

Special Lesson - Great Lent

1. Poon Paregentan: Introduction to Fasting

Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed:

Indoor/outdoor Game Ideas:

One-on-one tug of war - Regular tug of war, but rather than using a rope, use a large wooden stick and have the child try to pull the other child's two feet over a line drawn on the floor. Have the children hold the stick perpendicular to themselves.

Group tug of war - Using the wooden stick, have two children hold the stick and have the rest of the children hold onto the hips of the child in front of them, pulling to have the child (who is holding the stick) pulled over the line on the floor.

Choose to play any of these games in your classroom or outdoors.

Paregentan Activity: Make a character mask of choice (king, queen, sun, flower, different animals, etc.)

Construction paper, white paper, paper plates, crayons/ colored pencils, tan yarn, wide craft sticks, scissors, and glue.

Sing a Aong - Dance Along: [Paregentan Song](#) (duration 2:46)

* Please note that this song is in Western Armenian

Words of the week:

աղօթք - aghotk - prayer

պահք - bahk - fasting

ողորմութիւն - voghormootyoon - mercy/almsgiving

Memory Verse:

“But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret.”

Matthew 6:17-18

Lesson

Lesson Opening & Creating Interest:

Open with prayer:

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

Lesson Body:

Who doesn't like carnivals! The fun, the music, dances, and the good food! In our Armenian Church we celebrate a lot of fun holidays: Christmas, Palm Sunday, Easter. We gather with our family and friends, to celebrate and give God glory and thanks. One of these fun feasts is Poon Paregentan or Great Carnival. It is a special feast that marks the beginning of Great Lent (Մեծ Պահք – Medz Bahk) and takes place 50 days before Easter.

Q: What is Paregentan and why do we celebrate it?

The word Paregentan means “good living” or “good life”, as we are called to live cheerfully, joyfully, to be happy and grateful for all the gifts that God has given us. During the celebration of Poon Paregentan, we sing, dress up in character costumes, wear character masks, dance and plays many fun games.

Armenians have traditional games and activities that they play during celebrations of Poon Paregentan, such as one-on-one tag of war, group tag of war and break the chain. You can choose to play any of these games in your classroom or outdoors.

By celebrating Poon Paregentan or Great Carnival, we give thanks and remember all the blessings God has given us before we enter the period of Great Lent. This is important because during Great Lent, we must be extra grateful for what we have, practice giving up things that control us and we have difficulty saying no to, and sharing our blessings with others. Great Lent is a time of fasting. During this time faithful choose not to eat certain kinds of food, such as meat, milk products, eggs, or delicious sweets. This reminds us that we need to be humble and grateful for having just enough food, clothes, and a bed to sleep in. Giving up just food or things is not enough. We also need to pray and share our blessings with those who are in need.

Great Lent is a period of 40 days during which we become good servants of God through prayer, fasting, and acts of kindness.

Paregentan Craft Activity: Make a character mask of choice (king, queen, sun, flower, different animals, etc.)

Sing a Aong - Dance Along: [Paregentan Song](#) (duration 2:46)

Words of the Week:

աղօթք - aghotk - prayer

պահք - bahk - fasting

ողորմութիւն - voghormootyoon
- mercy/almsgiving



Read out loud:

“But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret.”

Matthew 6:17-18

Review

Memory Verse Review:

“But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, that your fasting may not be seen by men but by your Father who is in secret.” -Matthew 6:17-18

Lesson Review:

1. When is Poon Paregentan? (The day before Lent begins, 50 days before Easter)
2. What does “paregentan” mean? (Good living)
3. What is the purpose of Great Lent? (To improve ourselves and make ourselves better people)
4. What three things do we focus on during Great Lent? (Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving)

Words of the Week:

աղօթք - aghotk - prayer

պահք - bahk - fasting

ողորմութիւն - voghormootyoon - mercy/almsgiving

Close with prayer:

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