front of the classroom). "If you were walking to church and the kid in front of you dropped a dollar he had for his collection plate, would you pick it up and give it to him or keep it? Stand here if you'd give it to him and here if you think you might keep it." Do the same for the next three questions: "If you decide to give up candy for Lent and your friend offers you your favorite candy, would you take it? If your dad said you couldn't play outside until you picked up your toys, would you run out to play if a friend called you?" At the end of the game, have children return to their seats and say: "Well, thank you for your honesty! I think we know that God would have been more pleased with us if in each of these cases we..." - review questions. 15 min.
3. Now read **Listen to This** and discuss questions. 10 min.

4. Continue with **God Speaks to Us**. After each temptation, ask children to repeat what the Devil asked and what Jesus answered. Conclude with: “So here we see Jesus telling us three important things: God’s Word is as important to us as the food we eat. We can’t test God to see what he would do. And we worship only God and not the bad things of the world.”
5. In **We Learn About God**, have students focus on the picture of Jesus with his disciples. “The disciples have asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. We have already learned the Hayr Mer, remember?” Pray it together. “Let’s think especially of the part about temptation.” Review the lines “Give us this day our daily bread.....but deliver us from evil.” 10 min.
6. Read “Lost Sheep” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. After clean-up, go back to page 1 and read **Let’s Talk**. Then turn to page 4, **Hearts and Hands**. Say: “We are going to learn a chant to remind us of all the good behaviors we can show during Lent and all year round. Listen to the words first; then repeat after me.” Have them stand. Teach the chant that can be recited in unison or assign sections to pairs of children. 5 min.
8. Distribute cross hand-outs. “This is a cross to be used by you during Lent. Hang it somewhere where you can see it every day. Whenever you do something that is kind or helpful to your parents, your family, your friends or someone at school, color in one of the spaces on the cross. Your kind acts will please Jesus, too.”
9. Conclude with a prayer for Lent: “Lord, help us follow you closely for the next forty days. Fill our hearts with loving feelings and our minds with loving thoughts. Help us follow you, during all the days of Great Lent and all the days of our lives.” (Email parents to have their children mount the cross and work on filling it in during Lent. Follow up periodically.) 10 min.

Unit Three* *Following Jesus* *The Disciples*

Lesson

4

Key Concepts

1. Jesus chose twelve people to help him. They were called his disciples or apostles.
2. After Jesus’ death, the apostles went all over the world to preach the word of God. They chose others, in turn, to lead the church.
3. Two of the apostles, Thaddeus and Bartholomew, were sent to Armenia.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Explore the meaning of “teacher” and “student” and why Jesus needed faithful helpers.
2. Read about how Jesus called the disciples to follow him.
3. Discuss how we can be present-day disciples of Jesus and apostles of his message.

4. Name the twelve disciples.
5. Identify Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew as the apostles who went to Armenia with the Good News.
6. Review the names of important places and people in the Armenian Church today.
7. Read “Follow Me” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
8. Create a banner of Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew.

Materials Needed

1. Copies of the illustration of Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew
2. 12" x 18" colored construction paper
3. Glue, colored pencils, crayons, markers, yarn cut in 16-inch pieces
4. Large plain index cards or card stock (see Procedure #4)

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then have them stand in place or in a circle to pray.
2. Once children are seated, write the words “teacher” and “student” on the board. Ask them to describe the qualities of each. “What is a teacher?” (Someone who knows things that he or she will help others know, a person with a lot of knowledge, etc.) “What is a student?” (Someone who is learning things they don’t know). Explain that today the children will be taking a closer look at how Jesus gathered students around him so that he could teach them God’s ways and then they could teach others. Distribute their lesson and read **Let’s Talk** about Jesus’ calling of disciples. 10 min.
3. Read and discuss **Listen to This**. Explore with the children different ways they can help Jesus in addition to the ways listed. Examples: You can be a good neighbor (discuss how); help the poor (discuss how), grow closer to him (in prayer, by going to church, by reading Bible stories), etc. Teach **God Speaks to Us** and review the names of the twelve disciples. Write the names in big letters on the board and have the children stand. By raising hands, each can name a disciple and then sit. 10 min.
4. Read **We Learn About God** about the roles of the new leaders of the church – the bishops and priests. In **Our Armenian Way**, review the names of your parish priest, the Diocesan Primate, and the Catholicos. You could print these names on cards or paper in large print at eye level for children to see and copy easily. These can be left on display in the classroom and a picture of each added later. (Diocesan Primate: Bishop Daniel Findikyan; Catholicos of All Armenians: His Holiness Karekin II) 10 min.
5. Read “Follow Me” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. After clean-up, say “Today we learned that Jesus sent his apostles all over the world. Two of them went to Armenia. They were St. Bartholomew and St. Thaddeus.” Teach, do not read, the text in **Hearts and Hands**.
7. Say: “Today each one of you is going to make a banner honoring St. Bartholomew and St. Thaddeus.” Distribute the construction paper and the illustrations. Help the children with the craft as follows. Hold the paper vertically. Fold the top edge of the paper about 2 inches. Put a piece of yarn under the folded part and glue the folded edge to the paper. Have them color the illustration then glue it on to the colored paper. You might want to begin preparing their banners and tying the yarn while they are coloring. Conclude with a prayer: “Lord, help

us be good disciples, faithful and true. Give us the courage and vision of St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew and all the disciples who followed you without question and changed the hearts of millions of people. Amen.”

20 min.

Unit Three* Following Jesus

Leaders* St. Gregory

Lesson

5

Key Concepts

1. The disciples of Jesus were committed to him and his teachings despite great challenges.
2. Armenia became the first nation to adopt Christianity. It was declared the state religion in the year 301 A.D.
3. Holy Etchmiadzin was the first church built in Armenia. It is known as the Mother Church.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Explore the stories of Sts. Paul and Gregory.
2. Take part in a retelling of how Armenia became a Christian nation and the building of Holy Etchmiadzin.
3. Read “Jesus Is Welcomed Like a King” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. (Read this story on Palm Sunday also.)
4. Create a stained glass window of St. Gregory.

Materials Needed

1. Make copies of the figure of St. Gregory found at the end of the Teacher Manual. Trace the window frames on black construction paper and cut them out prior to class. Be sure to cut out the shapes within the frame so that the tissue pieces can be added.
2. Sheets of colored tissue paper
3. A sample of a finished window

Note to the Teacher

In church today, direct children’s attention to the stained glass windows.

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then have them stand in place or in a circle to pray. Ask the children if they know what “enlightener” means (someone who brings a light to our understanding, makes us see something more clearly).
2. Once children are seated, distribute lessons and read **Let’s Talk**. After reading, ask: “Who can tell me what ‘pagan’ means? Why did some of the early Armenians, especially the kings, remain pagan?” Answers might include: it’s hard to change old beliefs; it was scary for kings to think of a powerful God – after all, they thought themselves to be god-like; they wanted the people to follow them, not Jesus.
3. Say: “Close your eyes. I am going to take you back in time. Use your imaginations to think

about life back in the early days of Christianity.” Read **Listen to This** as animatedly as you can. Pause to discuss their answers. 15 min.

4. Read or teach **God Speaks to Us** and **We Learn About God**. Review information by later asking: “Who can remember one fact about St. Paul? Who can remember one fact about St. Gregory?” Etc. 10 min.
5. Direct students to the picture of Holy Etchmiadzin. “Do you know what Etchmiadzin means? Listen to this amazing story.” Read the story in **Our Armenian Way**. As a fun way to review, have the students take turns telling the story. Let each student stand and provide one sentence, then sit down for the next child to stand and continue the story. If you feel the children need “to move,” call them up one at a time to do this. Prompt them with missing details. In this way you can review all they learned together today. 10 min.
6. Read “Jesus Is Welcomed Like a King” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions.
7. Ask a student to distribute copies of the window and the St. Gregory figure (**Hearts and Hands**). Show them your own sample. Have them color the figure of St. Gregory, then glue different colored pieces of tissue paper to the back of the window frame. The St. Gregory figure can then be glued on top. 20 min.
8. Conclude by having children share their finished work. Pray together: “Lord, thank us for this chance today to learn about more of your saintly enlighteners St. Paul and St. Gregory. Help us shine your light on the world, too, just like the stained glass window we made today. Amen.” 5 min.

Unit Three* *Following Jesus* *Easter*

Lesson

6

Key Concepts

1. Christ’s resurrection is remembered on Easter, the holiest day of the Church year.
2. Christ’s resurrection is a sign of hope for all of us.
3. God’s message of love and forgiveness is that everyone who turns (or returns) to God can live forever with him.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Read a story about the joy of Easter in our lives today.
2. Restate God’s message of hope.
3. Review the events at the tomb of Christ on Easter morning and the meeting of Jesus with his disciples in Galilee.
4. Read “The End...and The Beginning” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Memorize the Easter greeting in Armenian and English.

6. Number in sequence the events in Jesus' life after the crucifixion and make a special Easter cross with the pictures.

Materials Needed

1. Copies of the cross from the back of the Teacher's Manual, preferably on card stock
2. Color copies of the 6 post-resurrection pictures in their student lesson
3. Pencils; colored pencils; markers, glue, scissors

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then have them stand in place or in a circle to pray.
2. Read about Varteni and her father and God's hope for us in **Let's Talk** and **Listen to This**. Ask children what they think would be something needing God's forgiveness (a mean thought or word, or action, taking something that isn't ours, etc.). What does it mean to be truly sorry? (to realize it was something we shouldn't have done and to be determined not to do it again). 10 min.
3. Read **God Speaks to Us**. Pause to discuss questions; distribute pencils and allow some time for children to draw their angels and share them with the class. 15 min.
4. Direct students' attention to the picture of Jesus speaking with his disciples. What do you think they are saying? Read **We Learn About God** together. 10 min.
5. Read "The End...And The Beginning" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. After clean-up, have children stand in their places while you teach them the Easter greeting in **Our Armenian Way**. Repeat the greeting several times with the children. They can also practice greeting each other in English and Armenian. Remind them to give their parents the greeting after church today (it is *not* a greeting given *in* church. The Kiss of Peace in church always remains the same). 5 min.
7. Distribute the cross from the Teacher Manual and direct children to the 6 illustrations in their student book under **Hearts and Hands**. "We are going to remember the story at the tomb and number these pictures in the order in which they happened." Have the children number them correctly in their lesson (T: 3, 4, 2/B: 1, 5, 6). Then distribute their own copies, and have them cut out their squares. They may then glue them to the cross (see sample below).
8. Dismiss the class by giving them the Easter greeting and receiving their response. tell children they must bring a shoebox next week; email parents a reminder. 15 min.



Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together

Jesus is With Us at Church

Lesson

1

Key Concepts

1. We celebrate the life of Jesus during the Divine Liturgy.
2. Jesus is with us in a special way when we gather as a church family.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss activities they do with their families.
2. Compare family activities with the activities of the church family.
3. Discuss the meaning of the Bible passage Matthew 18:20.
4. Memorize Matthew 18:20.
5. Read a story about a girl and her great-grandmother.
6. Name the objects found on the altar.
7. Read “Heaven Belongs to Them” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
8. Make a church diorama.

Materials Needed

1. Diorama hand-outs copied in sufficient number for students
2. Shoe boxes
3. Thin markers
4. Glue sticks
5. Plastic bags for children to take home their boxes

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Ask children what kinds of things they do with their families. (Write them on the board; accept all answers).
3. Distribute today’s lesson and continue the discussion by examining the text and photos in **Let’s Talk** and **Listen to This**, emphasizing the similarities between their families and church families (in both families: we have fun, we share meals, we thank and praise God, we comfort each other’s sorrows). 15 min.
4. Read Matthew 18:20 in **God Speaks to Us**; briefly discuss the passage. Ask: “How do you think Jesus might be with us *especially* when we are together?” (In the respect and love we show towards each other, in our thankfulness, in the good work we accomplish together, in the peace we feel when we pray and sing together.) “Did Jesus mean just ‘two or three’ only – if there were four, he wouldn’t be close to us?” (Of course not, 2 or 3 means when any number come together, but always in his name, which has special reference to being at church together.) Repeat the passage several times to help the children memorize it. 5 min.
5. Go to the rug area to read the story about Kohar and her great-grandmother.

Discuss with children the reasons Kohar's great-grandmother gave for attending church and being a part of the church family. Return to table or desks. 10 min.

6. Read "Heaven Belongs to Them" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. Review the text and vessels in **Our Armenian Way**. Then distribute diorama sheets, markers, scissors, and glue sticks and help children construct their church dioramas. Have them first color the altar and church, then cut and affix to the sides of the shoebox with glue.
8. Bag the dioramas for each child and end with a prayer: "Lord, help us always remember the power we have in you when we gather, even two or three of us, to be together in your name. Amen." 20 min.

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together We Listen to God's Word

Lesson

2

Key Concepts

1. The Avedaran (Gospel Book) contains the writings of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
2. The Gospels were written to tell the good news about Jesus.
3. The Word of God is read to the people of God.
4. The name of the Bible in Armenian is Asdvadz-a-shoonch (Breath of God).

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss some basic facts about the Bible.
2. Listen to a story about a boy named Danny.
3. Listen to the Bible reading from the Old Testament.
4. Take part in a discussion about the Old and New Testaments.
5. Read "A Farmer Planting Seeds" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Learn and recite the deacon's and choir's responses before a Scripture reading.
7. Make and illustrate a book about the holy evangelists.
8. Attend church for the Final Blessing to kiss the Gospel Book.

Materials Needed

1. A Bible
2. Red construction paper for book cover (8 ½" x 11"), one for each child
3. White paper, one for each child
4. Rectangular strips – 5" and 7" (one set for each student) cut from silver paper for cross on book cover
5. Templates of biographical material (from back of this manual)
6. Glue sticks, stapler, colored pencils, crayons, markers, scissors

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Hold up the Bible and ask: “Children, do you remember what this special book is?” (A Bible, and they’ve been hearing stories from the Bible for many weeks.) Then ask, “Do you remember the name of this book in Armenian?” Before or while they are answering, distribute today’s lesson and read questions in **Let’s Talk**. Guide children to bottom of the page and answers. 10 min.
3. Let them follow as you read the story about Danny in **Listen to This**. Explain that the Gospel book on the altar is just the first four books in the Bible on display (flip through it to demonstrate). Direct their attention to the Scripture verse in **God Speaks to Us**. Help children review it a few times until they can say it smoothly. Ask “What do you think it means to obey God’s commandments?” (Discuss; remind them of the Ten Commandments and rules for us to follow such as always honoring God’s name, setting aside Sunday for God’s day; honoring our parents, etc, also being peacemakers, being a good sister or brother, etc.)
4. Continue with **We Learn About God** and **Our Armenian Way**. As you talk about the Old and New Testaments, open a Bible to show these sections to the children. Ask the children to repeat the deacon’s and choir’s responses after you. Practice them several times. 15 min.
5. Read “A Farmer Planting Seeds” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. You might want to demonstrate the effect of holding the Bible in front of your face while reading, by reading the Bible story both ways. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. Describe the evangelists (using text from the Teacher Manual hand-outs) in **Hearts and Hands** as the children look at the portraits. Distribute red construction paper and have students fold it in half and glue the silver strips (one short, one long) to make a cross and glue on the cover. Then have them fold the white sheet in half, cut and glue each evangelist’s description on a different page and draw a picture of each over the text. They may use the illustrations in their lesson as models. Staple the pages inside the cover. 20 min.
7. Clean up and attend the Final Blessing in church so the children can kiss the Gospel. 5 min.

Unit Four The Church Family* Being Together* *We Say What We Believe*

Lesson

3

Key Concepts

1. Prayer can help us grow stronger and surer in faith.
2. The Havadamk is a special statement of faith of what we, as Armenian Christians, believe.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Attend church especially to participate in and hear the Creed (this may affect the order of your activities).

2. Participate in a discussion about what they believe about Jesus.
3. Hear, discuss and retell a story about a father and his sick child (Mark 9: 14-29).
4. Read “The Garden of Prayer” in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Take part in a discussion of the Havadamk (We Believe).
6. Review the position of the hands during the recitation of the Havadamk.
7. Memorize the first statement of the Havadamk.

Materials Needed

1. Prayer hands (from back of Teacher Manual) and Creed statements (copied from Student Lesson)
2. Glue

Note to the Teacher

1. Timing for today’s lesson should be flexible as you will be attending church for the Havadamk; adjust accordingly.
2. For next week, you might want to enlist the help of two older students to act out the parts in next week’s **Listen to This**. It would be fun for both your class and the older students to have this “dilemma” performed.

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Distribute the lesson and go through **Let’s Talk** with the children. Call their attention to the first picture. Ask them, “Do you believe Jesus was born in a stable, and do you believe his mother’s name is Mary?” Ask the children to respond, “We believe.” Continue in this way with the rest of the pictures. Use it as an opportunity to review these events in Jesus’ life. 10 min.
3. Tell the children to listen attentively to a few lines of Scripture and read from **God Speaks to Us** and then follow by saying “here’s the story behind those few lines!” Read **We Learn About God** as animatedly as possible and discuss the first three questions (accept all answers but for why the apostles could not help the man – students might say they didn’t try hard enough or didn’t know how – you can follow up with Jesus’ own advice: that prayer was needed).
4. Have children stand up. Begin retelling the story, one line at a time (you begin); as each child adds a sentence, they may sit down. Encourage them to help one another remember details. Then discuss the last question. You might want to conclude with: “Wonderful! Lots of good things to remember, but let’s always especially remember two things: that Jesus is always ready to help us become even stronger and even surer in our faith. What do we need to do to let him know we need help? Yes, pray!” 10 min.
5. Attend church for the Scripture readings and Creed. Model the position of your hands for children to follow. 15 min.
6. Read “The Garden of Prayer” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. After clean-up, teach the material in **Listen to This** and **Our Armenian Way**.
8. **Heart and Hands**. Teach the children the statement of the Creed (*Havadamk*) in Armenian and English. When the children have memorized the first three lines, ask them to stand, position their hands, and recite it. 5 min.

9. Distribute Creed hands. Have children paste on Creed verses in Armenian and English and write *We Believe - Havadamk underneath* (write these words on the board and have them copy). Review verses again and dismiss with this prayer: "Lord, we believe! Help us believe more day by day." 10 min.

Unit Four* *The Church Family* Being Together* *Peace*

Lesson

4

Key Concepts

1. Jesus wants us to have peace in our hearts, the peace that comes from knowing and loving God.
2. Jesus wants us to be peacemakers.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss making choices.
2. Listen to a story about two brothers and take part in a discussion to find a solution to their problem.
3. Explore Jesus' instructions for peace in the Gospels of Mark and John.
4. Read "Now I Can See Him" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Listen to the priest's peace blessing directed to the congregation.
6. Memorize the congregation's response to the blessing.
7. Plan a mural to be titled "The Peacemakers."

Materials Needed

1. Pencils, colored pencils, crayons, markers, glue
2. Several sheets of 8 ½" X 5 ½" paper (white or pale colors)
3. Brown wrapping paper as background (24" x 36").
4. Caption for mural – Peacemakers

Note to the Teacher

Next week requires nushkhars and a visit to church as badarak ends. Confirm with your pastor and remind parents.

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Distribute lessons and begin by reading **Let's Talk** about making the right choices. Intersperse your reading with questions: What choices do we make that, let's say, our pet puppy or a bear in the forest doesn't have to make? (what clothes to wear, what to eat, whether to play outside or watch TV, whether to do homework now or later) What more difficult choices do we have to make? (helping a friend with her homework - even if it means less playtime, giving up something important during Lent, sharing a favorite sweater with our sister, etc.) 10 min.
3. Read **Listen to This** (or have two older students perform as per note in last week's lesson). Discuss solutions to the boys' dilemma. As children volunteer them, write them on the board in simple phrases. After a few moments, conclude your brainstorming. Have

volunteers (or everyone working together) retell the story in a few different ways, according to their solutions. 10 min.

4. Tell the children: “It was so important for people not to be angry with each other over silly things, especially in our families and church families, that Jesus gave us very clear instructions. Read Mark 5:23-24 in **God Speaks to Us**. With your help, encourage the children to share their understandings.
5. Continue with **We Learn About God** and discuss questions The last sentence will help the children understand the meaning of peace. 10 min.
6. Read “Now I Can See Him” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. Read and explain the priest’s blessing in Armenian and English in **Our Armenian Way**. Read the congregation’s response, repeating it several times to encourage memorization.
8. Say: “Today we are going to start a wall mural called “The Peacemakers.” Teach the text in **Hearts and Hands**. Encourage the children to make at least two contributions to the mural. Distribute paper. Ask the children to think about ways they have helped a neighbor, a pet, or a friend or family member and draw a picture of it. When the children finish their drawings, ask them to dictate a sentence about each one (for you to write in bold letters with a marker) and place them on the mural. The mural can be left on the wall for the rest of the class year and added to as the occasions arise. Conclude with a prayer and dismiss class. 20 min.

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together ***Our Gifts to God Become Jesus***

Lesson

5

Key Concepts

1. The gifts of bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. The nushkhar (wafer), made by the priest, represents the bread used at the Last Supper.
3. The nushkhar is used during Holy Communion along with the wine.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Hear about God’s special “forever” gifts to us.
2. Discuss what it means to be strong: first, physically, then spiritually.
3. Explore the special words that call us to share in Jesus’ very Body and Blood in church and at the Last Supper itself.
4. Role-play Peter’s denial of Jesus.
5. Read “Jesus Makes A Promise” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Learn about the nushkhar.

Materials Needed

1. Small plastic bags for nushkhar
2. A sample nushkhar
3. Nushkhar coloring page from Teacher Manual
4. Optional: props for acting out Peter's denial of Jesus (headgear, etc.)

Note to the Teacher

Confirm with your parish priest to have a sufficient number of nushkhars ready for the children in your class. Arrange to go to church. At the end of the service, go forward to kiss the Gospel. Stay in the chancel so that the priest can speak to the children (ask him to say a few simple words about the nushkhar, how it's made and when it's used) and give each one a nushkhar to take home. Have plastic bags ready.

You may also choose to be in church with your class to listen for the words, "Arek, gerek, ays eh marmeen eem." Arrange to receive Holy Communion as a class.

If you follow the lesson as written, apprise parents that class will be dismissed directly from church and that they may join their children in the chancel.

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Distribute today's lesson and direct children's attention to the muscleman in **Let's Talk**. "Wow! What do you think you have to do to build muscles and be strong like *this*? (exercise, lift weights, run, eat the foods that will help build muscle) Great. So that's how the *body* grows very strong. And what can you do when you're strong – although you don't have to have huge muscles like this to be strong, right? (lift things, walk and run well, think better, help others who are weaker, carry things) But what about our faith? How do we grow strong in soul and spirit?" (Discuss; include among answers: spiritual exercise like prayer and attending church and reading the Bible; loving acts, being around other faithful people, etc.) Read the text and talk about God's gifts with the children, exploring what each one means. 10 min.
3. Read from **Listen to This**. Repeat the words in English and Armenian – "Take, eat, this is my body. Arek, gerek, ays eh marmeen eem." Have the children repeat these words.
4. Read the story of the Last Supper (the Feast of Passover) in **God Speaks to Us**. Remind the children that the priest says these same words during the Badarak. 10 min.
5. Introduce the story and activity in **We Learn About God** by saying "Well, earlier in our lesson we learned what some of God's very important "forever" gifts to us are and how we become spiritually strong (review your opening conversation). And at the Last Supper, he gave the gift of Holy Communion so that with the simple act of taking bread and wine, we could share in the Body and Blood of Jesus. Peter was one of Jesus' trusted apostles. Let's see what *he* did right after receiving these gifts. Listen carefully as I read the story about Peter's behavior after Jesus was taken away by the soldiers." Read it and discuss. Now have children stand up and act out the story of Peter. Put the name of each character (Jesus, Peter, Soldiers, Servant Girl, Woman, Man) on a slip of paper so the students can choose one. You be the narrator and review what each person will say in the role they have chosen (simplify for first graders – they *can* do this!). Use props or headgear if desired. 20 min.

6. Read “Jesus Make A Promise” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. Continue with **Hearts and Hands** and **Our Armenian Way**. Distribute nushkhar illustrations that children can color while you teach. Prepare children to attend church, reminding them that the priest has made extra nushkhars for the class. When the service has ended, the priest will give each student a nushkhar; they can put it immediately in their baggie and take it home to place in a container of flour, rice, lentils or other grains. You might want to email parents to expect it. Since your class will end in church, let that be your concluding prayer. 10 min.

Unit Four* *The Church Family* Being Together* *The Church Forgives Us in God’s Name*

Lesson

6

Key Concepts

1. Jesus taught us that God’s love never ends and as God forgives us we need to forgive each other.
2. We need to prepare ourselves to receive Holy Communion.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Explore how God is like the father in the story of the prodigal son.
2. Discuss the importance of being forgiving ourselves (Matthew 6:14-15).
3. Listen to a story about a girl who hurt her best friend.
4. Read “Lazarus, Come Out” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
5. Learn about the sacrament of penance.
6. Create an invitation to family members to receive Holy Communion with the class.

Materials Needed

1. Colored pencils, crayons, markers, ribbon, stickers
2. Invitation from Appendix, one for each child. The child will insert the information on the invitation. It can be rolled up and tied with a ribbon. Or you can also fold the invitation after it has been decorated and seal it with a sticker.

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Distribute lessons and read **Let’s Talk**. Ask: “How do we know that God loves us? You know, Jesus told us this many times and we read about this in the Bible. But what are some of the ways we know God loves us?” (Solicit answers from children but mention or lead them to answering that we know God loves us because he gifted us with: life, our families, the beautiful world – and you can go into details here about animals, flowers, trees, stars, the sun, the church, so that we can grow together in faith, eternal life so that we may live with God forever.) Read **We Learn About God**. Give special emphasis to the last sentence. 15 min.

3. Talk about forgiveness using the Bible reference in **God Speaks to Us**. Discuss what experiences the children have had perhaps at home or at school where it might have been important to be forgiving (provide examples: a sister or brother being mean, a teacher thinking you were talking in class when you weren't). Then switch to experiences of hurting others and being *forgiven* (you get someone into trouble with a teacher, you talk back to your parents, you hurt a friend's feelings).
4. Go to the rug area and introduce the story about Elizabeth in **Listen to This** by saying: "Now let's listen to a story of someone who did something she was sorry she did." Read the story, pausing to ask: "Why do you think Elizabeth was upset when Lori was playing with someone else? Why do you think she pushed Lori? Was Lori right to tell the teacher?" Discuss. 15 min.
5. Have children return to their desks and read "Lazarus, Come Out" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
6. Review questions and answers in **Our Armenian Way**, exploring some of the things children might be sorry for doing or saying. 5 min.
7. Distribute communion handout from teacher manual. Have children color, decorate and fill it in. Conclude with a prayer and dismiss class. 15 min.

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together Let's Celebrate Our Happy Year Together*

Lesson

7

Today's class will consist of a review game, attending church where children will conduct an in-pew "scavenger hunt," and a class party.

Materials Needed

Snacks, treats, promotion prizes (this can be as simple or as elaborate as you wish)

Procedure

1. Read "The Happy Wedding" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
2. **Listen to This**. Work together on the review questions in **You Name It**.
3. Have children take their lesson and a pen to church. Instruct them to check off things they see in **You Find It** (review the list beforehand; you or their parents may give them further assistance in church).
4. After a brief session in church, return to the classroom and celebrate! Make sure you all draw on or sign the autograph page.

You Name It.

1. God created the world in how many days?
Six days. God rested on the seventh day.
2. What does **anoonovut dzeranas** mean?
May you grow old honoring your name.
3. Name the two gifts the deacon brings to the priest during Badarak.
Bread and wine.
4. In church, how do we share our love for God and for our church family?
We share our love through the Kiss of Peace.
5. Name one thing the family provides for the Home Blessing?
Salt, water, bread.
6. Who created the Armenian alphabet?
St. Mesrob with the help of St. Sahag.
7. What is the Armenian word for the Bible?
Asdvadzashoonch.
8. What happens when we receive Holy Communion?
Our sins are forgiven if we are truly sorry.
9. What do we celebrate on Easter Sunday?
Jesus rose from the dead.
10. Why did God send his son Jesus to us?
To tell us about God's great love for us.
11. What does Hayr Mer mean in English?
It means "Our Father."
12. Who taught the Hayr Mer prayer to the disciples?
Jesus.

Appendix

Craft Resources

Unit One

- Lesson 2 Jesus' Ascension coloring page
- Lesson 3 Tongues of Flame
- Lesson 4 Thank You, God for...
- Lesson 7 Gospel Bookmark

Unit Two

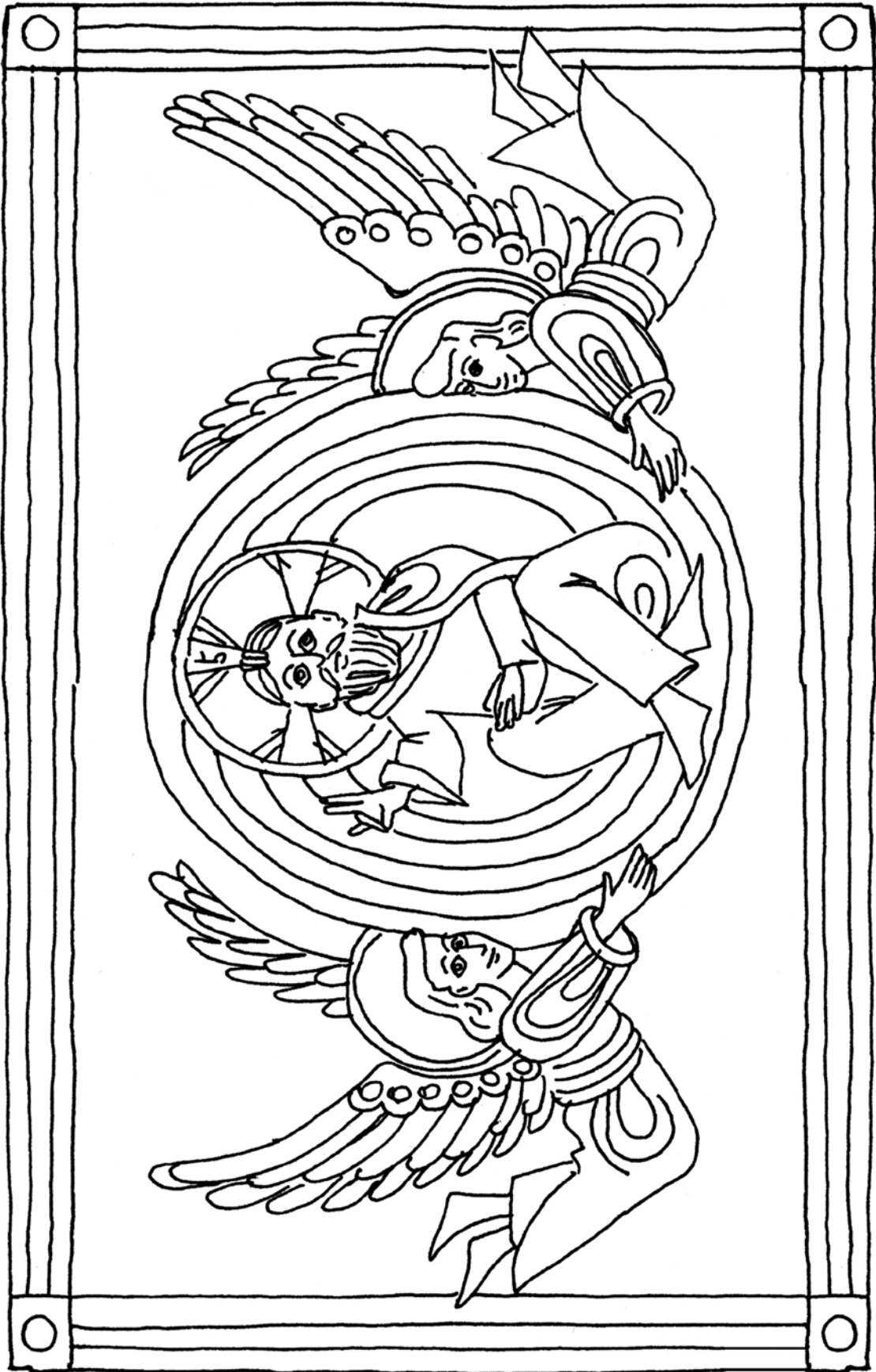
- Lesson 3 Fruit of the Holy Spirit
- Lesson 4 We Follow Jesus maze
- Lesson 6 Kohanamk Uzken/We Thank You, God poster title
- Lesson 7 Home Blessing Cube
- Lesson 8 Nativity coloring page

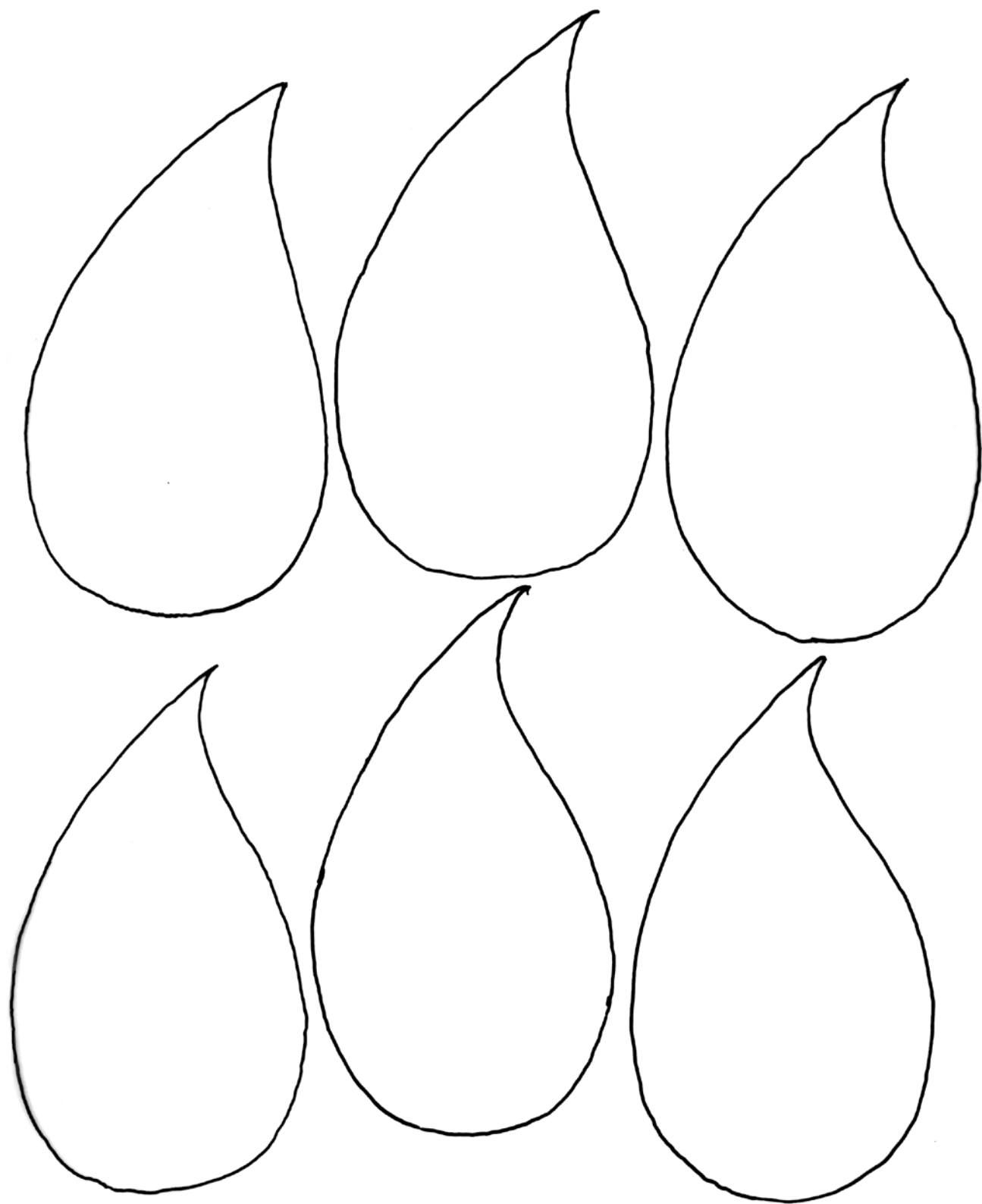
Unit Three

- Lesson 1 St. Vartan's Shield
- Lesson 3 Armenian Cross template
- Lesson 4 Sts. Thaddeus and Bartholomew banner figures
- Lesson 5 St. Gregory Figure/Window
- Lesson 6 Armenian Cross template

Unit Four

- Lesson 1 Diorama Altar/People
- Lesson 2 Evangelist Biographies
- Lesson 3 Prayer Hands
- Lesson 5 Nushkhar coloring page
- Lesson 6 Communion Invitation







Thank you God for

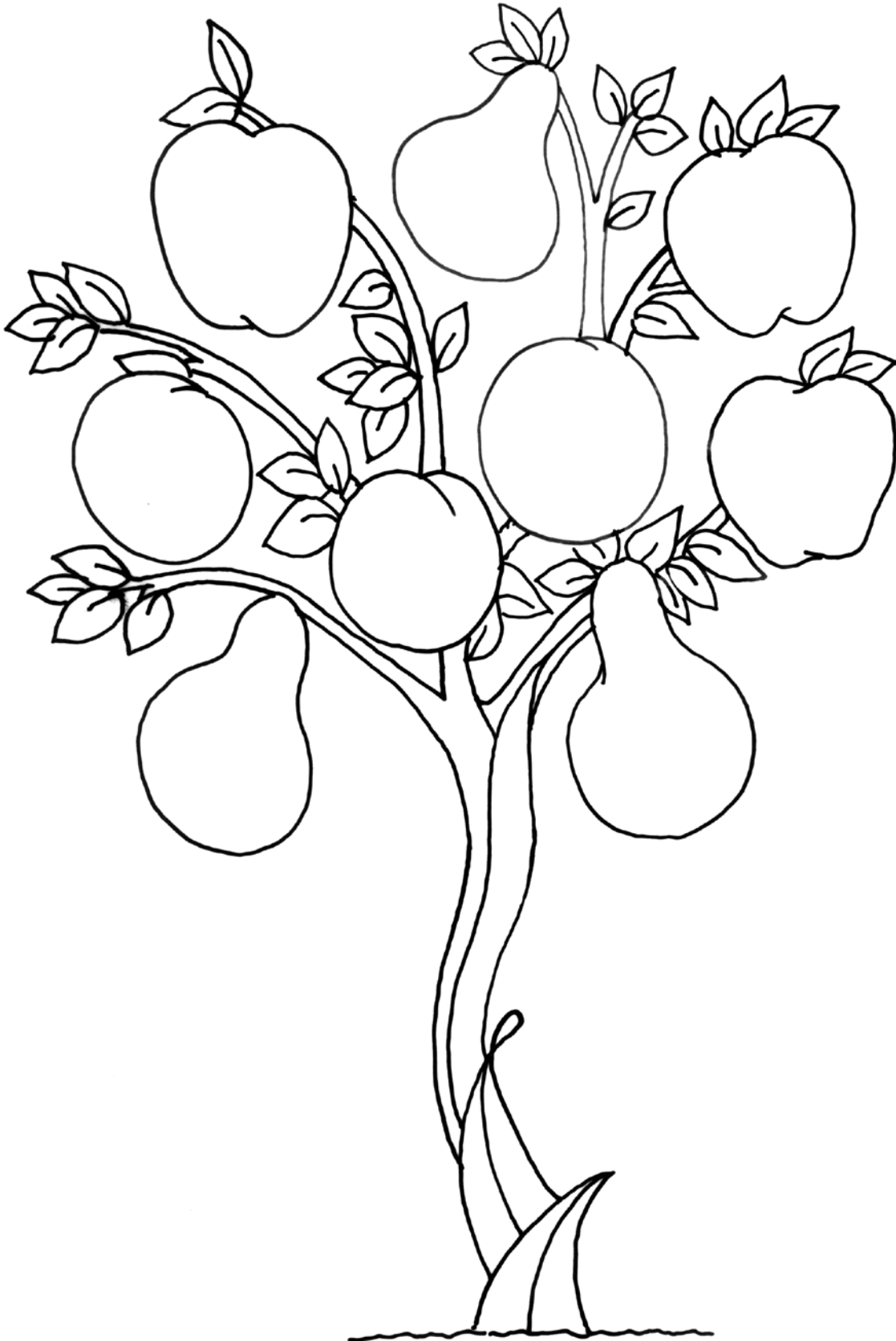
Thank you God for

Thank you God for

Thank you God for



Fruit of the Holy Spirit

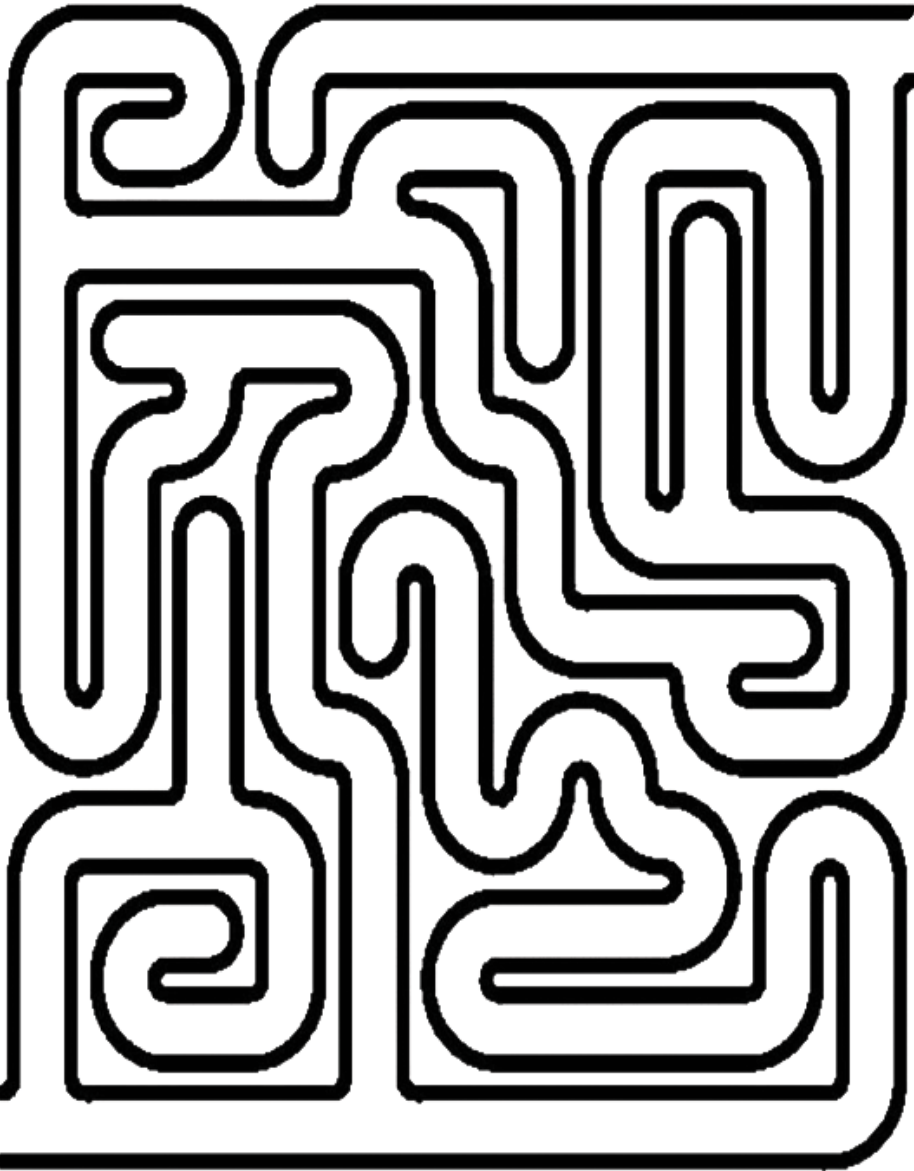


The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22

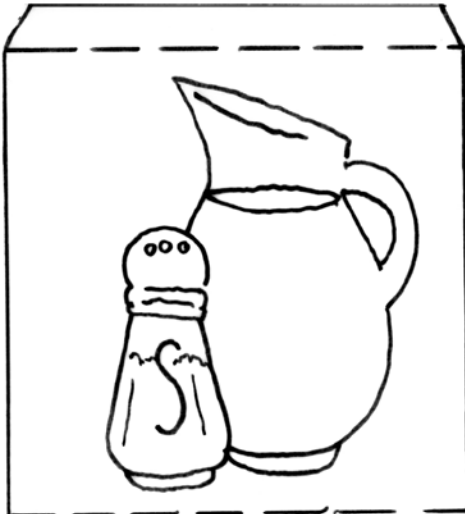


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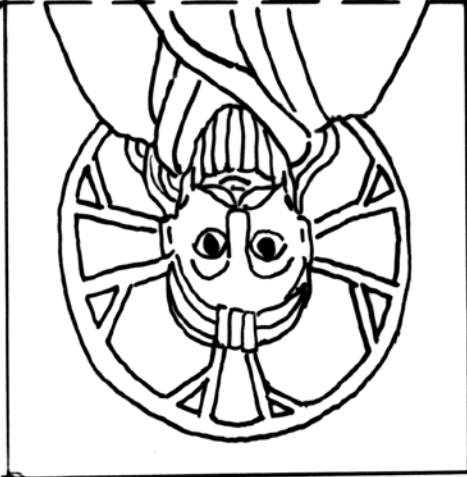
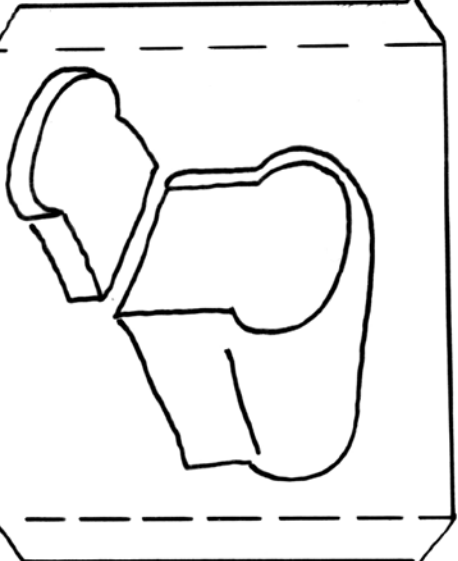
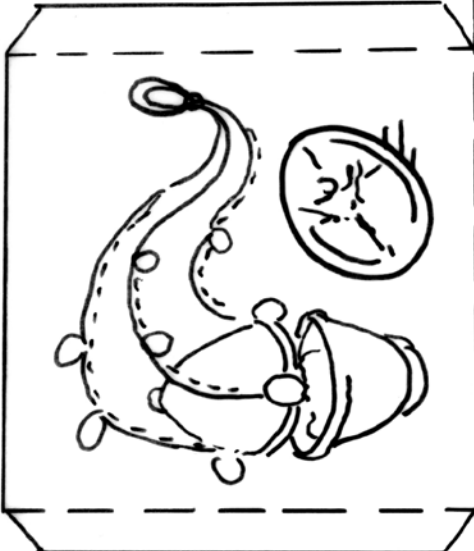


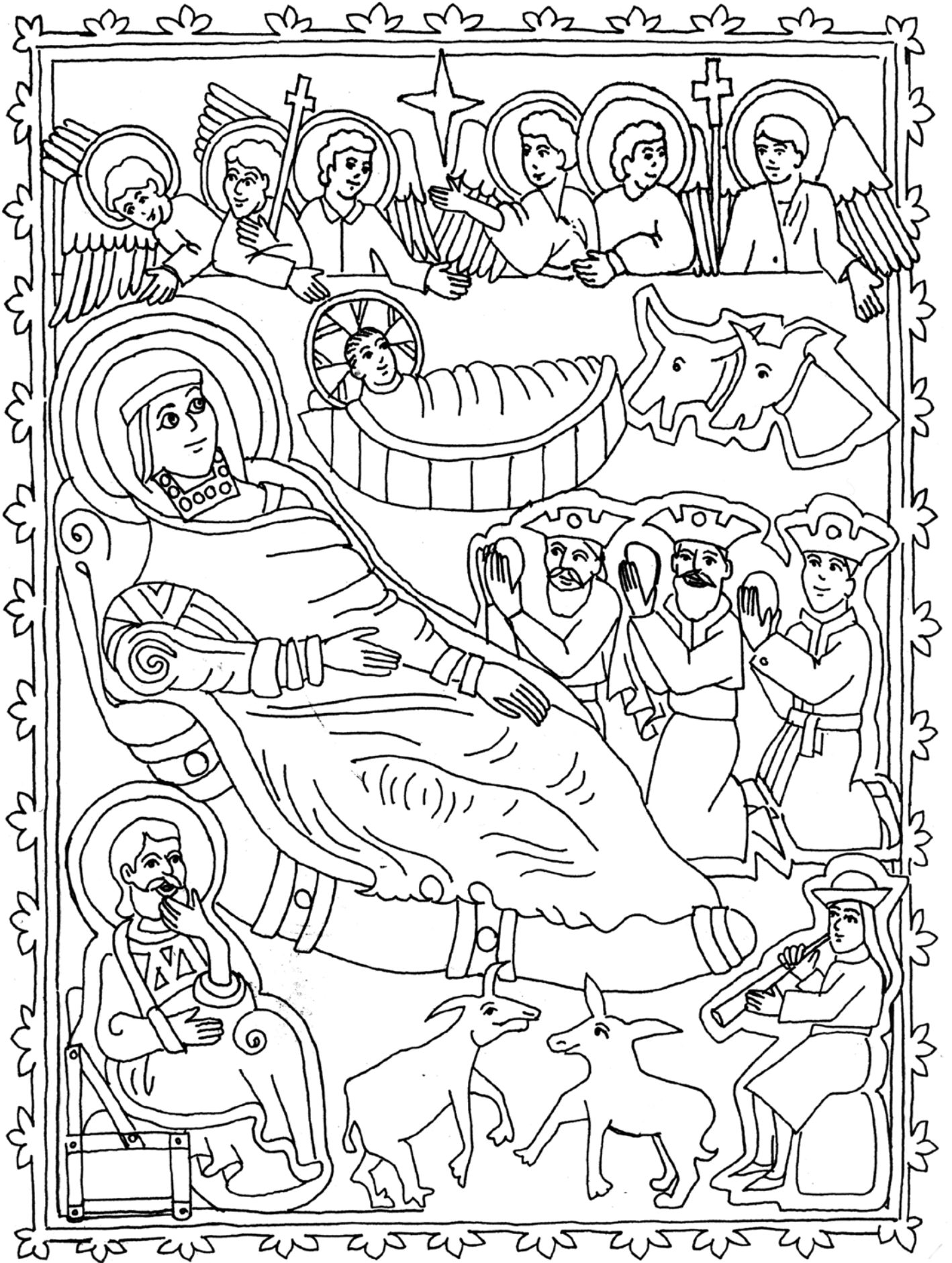
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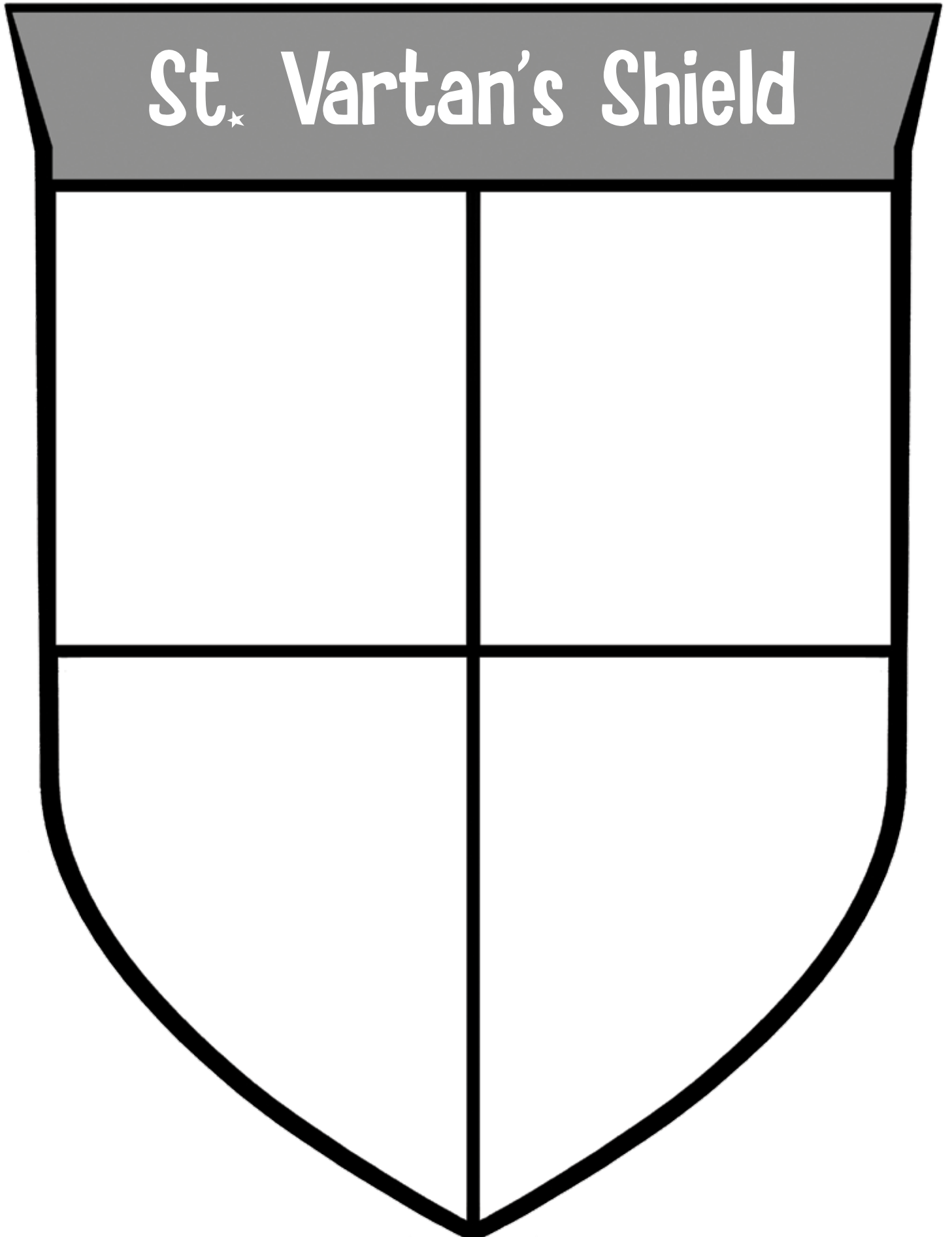


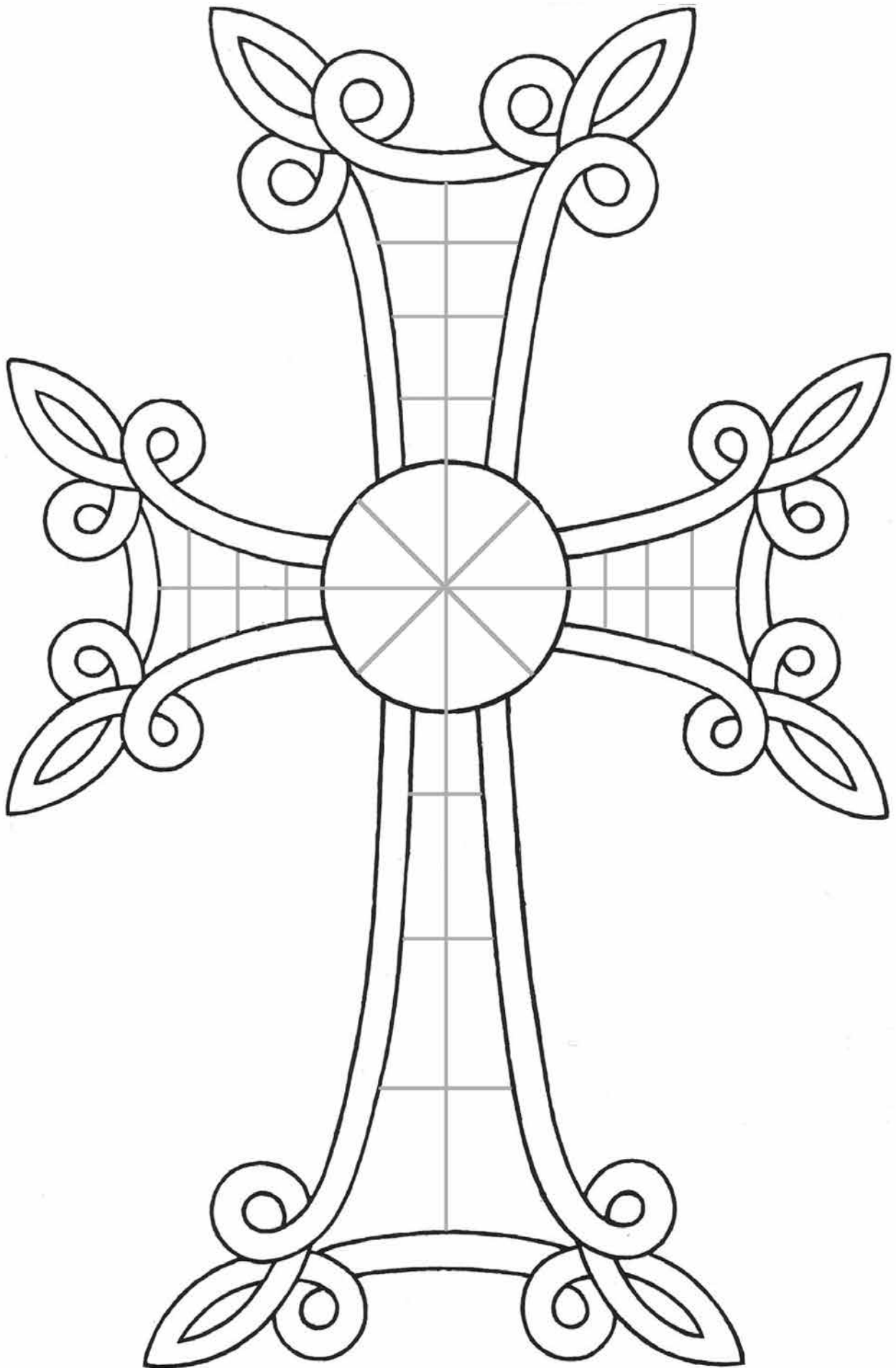
GOD BLESS
OUR
HOME





St. Vartan's Shield

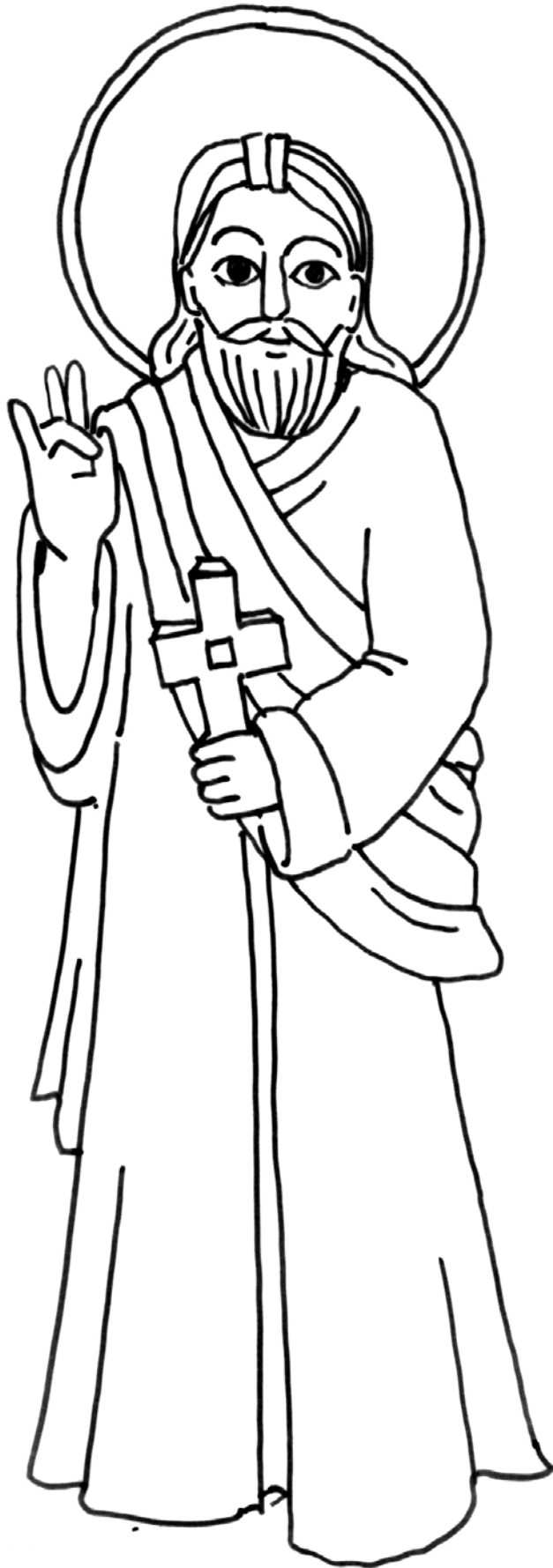


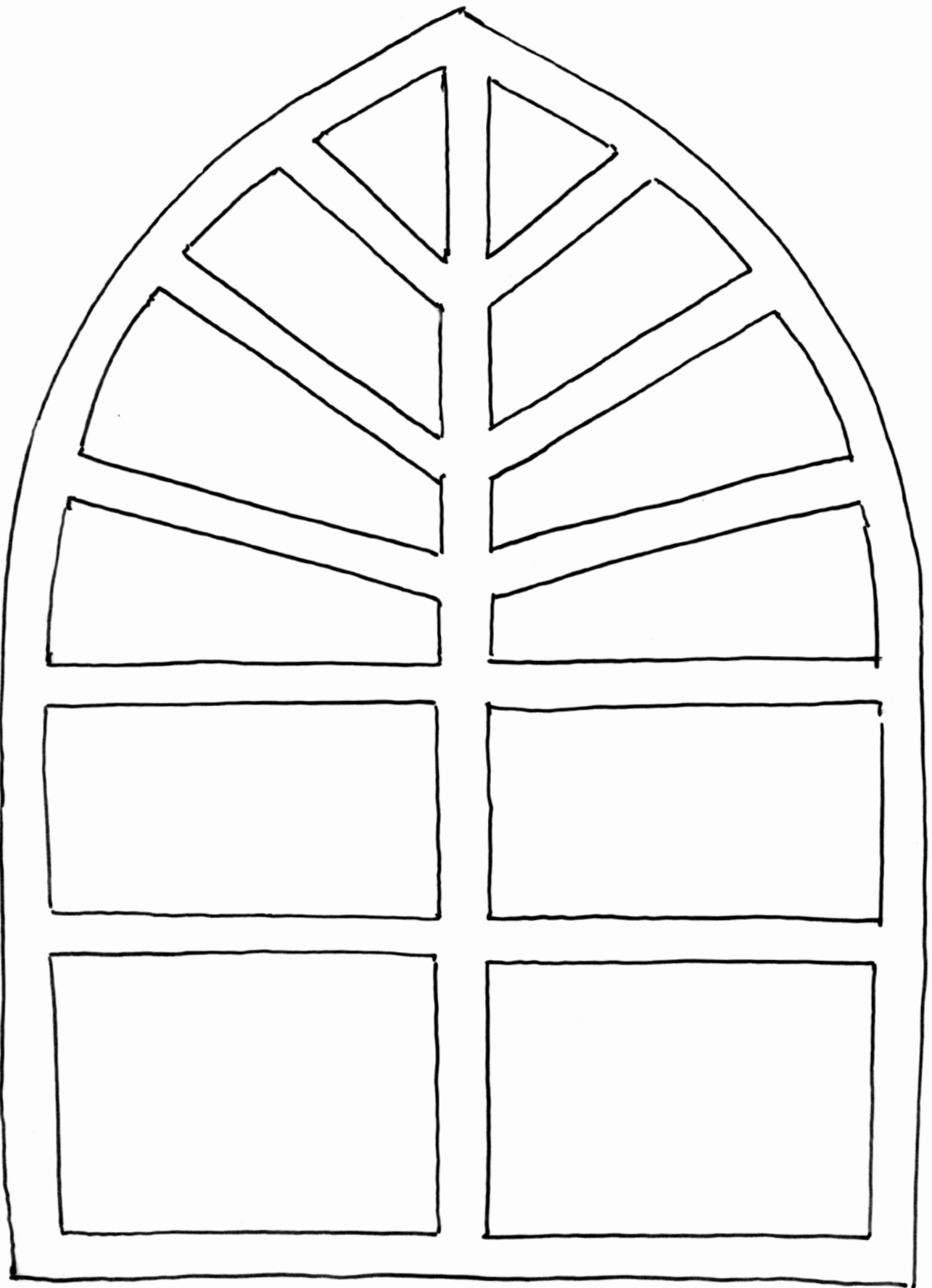


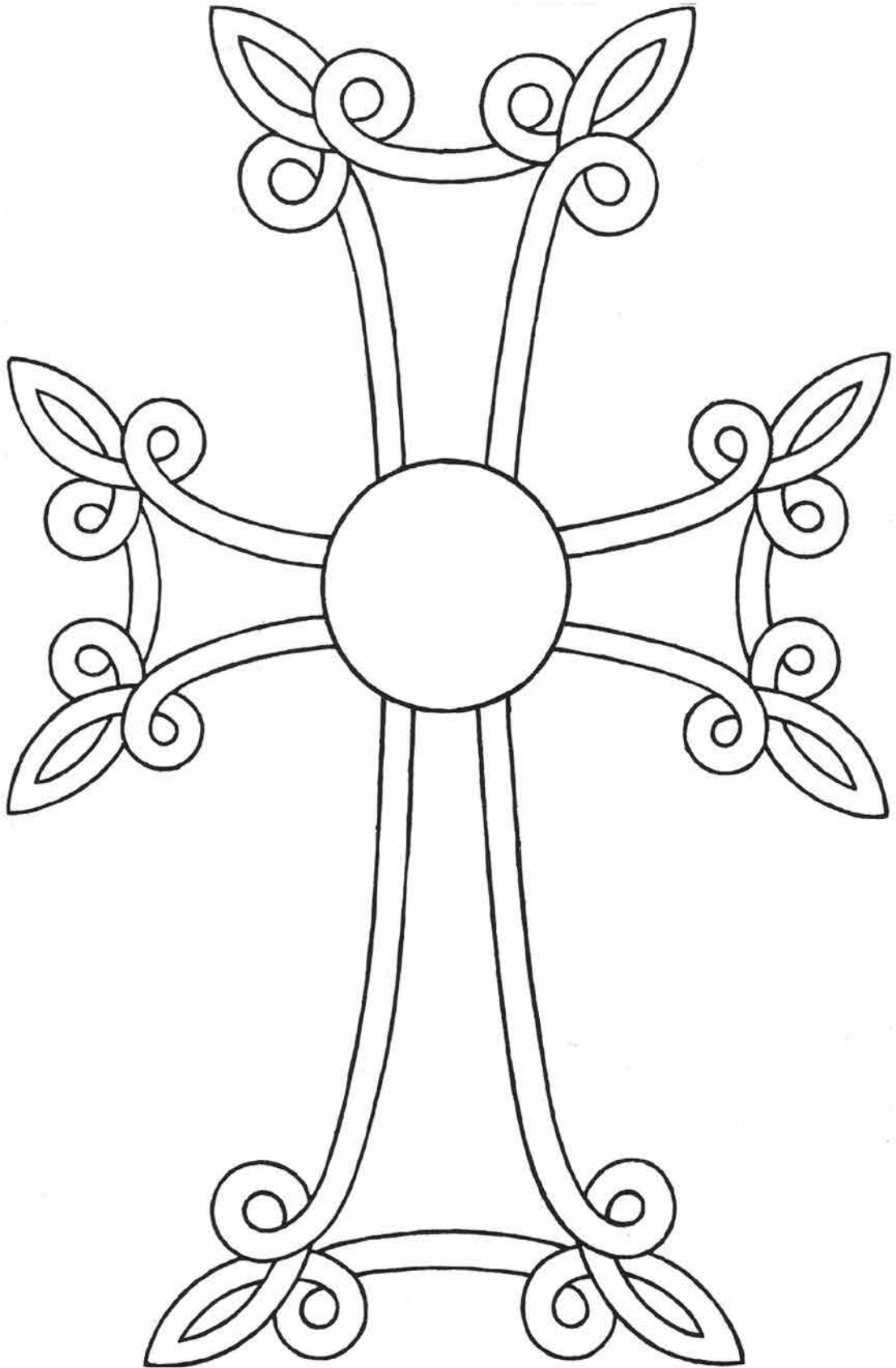
St. Thaddeus • Soorp Tateos • Սուրբ Թադէոս

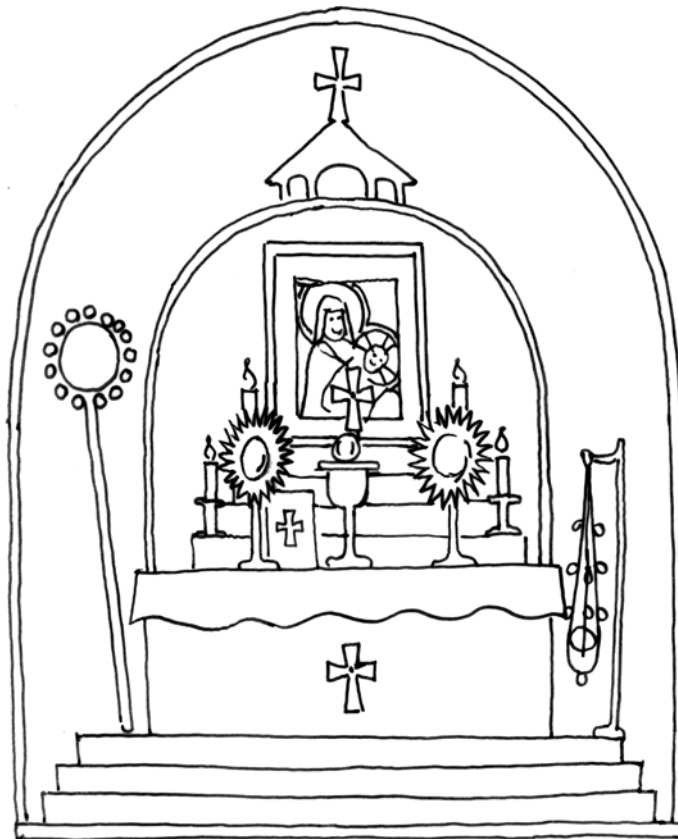
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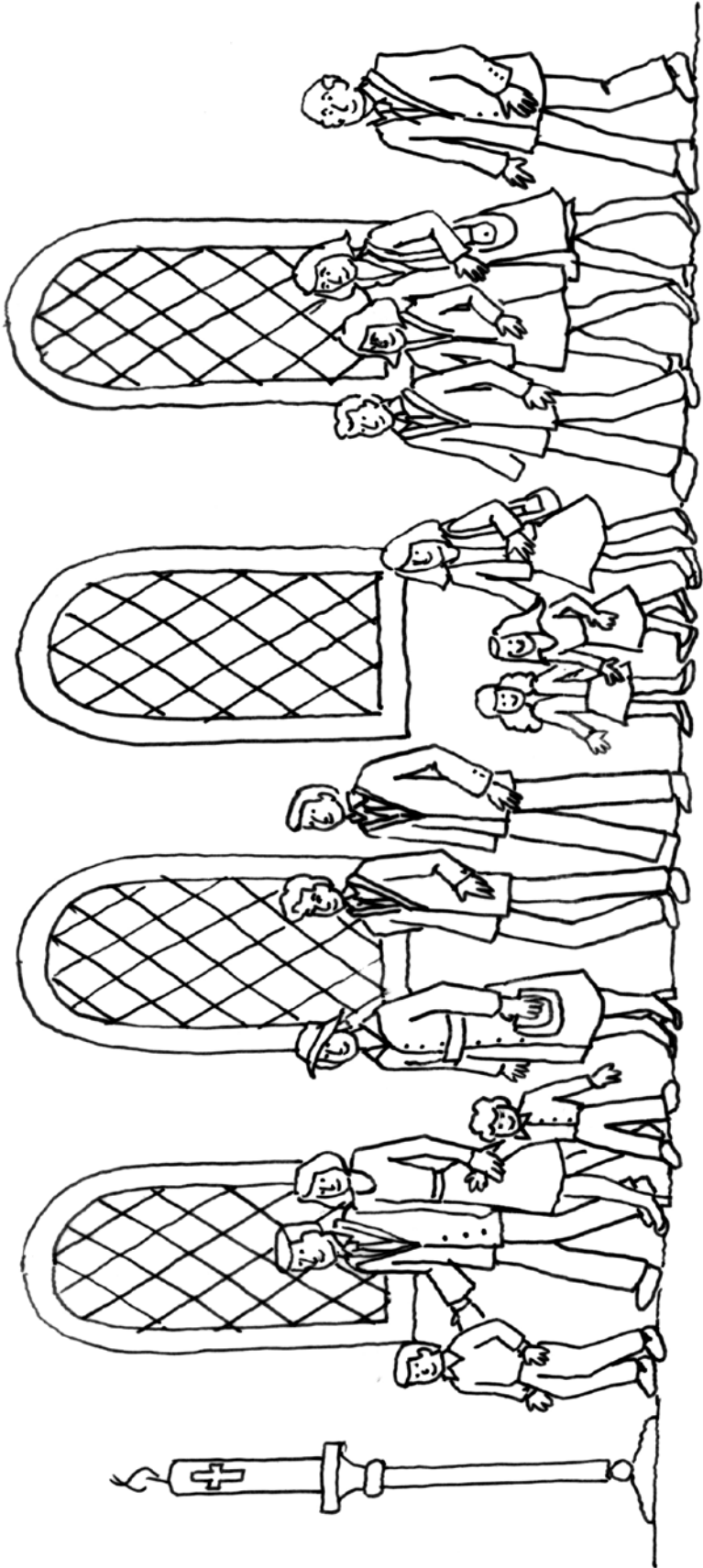












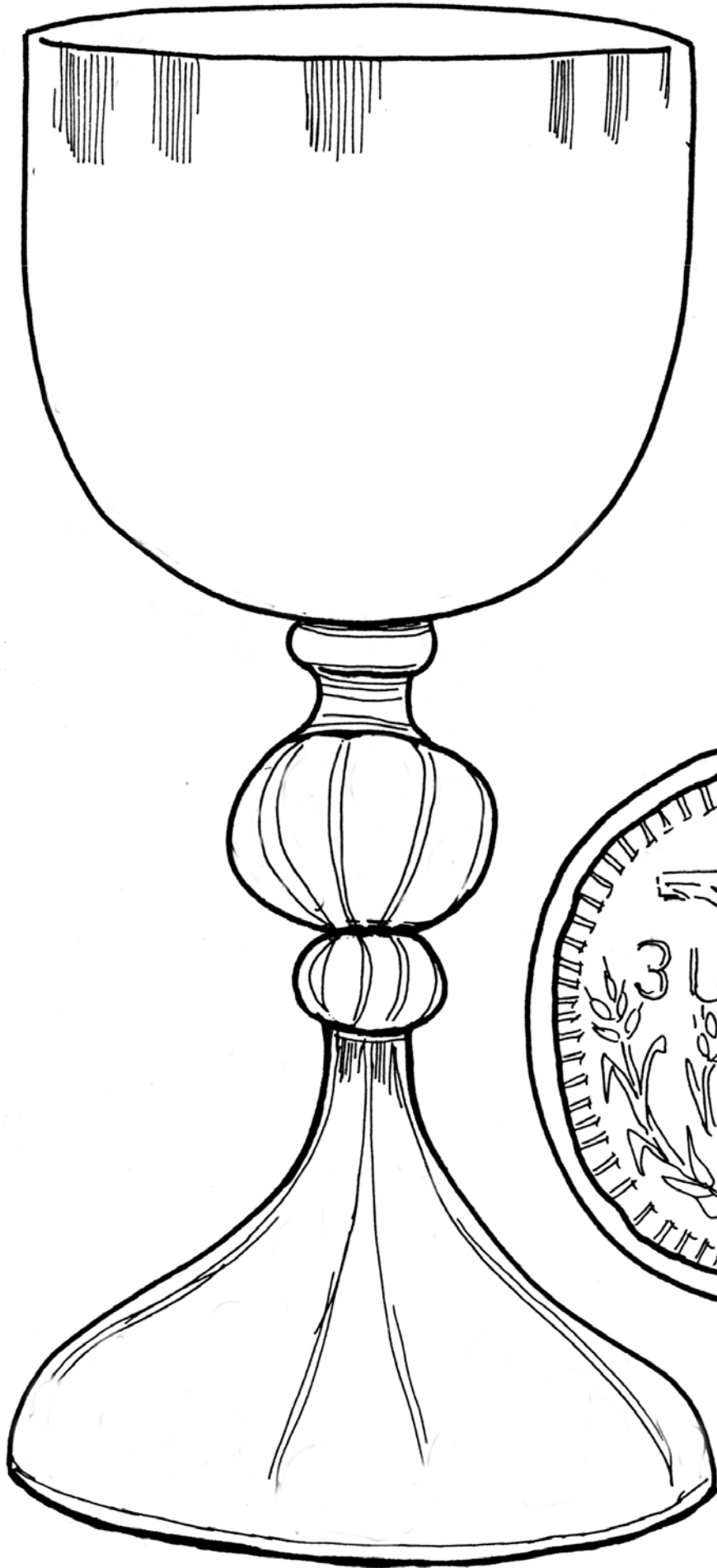
Matthew, the Evangelist... was a tax collector. One day while Jesus was preaching in Capernaum, he came to Matthew who was busy collecting taxes and said, "Follow me." Matthew was a wealthy man. He left all of his money to serve Jesus.

Mark, the Evangelist, was not one of the first 12 disciples, but he was very close to Peter and traveled with him, writing down his teaching. He also went with St. Paul to take the good news of Jesus to other parts of the world.

Luke, the Evangelist, was a doctor. He traveled with St. Paul and his followers, preaching the words of Jesus. He was a loyal friend of Jesus. He loved the poor. He believed that God would forgive and show mercy to sinners. Luke also wrote the history of the early church called *The Acts of the Apostles*.

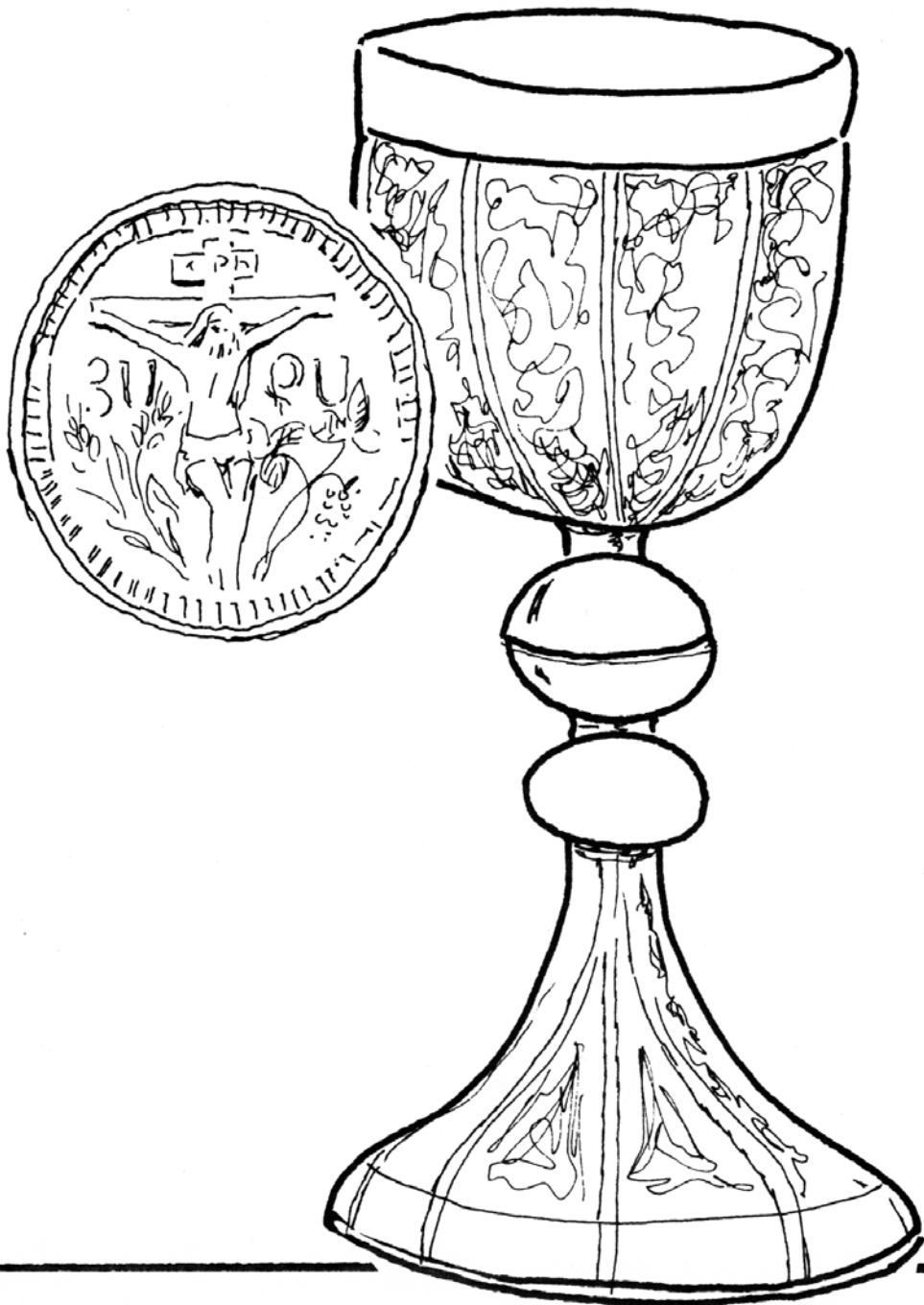
John, the Evangelist, was a fisherman, along with his father and his brother James. John was a very close friend of Jesus and one of the first twelve disciples. At the Passover meal (the Last Supper), John sat next to Jesus. From the cross, Jesus asked John to take care of Mary, his mother.





Dear _____:

Please join our class for communion next Sunday, _____. I will be so happy to receive communion with you!



Love,



Department of Christian Education
Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern)
Առաջնորդութիւն Հայոց Ամերիկայի Արեւելեան Թեմի

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