

# The Faith Journey

## Lesson 5

# Unit Three

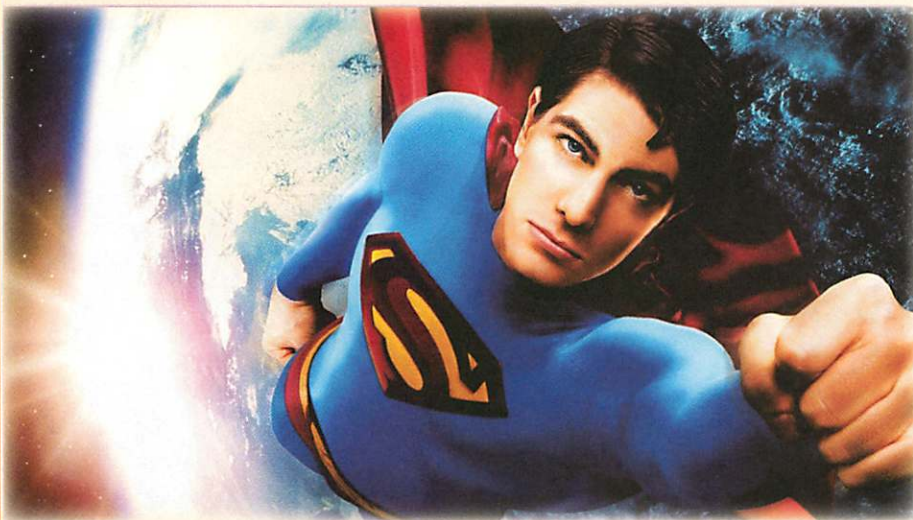
## Men and Women Living The Word

### Here I Am, Lord

*God, at the beginning of each day, a new chapter in my life begins. Help me remember that I leave an impression on every person I meet. Help me to greet them with a smile, a helping hand, sincere advice and kind words. I don't always think of you as part of these encounters, but you truly are! Lord, thank you for all the people who will show me your love today. And help me think of ways I can reflect your love to everyone I meet as well. Amen.*



### You Can Change the World



Imagine for a moment that by some mysterious power you were able to change the world. What would you change? Would you want to be a Superhero (think Spiderman, Superman, Batman, Wonder Woman) and use your powers to fight evil villains? While getting rid of bad guys might be a noble undertaking, if the goal is to change the world, maybe there's a way to make a bigger impact.

Certainly there are endless possibilities. You could become a medical researcher and work to eradicate disease. Or a

great humanitarian and develop strategies that would feed the hungry of the world or end war. You could become a missionary like Mother Theresa of Calcutta, who dedicated her life to serving the poorest of the poor. Or a visionary churchman like Catholicos Khrimian Hayrig, who so courageously protected his flock in Turkey.

But changing the world is an inside-out job. When we look to change the world, very often we look outside of ourselves. When God looks to change the world, he looks deep within us to get the job done. Didn't we see a wonderful example of how God works through those he created in our last lesson as we learned about the awesome contributions of the Holy Translators and how their life's work affected not just the Armenian people...but the entire world?



## One Step Back

1. Mesrob Mashtotz was a

- a. Monk (*vartabed*)      b. Catholicos      c. Armenian king

2. The Armenian Church recognizes the Holy Translators as those who

- a. founded the Armenian Alphabet  
b. translated the Bible  
c. began a movement of writing and translating important work into the Armenian language  
d. All of the above

3. The Golden Age of Armenia was a glorious period of accomplishment in the

- a. 3rd century      b. 5th century      c. 7th century      d. 12th century

4. The historian Goriun Vartabed wrote the famous book *Vark Mashtotzi* which means:

- a. Works of Mashtotz      b. Life of Mashtotz      c. Translations of Mashtotz

5. The translation of the Bible was completed in the year

- a. 451      b. 301      c. 425

6. Bonus Question: Proverbs 1:2 was the first thing written in the new Armenian alphabet. See if you can remember the verse which describes the purpose of the proverbs:

a "To know \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_: to perceive the words of \_\_\_\_\_".

*understanding*

*instruction*

*wisdom*

## Celebrating Hope ... Celebrating Christian Life

**Are you holy?** If someone asked you point blank if you thought you were holy, how would you respond? Would you be comfortable responding to that question or would you squirm a little?

How would you assess yourself in order to answer that question?

The early converts had a great deal to learn about how Christians should live. Saint Paul wrote his longest letter in preparation for his visit to Rome, because he wanted to explain his teachings to the Christians who



lived there. They too needed help with rules for holy living. St. Paul's letter to the Romans is simply referred to as "Romans" and is as timeless and important to us today as it was to Paul's audience. Right from the first chapter St Paul gives us important keys to unlock the door to a saintly life:

1. Faith is the Answer to Sin
2. How God Works with Those Who Love
3. The Gospel Shows Us the Way

### Read Romans 1:16-17

- What should we have complete confidence in? (v. 16)
- What does the Gospel reveal? (v. 17)
- How does God put us right with him? (v. 17)
- How will the righteous live? (v. 17)
- Which key does St. Paul describe in this reading?

### Read Romans 3:9-24

- What is the definition of sinners? (v. 12)
- How do we commit sin? (v. 12-18)
- What does the Law do? (v. 20)
- What frees us from the powers of sin? (v. 22)
- Which key does St. Paul describe in this reading?

### Read Romans 8:28-39

- What can those who love God be assured of? (v. 28)
- What does it mean to be called according to his purpose? (v.29)
- What happens to those who are God's children? (v. 30)
- Which key does St. Paul describe in this reading?

The word 'holy' comes from the same word as 'whole.' The original word meant unbroken, healthy, or complete. Someone who is holy has a solid relationship with God. The word 'holy' in Armenian is *soorp* and comes from the same word as *srpel*, to clean. *Soorp* is also the word for saint. Someone who is holy or a saint in Armenian has a clean and pure heart toward God and others.

Holy Soorp Unpp

## Superhero Saints

As we look at the lives of our saints we see very clearly how God's light shines through men and women whose love for God led them to walk a path of obedience and service. The path of true Christian Spirit has been well traveled throughout the centuries. We are here today as Armenian Christians because our holy saints inspired those around them and all those who came after them. By learning about the saints — the Superheroes of our faith — we, too can be inspired and encouraged.



## Our Armenian Way

### St. Santookht (1st century)



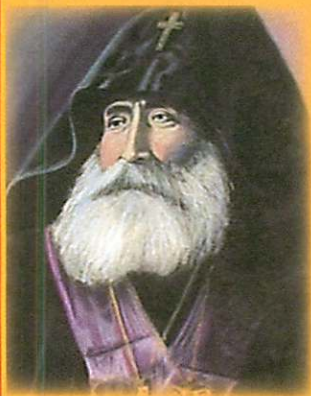
This young princess lived a privileged life as a royal in 1st century Armenia. What could ever win someone away from such a life? When St. Thaddeus left Jerusalem after Pentecost and came to Armenia, gifted with the ability to speak the language, Santookht was among those who heard him preach. She began to follow him, attending the gatherings of believers in the company of her nurse, who was already a convert. Eventually she was convinced that a life in Christ was the way to the best and most meaningful life. Her father was opposed to this new faith, angered by Christ's call to unbiased love and mercy and a humble life of service and prayer. Santookht resisted all his efforts to win her back from her new life. Finally, in a story famous in Christian legend, he offered her the choice of a crown or a sword – life as a princess or.... execution. She chose to die for the Truth rather than live a false life.

### St. Nersess Shnorhali (1102-1173)



St. Nersess was one of the outstanding Catholicos of the Armenian Church, known as 'Shnorhali' (which means "filled with Grace") because of the eloquent quality of his writing. He was an accomplished theologian, poet, writer and composer of hymns. During his tenure as Catholicos he worked diligently to reconcile the Armenian Church with the Eastern Orthodox churches. Because of this, Nersess is considered by not only the Armenian Church but also the Eastern Churches as a champion of Church unity. Among his many works is a 24-verse prayer titled *I Confess With Faith* which was written to be recited in parts at every hour of the day. Sunday School students are especially familiar with one of the verses – "Jesus, wisdom of the Father, grant me wisdom..."

### Catholicos Mgrdich Khrimian (1820-1907)



After years of service and works of charity in the Van region (where he was born), Khrimian served as the Patriarch of Constantinople. In 1878, a conference of statesmen was convened in Berlin where they were to discuss the issue of Armenian rights in the Ottoman Empire. Afterwards, Khrimian (who headed the Armenian delegation) delivered his world-famous "paper ladle" speech to the Armenian people back home. He told them: What good could appeals and paper petitions be next to the guns and swords of others? If all human rights were placed in a bowl, the Armenians could draw out very little with their 'paper ladle.'

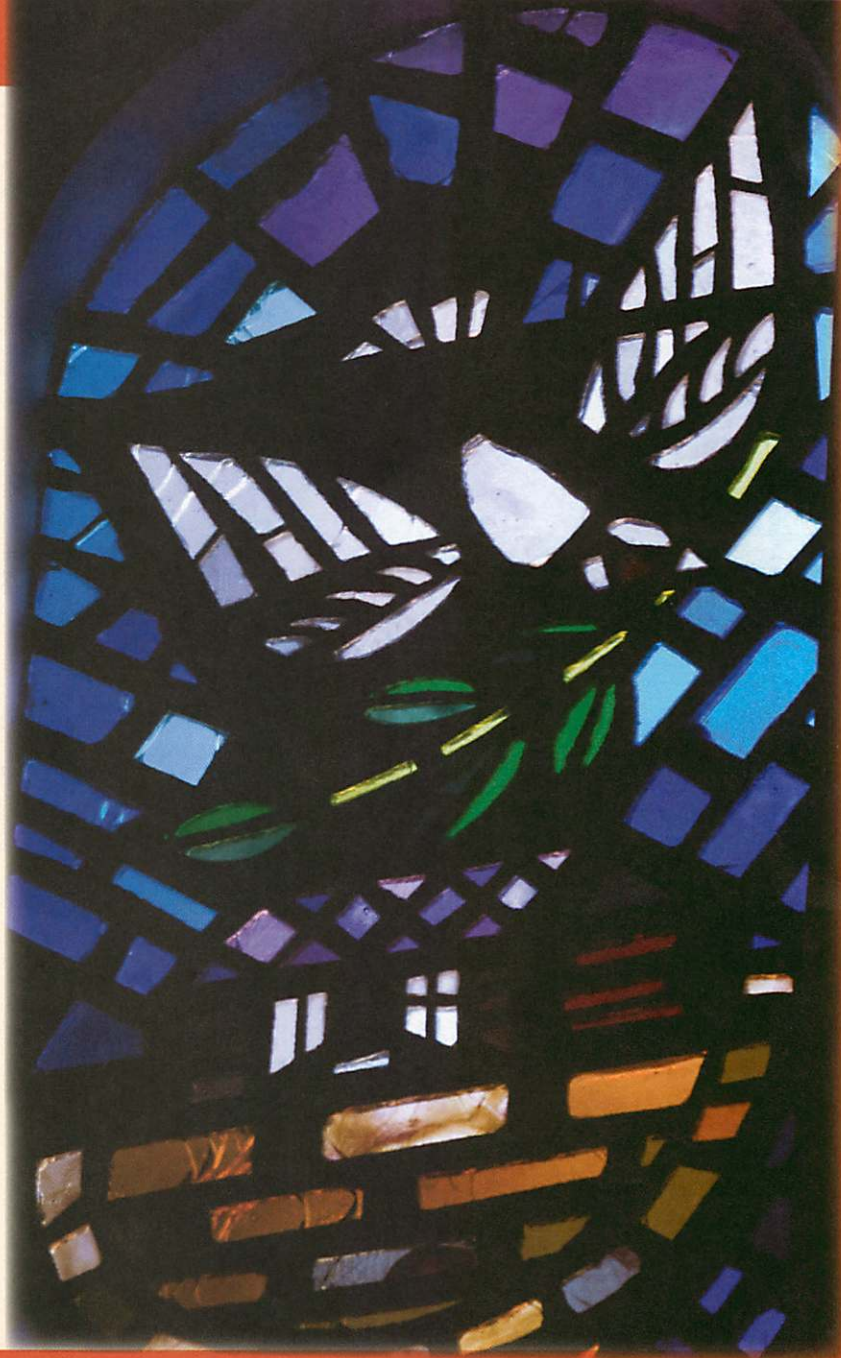
Khrimian was an equally courageous Catholicos from 1892-1907. During that time, he fought against the Czarist policy of confiscating Armenian Church properties and schools. In 1898, he officially established an Armenian Diocese in the United States. He died in 1907 and was mourned by the countless Armenians who had been touched by his outstanding leadership and love. He became affectionately known as Khrimian Hayrig ("father").

Collage: Holy Living/Saintly Lives

## How Does God's Light Shine Through In My Life?

So now we will ask again... *are you holy?*

You will be very happy to know that everything God created is holy—including you! Sometimes, though, holiness is hard to recognize. What St. Paul is trying to tell us in the book of Romans is that the goal of Christian life is to live in holiness, which begins with the simple desire to be who God created us to be. Those who have attained this goal we call saints. *We* are also called to be saints. How do we achieve this goal? The best way for you to shine your light is to imitate their devotion to God. It starts out simple: making the choice to respond to God by doing what you know is right, following Christ, thinking as you make decisions, “What would Jesus do”... and, simply doing just that!



## Closing Prayer

*Jesus, Wisdom of the Father,  
Grant us wisdom.*

*That we may always think, speak and do  
that which is good in your sight.*

*Keep us from evil thoughts, words, and deeds.*

*And grant mercy upon us, great sinners.*

*St. Nersess Shnorhali*