

# V A C A T I O N   B I B L E   S C H O O L

**Armenian Church Curriculum**

## W E   B E L I E V E

*The Holy Trinity and the Creed*

**Grade Level:** Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten

**Ages:** 3 to 6 years old

**Duration:** 5 Days

Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern)

## C O N T E N T S

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**Day 1:** Holy Trinity – God is One in Three

**Day 2:** God the Father – Creator and Protector

**Day 3:** Jesus Christ – The Son of God

**Day 4:** The Holy Spirit – Our Helper and Guide

**Day 5:** The Creed – What We Believe as God's Church

*Each day includes:*

- *Story-Time Script*
- *Digging Deeper Questions*
- *Memory Verse*
- *Activity*
- *Child's Prayer*
- *Crafts*

## THEOLOGICAL NOTES FOR TEACHERS

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**Miaphysite Christology (Day 3):** The Armenian Church teaches that Jesus Christ is one Person with one united nature, at once truly divine and truly human (miaphysitism). The original lesson used the phrase "fully God and fully man," which reflects Chalcedonian theology not held by the Armenian Church. This has been corrected throughout Day 3 to: "truly God and truly human, one Person whose divine and human natures are perfectly united." Teachers should avoid "two natures" language and instead say: "Jesus is one Person, truly God and truly human, perfectly united."

**The Holy Spirit Proceeds from the Father (No Filioque):** The Armenian Church, in accord with the original Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, teaches that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father. The Filioque addition ("and the Son"), accepted in Western Christianity (Roman Catholicism), is not part of the Apostolic tradition. All Creed references in this curriculum reflect the original text without the Filioque.

**Holy Mysteries (Sacraments):** This curriculum refers to Baptism (*Mgrdootyoon*) and Chrismation (*Troshm*) as the primary means of receiving the Holy Spirit, consistent with Apostolic practice. The Divine Liturgy and Holy Communion are also referenced as central to the life of the Church.

**About the Closing Prayers:** Each day includes two prayers: (1) a short, child-friendly prayer for the children to say together, and (2) a traditional prayer from St. Nersess Shnorhali for the teacher to read aloud or pray with the children. The Shnorhali prayers use richer theological language suitable for adults. They are included to ground each lesson in the living prayer tradition of the Armenian Church, but children are not expected to memorize or repeat them.

**The Use of Analogies:** Please refrain from using analogies such as ice, steam, and water; masks; Neapolitan ice cream; or roles when describing or explaining the Holy Trinity. These lead to heresy and become more confusing. Understanding the Holy Trinity is confusing; hence its designation as a mystery. A perfect example of this, which keeps us humble in our search to understand the Holy Trinity, is the story of St. Augustine. It was around the year 415, and St. Augustine was walking along the beach on a bright, sunny day. He was frustrated, having taken a break from working on what's become known as one of his greatest doctrinal contributions to the Church, *De Trinitate*, or "On the Trinity." The subject matter had left him bleary-eyed and in need of fresh air.

It was in this moment, as the frothy tide rushed out, that a little boy caught St. Augustine's eye. The freckle-faced child had a determined, furrowed brow. He was clearly up to something, running back and forth, back and forth, between the Mediterranean Sea and a tiny hole in the ground.

"My son," St. Augustine called over the crashing waves, "What are you doing there?"

The boy held up the pink shell he was using to move water, "I'm trying to fit that great big ocean into this tiny hole," he yelled, pointing assertively at the sand.

St. Augustine smiled, charmed by the child's innocence, his bright eyes, the way sunlight shone in his curly hair. He then followed the boy to kneel beside the tiny hole, watching him spill out a few meager drops.

"My silly child," St. Augustine broke the news gently, turning the boy's skinny shoulders to face the sea. He then spread his own arms wide, "You could never fit this great, magnificent ocean into that tiny hole!"

The child didn't flinch but responded quickly: "And you could never possibly understand the majesty of the Holy Trinity and place it into your limited mind." Then in a flash, the boy disappeared.

Over the centuries, many great thinkers have speculated about this story. We can never understand these mysteries all at once" (much like the ocean – where scientists discover new life all the time). But if we open our minds to God, he reveals himself to us bit by bit.

## DAY 1

### Holy Trinity

*God is One. He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — One God in Three Persons.*

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Children will begin to understand that the One True God is a Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They will learn that God made them, loves them, and that the three Persons of the Trinity always work together to help us live with God forever.

#### WORD BANK

Word (Armenian)	Definition
<b>Holy Trinity</b> Սուրբ Երրորդութիւն (Soorp Yerr-ort-oo-tyoon)	One God in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
<b>Creator</b> արարիչ (ar-ar-eech)	Someone who makes things. God the Father created the whole world.
<b>Jesus</b> Յիսուս (Hee-soos)	God the Son, the Word of God, who became a man and saved us.
<b>Holy Spirit</b> Սուրբ Հոգի (Soorp Ho-kee)	God who helps us love, pray, and live like Jesus.

#### MEMORY VERSE

*"I am with you always."*

— **Matthew 28:20**

**Teacher Tip:** Write this verse on a whiteboard or poster in large, colorful letters. Point to each word as you say it together. Repeat it three times with the children, then try clapping the rhythm!

## MAIN IDEA

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- God is One. He is the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God made you, loves you, and wants you to live close to Him forever.
- The Holy Trinity is a mystery, but it is the very heart of our Faith.

## STORY-TIME SCRIPT

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*Bible Reference: Matthew 3:13–17 (The Baptism of Jesus)*

**Teacher Tip:** Keep this script to about 10 minutes. Speak slowly, use big expressions, and pause to let children respond. Encourage them to echo key phrases back to you.

**Fr. Mashdots:** Welcome, little explorers! Today we're going to learn about the most amazing mystery of all — who God is!

**Ayp:** I know! God is big and powerful and made everything!

**Pen:** And God loves us!

**Fr. Mashdots:** Yes to both! And here's something even more amazing: God is ONE God — but He is THREE Persons. He is the Father, the Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. They are not three Gods — they are One God!

**Ayp:** That's hard. It sounds like three Gods.

**Fr. Mashdots:** (Kneels down) I know! Let me show you something. Imagine one candle. When you light it, what do you get?

**Ayp:** A flame!

**Fr. Mashdots:** Right! And that one flame gives light, gives warmth, and gives fire — all at the same time! God is like that. One God — but He gives us love through the Father, life through the Son, and help through the Holy Spirit. Always together. Never apart.

**Pen:** That's kind of beautiful!

**Fr. Mashdots:** (Holds up Bible) And we see all three in the Bible! One day, Jesus went to the River Jordan to be baptized. When He came out of the water — the skies opened up! The Holy Spirit came down like a gentle dove. And God the Father's voice called out from heaven...

**Pen:** (Big eyes) What did He say?!

**Fr. Mashdots:** "This is My Son, in whom I am well pleased!" So right there — we saw Jesus in the water, the Holy Spirit like a dove, and the Father's voice from heaven. All three Persons of the Holy Trinity — together!

**Ayp:** Wow! That's the Holy Trinity!

**Fr. Mashdots:** Yes! And when YOU were baptized, you became part of that same family. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all with you. Every time we make the Sign of the Cross, we remember them. (Hold up three fingers.) The Father... the Son... the Holy Spirit... (bring fingers together) — One God. That's our mystery. That's our Faith.

**Pen:** I'm going to remember that forever.

**Fr. Mashdots:** I know you will! This week, we'll learn more about each Person of the Trinity. Let's start our adventure!

## DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

**Teacher Tip:** Ask these one at a time. Accept all answers warmly. For very young children, let them answer with actions — hold up fingers for "three," make a circle with arms for "one God."

### 1. Who is God?

*God is the One who made everything and loves us!*

### 2. How many Persons is God?

*Three Persons — but still One God.*

### 3. What are their names?

*God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit.*

#### 4. Where did we see all three Persons together?

*At the Baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan.*

#### ACTIVITY

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**Song:** "Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal..." (Soorp Asdvadz, Soorp yev huzor, Soorp yev Anmah...) three times. Sing the simple version (found on page 14 in the Divine Liturgy books), making the sign of the cross every time you sing "Holy God". Teach children to hold up three fingers and then bring them together as they sing.

#### CLOSING REFLECTION

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**Say:** God made you. God loves you. God wants you to live with Him forever. And He will never leave you — because He is always Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

#### Our Prayer Together

**Teacher Tip:** *Have children fold their hands and repeat each line after you, one line at a time.*

*Dear God,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;  
thank You for loving me.  
Help me to love You too.  
Amen.*

#### Traditional Prayer (for the Teacher)

**READ ALOUD OR PRAY SILENTLY OVER THE CHILDREN:**

*I confess with faith and worship you,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
uncreated and immortal Essence,*

*creator of angels, humans and of all that exists.*

*Have mercy upon your creatures,  
and on me, a manifold sinner. Amen.*

*— St. Nersess Shnorhali*

## C R A F T S

*Dowel Rod & Ribbon Banner Craft and Bible Craft can be found in the Crafts Packet*

## DAY 2

### God the Father

*God the Father made everything. He cares for us, provides for us, and loves us as His children.*

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Children will learn about God the Father, the First Person of the Holy Trinity. They will understand that God made the world, made them, and watches over them with love and care.

#### MAIN IDEA

- God the Father is the First Person of the Holy Trinity.
- He created everything in love and made us in His image.
- He cares for the world and each of us like a good and loving Father.

#### WORD BANK

Word (Armenian)	Definition
<b>Creator</b> արարիչ (ar-ar-eech)	Someone who makes everything. God the Father is our Creator.
<b>Heaven</b> երկինք (yer-geenk)	The place where God the Father dwells and where we hope to live with Him forever.
<b>Father</b> հայր (hayr)	A loving parent. God is our Heavenly Father.

#### MEMORY VERSE

*"God made me, and it is good!"*

— Based on Genesis 1:31

**Teacher Tip:** *This simplified verse helps young children connect directly to God's act of creation. Point to each child as you say it and encourage them to point to themselves: "God made ME — and it is good!"*

## STORY-TIME SCRIPT

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*Bible Reference: Genesis 1:1–31 (The Creation Story)*

**Teacher Tip:** *Use an illustrated children's Bible for this story. Pause at each day of creation and ask: "What did God make?" Let children point to pictures and call out answers.*

**Fr. Mashdots:** Welcome back, explorers! Today we're learning about God the Father — our loving Creator!

**Pen:** I always thought God the Father was far away in the sky.

**Ayp:** Yeah, like He sits on a big cloud!

**Fr. Mashdots:** I know that picture! But God the Father is actually much closer than that. He made everything — the trees, the animals, the stars, the ocean, the sunshine — and He made YOU! And He watches over everything He made with love.

**Pen:** He made the birds outside? And the grass? And the sunshine?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Every single one! The Bible says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." He made everything good. And do you know what He made last — and called the most special?

**Ayp:** Us??

**Fr. Mashdots:** Yes! People! He made us in His own image — which means He gave us the ability to love, to think, to laugh, to care — just like Him. (Look at a child) God made you, and you are very, very special.

**Pen:** But sometimes bad things happen. Does God the Father still care?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Always. God never leaves us, even when things are hard. He sent His Son Jesus to help us. And He still gives us what we need every day — food, love, family, and people to care for us.

**Ayp:** He sounds like the best dad ever.

**Fr. Mashdots:** He is! And here's the amazing thing — He's not just Jesus' Father. He's OUR Father too. That's why Jesus taught us to pray, "*Our Father who art in heaven.*" God the Father wants us to come to Him like little children, full of trust.

**Pen:** My dad helps me when I'm scared. Does God the Father do that too?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Yes! When you feel afraid, you can talk to God the Father right in your heart. He always hears you. He is strong, loving, and always, always near.

**All:** Heavenly Father, thank You for making me, loving me, and watching over me. Help me to always love You and trust You. Amen.

**Fr. Mashdots:** He hears every word. Now let's go explore, knowing our Father in Heaven loves us very much!

## DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

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**Teacher Tip:** *For question 3, invite children to demonstrate — fold hands to show praying, go through the motions of going to church, mime helping a friend.*

### 1. Who is God the Father?

*The First Person of the Holy Trinity — our Creator!*

### 2. What did God the Father make?

*The whole world — and us!*

### 3. How does God the Father take care of us?

*He listens to us, loves us, and gives us everything we need.*

### 4. How can we talk to God the Father?

*Through prayer — anytime, anywhere!*

## ACTIVITY

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**Song:** "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" — Teach motions and sing about how God the Father holds everyone and everything in His loving hands. Go around and name things God made: "He's got the little tiny baby... He's got you and me, sister..."

## CLOSING REFLECTION

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**Say:** God the Father made everything and made you very special. He loves you, takes care of you, and listens when you pray. You are His child — and He is your Father forever.

### Our Prayer Together

**Teacher Tip:** *Have children repeat each line after you with hands folded.*

*Heavenly Father, thank You for making me and for loving me every day.  
Help me to love You and trust You. Amen.*

### Traditional Prayer (for the Teacher)

**READ ALOUD OR PRAY SILENTLY OVER THE CHILDREN:**

*Heavenly Father, true God,  
who sent your beloved Son to seek the lost sheep.  
I have sinned against heaven and before you;  
receive me as the prodigal son,  
and clothe me with my former garment,  
of which I was deprived by sin.  
Have mercy upon your creatures,  
and on me, a manifold sinner. Amen.*

*— St. Nersess Shnorhali*

## CRAFTS

*Earth Craft can be found in the Crafts Packet*

## DAY 3

### Jesus Christ, the Son of God

*Jesus is the Son of God who became a man, lived among us, died for us, and rose to give us life.*

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Children will be introduced to Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. They will learn that Jesus is truly God and truly human — one Person — who came to save us and bring us back to God.

#### MAIN IDEA

- Jesus is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity.
- Jesus is truly God and truly human — one Person, perfectly united.
- Jesus died on the Cross to destroy death and rose again to give us eternal life.

#### WORD BANK

Word (Armenian)	Definition
<b>Jesus Christ</b> Յիսուս Բրիստոս (Hee-soos Krees-dos)	The Son of God, who became a man to save us. He is one Person, truly God and truly human.
<b>Cross</b> խաչ (khach)	The place where Jesus died to defeat death.
<b>Resurrection</b> յարութիւն (ha-roo-tyoon)	Jesus rising from the dead to give us new life.

## MEMORY VERSE

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*"Jesus loves me — this I know!"*

— Based on 1 John 4:16

**Teacher Tip:** *This verse is simple, familiar, and deeply true. Children this age need to feel Jesus' love before they can understand His theology. Pair it with the song "Jesus Loves Me" for instant connection.*

## STORY-TIME SCRIPT

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*Bible Reference: Matthew 1:18–25 (Birth of Jesus); Luke 24:1–12 (Resurrection)*

**Teacher Tip:** *Young children connect most with the beginning (manger) and the end (resurrection) of Jesus' story. Keep the middle brief and focus on wonder and love rather than the suffering of the Cross. Frame the Cross as love for mankind, not violence.*

**Remember,** *we do not believe in penal substitutionary atonement. We do not believe that Jesus had to die satisfy God the Father's anger for sin and justice. That is a Protestant idea that does not exist in any Apostolic Orthodox Church. Orthodoxy views Christ's crucifixion as Christ overcoming death and uniting humanity to God, viewing sin as an illness to be healed rather than a legal debt.*

**Fr. Mashdots:** Hello, explorers! We've talked about God the Father. Today we're going to learn about God the Son — Jesus!

**Pen:** I love Jesus! He was born in a manger, right?

**Ayp:** And the angels sang when He was born!

**Fr. Mashdots:** That's right! Jesus is the Son of God, but He actually became a real baby, born to the Virgin Mary. He laughed, played, learned things, and grew up just like you. But He was also God the whole time. Can you imagine? God became a little child!

**Pen:** Did He ever get sad? Or hungry?

**Fr. Mashdots:** The Bible tells us He did! He cried when His friend died. He got tired. He needed food. He was truly human. But He never sinned — not even once. He always chose love.

**Ayp:** Why did He die on the Cross?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Because He loves us SO much. Death, demons, and sins (the wrong things we do) they separate us from God. But Jesus destroyed death, defeated the demons, and gave us a way to forgive sins. He died on the Cross so that nothing would keep us away from God's love.

**Pen:** That makes me feel sad.

**Fr. Mashdots:** It is sad, for a little while. But then comes the most amazing part. Three days after He died, Jesus rose from the dead! He is ALIVE. That's what we call the Resurrection. And because Jesus is alive, we know that death is not the end for us either.

**Ayp:** So Jesus is alive RIGHT NOW?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Yes! Right now, Jesus is alive and He is with us. We see His love in the Cross at church. We feel His love in Holy Communion. We hear His love in the Bible. He is our Friend, our King, and our Savior.

**Pen:** I want to say thank you to Jesus.

**All:** Lord Jesus, thank You for loving us, dying for us, and rising again. Help us to love You and follow You every day. Amen.

**Fr. Mashdots:** He hears you. Now let's go dig and remember that Jesus walks with us every step of the way!

## DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

**Teacher Tip:** *For question 4, invite children to look around the room and point to any images or crosses they can see. Help them connect faith to their surroundings.*

### 1. Who is Jesus?

*The Son of God — and our Savior and Friend!*

### 2. Where was Jesus born?

*In Bethlehem, to the Virgin Mary.*

### 3. What did Jesus do because He loves us?

*He died on the Cross and rose again to give us new life!*

### 4. Is Jesus alive now?

*Yes! Jesus is alive and always with us.*

## ACTIVITY

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**Song:** "Jesus Loves Me" — Sing with motions, reminding children that Jesus' love is forever and strong. Encourage them to sing loudly and with big smiles.

## CLOSING REFLECTION

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**Say:** Jesus is God's Son. He loves you so much that He died for you — and rose again! He is alive, and He wants to be your very best Friend. You are never alone because Jesus is always with you.

### Our Prayer Together

**Teacher Tip:** *Have children repeat each line after you with hands folded.*

*Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me and for dying and rising for me.  
Help me to follow You every day. Amen.*

## Traditional Prayer (for the Teacher)

**READ ALOUD OR PRAY SILENTLY OVER THE CHILDREN:**

*Son of God, true God,  
who descended from the bosom of the Father,  
and took on flesh from the holy Virgin Mary for our salvation;  
crucified, buried, and raised from the dead,  
ascended in glory to the Father;  
I have sinned against heaven and before you;  
remember me like the penitent thief  
when you come into your kingdom.  
Have mercy upon your creatures,  
and on me, a manifold sinner. Amen.*

— St. Nersess Shnorhali

## CRAFTS

*Cross Craft can be found in the Crafts Packet*

## DAY 4

### The Holy Spirit

*The Holy Spirit is God. He fills our hearts with love, helps us grow in holiness, and makes us part of the Church.*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Children will be introduced to the Third Person of the Holy Trinity: the Holy Spirit. They will understand that the Holy Spirit is God and that He helps us to love God, follow Jesus, and live holy lives.

### MAIN IDEA

- The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity.
- The Holy Spirit comes to us at Baptism and Chrismation and lives in our hearts.
- The Holy Spirit helps us grow in faith, love others, and be part of the Church.

### WORD BANK

Word (Armenian)	Definition
<b>Holy Spirit</b> Սուրբ Հոգի (Soorp Ho-kee)	The Third Person of the Holy Trinity. He fills our hearts and helps us live like Jesus.
<b>Baptism</b> մկրտութիւն (mu-gur-doo-tyoon)	A holy mystery where we become part of God's family and receive the Holy Spirit.
<b>Chrismation</b> դրոշմ (trosh-um)	Another holy mystery during which Holy Myuron is anointed on our body, sealing us as Christ's.
<b>Church</b> Եկեղեցի (ye-ge-ghe-tsee)	God's family, where the Holy Spirit brings us together.

## MEMORY VERSE

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*"The Holy Spirit will teach you everything."*

— **John 14:26**

**Teacher Tip:** Ask children: "Who teaches us things at school?" (teacher) "Who teaches us things at home?" (parents) Then say: "The Holy Spirit is our teacher too — and He lives right inside us!"

## STORY-TIME SCRIPT

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*Bible Reference: Matthew 3:13–17 (The Baptism of Jesus — focus on the dove)*

**Teacher Tip:** Children this age think concretely. Focus on the dove symbol and connect the Holy Spirit to things they can feel: warmth, kindness, courage, joy. Avoid abstract theology — keep it personal and sensory.

**Fr. Mashdots:** Hello again, little explorers! We've learned about God the Father and God the Son — Jesus. Today we're going to meet the Third Person of the Holy Trinity — the Holy Spirit!

**Ayp:** I remember! The Holy Spirit is part of the Trinity. But what does He actually do?

**Pen:** Is He like a wind? Or a bird?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Great questions! The Holy Spirit is invisible, like the wind. You can't see Him, but you can feel what He does. At Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit came down looking like a beautiful dove. That's one of His symbols. But inside us, He feels like love, and joy, and kindness, and bravery.

**Ayp:** So how do I get the Holy Spirit?

**Fr. Mashdots:** In our Armenian Church, God gives us the Holy Spirit when we are baptized and when we are anointed (chrismated) with holy oil called Myuron. That's when the Holy Spirit comes to live inside us like a warm light in your heart.

**Pen:** So, He's always with me? Even when I'm at home? Or at school?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Always! The Holy Spirit never leaves you. When you choose to be kind instead of mean, that's the Holy Spirit helping you. When you feel brave even though you're scared, that's the Holy Spirit. When you feel love in your heart at church, that's the Holy Spirit!

**Ayp:** I want to feel Him more. How?

**Fr. Mashdots:** By praying. By listening to Bible stories. By going to church. By being kind. Every good thing you do opens your heart a little more to the Holy Spirit.

**Pen:** So, He's like my invisible helper?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Exactly! And He works in all of us together. That's how the Church becomes one big family. We're all filled with the same Holy Spirit.

**All:** Holy Spirit, thank You for loving us. Help us to love God, love others, and live like Jesus. Amen.

**Fr. Mashdots:** Wherever you go today, the Holy Spirit goes with you. You are never alone!

## DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

**Teacher Tip:** For question 2, show children a picture of a dove if available. For question 3, invite them to give examples: "When did you feel kind today? That might be the Holy Spirit!"

### 1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

*The Third Person of the Holy Trinity — God who lives in our hearts!*

### 2. What did the Holy Spirit look like at Jesus' baptism?

*A dove.*

### 3. How does the Holy Spirit help us?

*He helps us love God, be kind, be brave, and live like Jesus.*

### 4. When did the Holy Spirit come to live in us?

*At Baptism and Chrismation, when we received the holy oil called Myuron.*

## ACTIVITY

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**Song:** "Holy Spirit, Come and Fill Me" — Teach a simple tune with motions (spread arms like wings for the dove, hug yourself for "fill me," point upward for God). Let children feel the song in their bodies.

## CLOSING REFLECTION

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**Say:** The Holy Spirit is God, living right inside your heart. He helps you love, helps you grow, and keeps you close to God. Wherever you go, He goes with you.

### Our Prayer Together

**Teacher Tip:** *Have children repeat each line after you. Encourage them to place a hand over their heart as they pray.*

*Holy Spirit, thank You for living in my heart.  
Help me to be kind and loving today and every day. Amen.*

### Traditional Prayer (for the Teacher)

**READ ALOUD OR PRAY SILENTLY OVER THE CHILDREN:**

*Spirit of God, true God,  
who descended on the river Jordan, and into the Upper Room;  
who enlightened me by the baptism of the Holy Font,  
I have sinned against heaven and before you.  
Purify me again with your divine fire,  
as the fiery tongues purified the Holy Apostles.  
Have mercy upon your creatures,  
and on me, a manifold sinner. Amen.*

*— St. Nersess Shnorhali*

## CRAFTS

*Dove Craft can be found in the Crafts Packet*

## DAY 5

### The Creed

*The Creed helps us remember and say what we believe about God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Children will understand that a Creed is a statement of faith — it tells what we believe about God. They will learn that the Creed connects us to the whole Church, and that we live our faith by loving God and loving others.

#### MAIN IDEA

- The Creed is a summary of what we believe as Christians.
- We say the Creed together at church to show we all share the same faith.
- The Creed helps us stay close to the truth about God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

#### WORD BANK

Word (Armenian)	Definition
<b>Creed</b> դավանանք ( <i>ta-va-nank</i> )	A statement of belief that tells what we believe about God.
<b>Faith</b> հավատք ( <i>ha-vadk</i> )	Trusting in God with our whole heart.
<b>Church</b> եկեղեցի ( <i>ye-ge-ghe-tsee</i> )	God's family of people who believe and follow Him.

#### MEMORY VERSE

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart."*

— **Matthew 22:37**

**Teacher Tip:** *This verse is the heart of the Creed in child-friendly terms. Help children memorize it by putting it to a simple clapping rhythm: LOVE (clap) the LORD (clap) your GOD (clap) with ALL (clap) your HEART (clap clap).*

## STORY-TIME SCRIPT

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*Bible Reference: Matthew 22:37–39 (The Great Commandment)*

**Teacher Tip:** *For Pre-K and K, the Creed is best introduced as a "special prayer we say together at church" rather than as a doctrinal statement. The emphasis here is on belonging, love, and family — not memorization. Congratulate children on a wonderful week!*

**Fr. Mashdots:** Welcome back, explorers! This is our last day together — and what a week it's been! We've learned about the Holy Trinity — God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Today we're going to tie it all together with something special called the Creed!

**Ayp:** I've heard that word at church. What IS a Creed?

**Fr. Mashdots:** A Creed is a statement of faith. It's how we say what we believe. The word "creed" means "I believe." And in our Armenian Church, we say the Nicene Creed at every Divine Liturgy, every single Sunday!

**Pen:** We say something at church? Is that what all the grown-ups are saying?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Yes! And now YOU know what they're saying. They're talking about God the Father who made everything, Jesus who saved us, and the Holy Spirit who lives in us. Everything we've learned this week — that's the Creed!

**Ayp:** It's like a summary of the whole week?

**Fr. Mashdots:** Exactly! And it's more than a list of facts. It's like a love letter. We're saying: "God, we believe in You. We love You. We belong to You." And when we say it at church, we're saying it together with all the people in the room, with Christians all over the world, and even with the saints in heaven!

**Pen:** That's like a really, really big choir!

**Fr. Mashdots:** The biggest choir ever! And you are part of it. Let's practice the very beginning together. Repeat after me: *[Say slowly, one phrase at a time. Have children repeat.]*

**All:** We believe in one God... the Father almighty... maker of heaven and earth... And in one Lord Jesus Christ... And in the Holy Spirit...

**Fr. Mashdots:** Beautiful! Those words are ancient and holy. People have been saying them for thousands of years. And now you are too. When you go to church on Sunday, listen for the Creed — and try to say it along with everyone. You are part of the family of God!

**Pen:** This has been the best week ever.

**Ayp:** I want to keep learning about God.

**Fr. Mashdots:** And God wants to keep loving you — forever. Remember: God the Father MADE you. God the Son SAVED you. And God the Holy Spirit LIVES in you. Let your whole life be a "Yes!" to God. That's the Creed.

**All:** Amen!

## DIGGING DEEPER QUESTIONS

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**Teacher Tip:** *End the week with celebration! Invite children to share their favorite thing they learned. There are no wrong answers — the goal is joy and connection to faith.*

### 1. What is a Creed?

*A special prayer that tells what we believe about God.*

### 2. When and how do we say the Creed?

*Every Sunday at church, during the Divine Liturgy. We put our hands together (palm to palm), with our fingers straight (not folded), and cross our thumbs.*

### 3. What is the most important thing Jesus taught us?

*To love God with all our heart — and to love others!*

### 4. What have we learned this week?

*God the Father made us. Jesus saved us. The Holy Spirit lives in us!*

## ACTIVITY

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**Song:** "I Believe in God the Father" - A joyful song that follows the Creed line-by-line in child-friendly language with simple motions. Sing it as a celebration of the whole week!

## CLOSING REFLECTION

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**Say:** The Creed helps us remember what we believe about God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It helps us stay close to the Church and grow strong in our faith. Keep the Creed in your heart every day — and know that God loves you always.

### Our Prayer Together

**Teacher Tip:** Close the week by having all children say this prayer together with hands folded. Let them also make the Sign of the Cross as they say the first line.

*In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  
Dear God, help me to believe in You, to love You,  
and to follow You always. Amen.*

### Traditional Prayer (for the Teacher)

**READ ALOUD OR PRAY SILENTLY OVER THE CHILDREN:**

*Righteous judge,  
when you come with the glory of the Father to judge the living and the dead,  
do not enter into judgment with your servant; but save me from the eternal fire,  
and make me worthy to hear the most blessed call of the righteous for those who  
will enter to your heavenly kingdom.*

*Have mercy upon your creatures, and on me, a manifold sinner. Amen.*

*— St. Nersess Shnorhali*

## CRAFTS

*Baptism Craft and Nicene Creed Craft can be found in the Crafts Packet*