

## Unit Three: Sacred Living: Saints as Mentors

### Lesson 7

# Where Do I Fit In?



### Pray Together

Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyin Surpo, Amen.

Dear Lord, we know you are in our hearts. Help us feel your presence and be guided by your love every day. As we grow closer to you, we grow closer to our own true selves and to our Spirit-given gifts. Help us to use these gifts for our own greatest fulfillment, for the good of others, and for your glory, Amen.

## Quick Quiz

Write the correct answer in the space.

1. Matthew 10:16 says Christians are sent into the world as sheep among \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In Matthew 10:24-25, we are told that it is enough for a student to be \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. During the Genocide, Armenians were usually allowed to live if they agreed to \_\_\_\_\_ Islam.
4. The Armenian Church Feast of Vartanantz falls on the Thursday before \_\_\_\_\_ begins.
5. St. Vartan is remembered for the battle of \_\_\_\_\_.



### Did You Know?

In the year 1164, St. Nersess Shnorhali successfully brought about peace between two Armenian princes, Toros and Oshin, whose feud was endangering the nation.



## Many Parts, One Body

Look around the room. Look at the people you pass as you walk to school or sitting around you at a sports event or show. You can quickly see that we are all different. We come in many shapes, colors, sizes, and personalities. God has also given us different abilities. You may already have a pretty good idea of where your strengths are, but most likely you have not yet discovered many of your talents.

God lists some of the different abilities that he has given his followers. Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 to see a few of them. It is a measure of God's infinite wisdom and power that no two individuals are exactly alike, not even identical twins. If you look at the diversity of people and the rest of nature, you will see that God delights in variety. You should, too, because no matter how un-special you think you are, God has wonderful plans for you that you cannot even imagine at this time. You have so much to offer to him, the church, and the greater world. All you need to do is to make room for God to guide you.

How might someone who has these common gifts use them in the service of the church?

Good head for business  
Great cook  
Knows the Bible really well  
Musical  
Good writer  
Patient  
Likes children  
Physically strong  
Good handyman skills

## What Are My Gifts?

Are you a computer whiz? Can you make people laugh?  
Are you a good musician? A fast thinker? An athlete?  
Patient? Energetic?

Think about the qualities and abilities you have that are God's gift to you. Write them here:



## Do Everything As Unto God

Read Colossians 3:17. Discuss the following questions:

- Everyone has some subject in school they love to hate. If you apply this verse to that subject, what do you think might happen?
- We've all done the bare minimum to get rid of some task we didn't want to do. In light of the Scripture passage, how do you think Jesus feels about that sort of work ethic?
- It's a beautiful Saturday morning and you've been ordered to clean your room. How can the Bible verse make you feel a little better about it?

## Feed My Sheep

In John 21:15-17 Jesus repeatedly tells Peter to feed His sheep. In that passage, Jesus is not suggesting that Peter take up farming. What he means is that those who call themselves God's people will serve others, as Jesus served us all. That is also our mission - to do what we can to spread the Good News through our words and actions.

Consider the profiles below featuring a quality you might not consider a "gift." Think how each gift or challenge could be used to serve God's purpose at church and in everyday life:

1. I have a learning disability. I take a lot of garbage for it at school. It's really hard. I've got to do the best I can. God can use my situation to...
2. For some reason I'm able to get along with people from all different groups. This could be useful to the Lord if I...
3. Last year I was the new kid in school. Ugh. God could use this experience to...
4. It never takes me very long to finish my homework. My grades are always really good. I offer my academic skill to God by...
5. I love to make people laugh. I don't disrupt class with my joking around, but in my off time God could use my sense of humor to..



## Our Armenian Way

St. Nerses Shnorhali was one of the true heroes of the Armenian Church. He devoted his life to studying about God and teaching others about him. As we know, he gifted the Armenian Church with his famous 24 prayers, "I Confess with Faith," as well as numerous hymns and other writings. The *I Confess with Faith* prayers are so well-loved that they have been translated over the years into more than thirty languages.

Ordained as a priest at age eighteen, this gifted man attained the rank of bishop by around twenty-five years of age. The name "Shnorhali" means "grace-filled," which perfectly describes the character of Nerses. Modest, hardworking, and a peacemaker, he was happy teaching, singing, writing, and praying. He had no ambition for official church power. Nerses only became Catholicos when his brother, Catholicos Krikor, was too ill to continue.

Nerses continued to use his talents and personality to maintain peace and unity in the Armenian Church and with opponents of all types. One example of his character is shown in his handling of a group of people who worshipped the sun. In so many cases, such a sharp difference in religion results in violence and destruction. Nerses, however, chose to use gentle leadership to win back this group. He composed the hymns to our Sunrise Service, and their beauty convinced these "Sons of the Sun" that Jesus is the real light. Instead of force, Nerses used the many gifts God gave him to turn untold thousands to his beloved Lord.

"Jesus, wisdom of the Father, help me think, speak and do that which is good in your presence. Save me from evil thoughts, words, and deeds. And have mercy upon all your creatures and upon me, a great sinner. Amen."

*I Confess with Faith*