

How the Armenian Alphabet Helped Us Grow Closer to God



We Speak to God

Lord, thank you for the good people who helped Armenians pray in their own language long ago. Bless us always with people who dream and hope for you. Lord hear our prayer! +Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk

Shortly after Jesus Christ was crucified and rose from the dead, two apostles of Jesus arrived in Armenia.

They were St. Thaddeus and St. Bartholomew. They taught everyone about Jesus. The Armenian Church is known as an apostolic church because the two apostles were sent by Jesus to preach in Armenia.



Thaddeus and Bartholomew could speak Armenian. The people could understand them, but there were no books written in Armenian letters.

How would you have felt if you met St. Thaddeus or St. Bartholomew? What questions would you ask them?

When St. Gregory baptized the King of Armenia almost two hundred years later, there was still no Armenian alphabet! This is what “Love one another!” might look like in another alphabet.

Любите друг друга

Listen to This



Long ago there was an Armenian language but no alphabet. So even grown-ups could not write their names in their own language. There was one book that the people wanted to understand and that was the Bible.

In church they would hear the Bible in other languages.

“O Lord, let us hear your word in our own Armenian language.”

This was the prayer of the Armenian people.

With the help of Catholicos Sahag and others, a priest named Mesrob Mashdotz created an Armenian alphabet. But there were some letters missing. He prayed every night: “O Lord, give light to my mind, so that I may find the missing letters.”

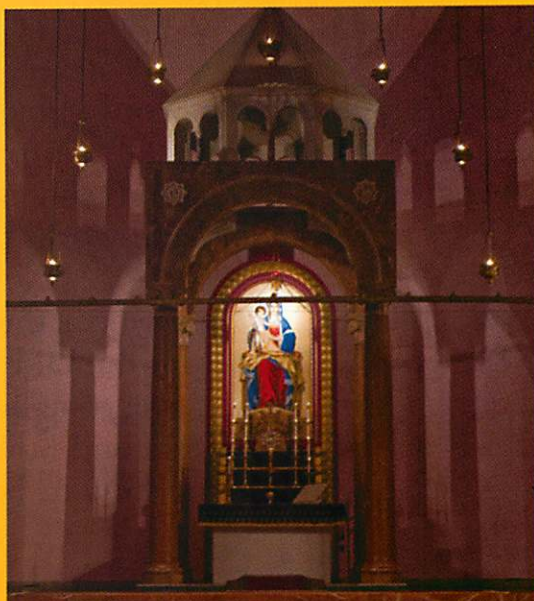
One day, his prayer was answered. St. Mesrob was half asleep and half awake. A smooth rock appeared in front of him, and a divine hand was writing the missing letters! St. Mesrob woke up and gave thanks to God.

The Bible was the first book to be translated. The prayers of the Armenian people were answered. This happened more than 1600 years ago, around 406 A.D. Both Sahag and Mesrob are saints of the Armenian Church.

God Speaks to Us

Your word is a lamp to
my feet and a light for
my path.

Psalm 119:105



We Learn About God

Those words were said long ago by someone who loved God's word.
Listen to what he said again. How does the Bible light up *your* life?

Hearts and Hands

These are the first three letters of
the Armenian alphabet: ayp, pen,
keem. This is just like saying a,
b, c! Trace them. Decorate the
letter ayp.

ա ա ա

բ բ բ

գ գ գ



Our Armenian Way

“O Lord, let us hear your word in our own Armenian language.” This was the prayer of the Armenian people. With their own alphabet, they could truly pray together in one voice. They heard the Bible in words they understood.

In the Armenian Church, we hear the Bible read to us every Sunday. We hear from the Old Testament prophets. These prophets reminded everyone how to follow God. We also hear St. Paul’s letters and other writings that tell the story of the church and how to believe.

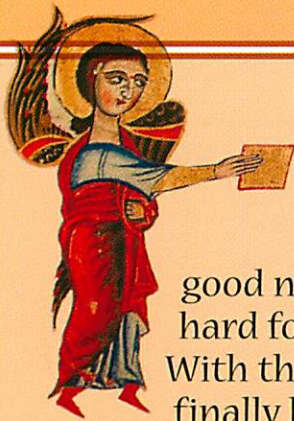
When the stories of Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John are read, we all stand and sing. God is speaking! Aseh Asdvadz.

Aseh Asdvadz

Ասէ Աստուած



For My Family



Sharing Our Faith

Today, first graders learned about how Sts. Thaddeus, Bartholomew, and Gregory the Illuminator brought the good news of Jesus to Armenia. Without their own alphabet, it was hard for the people of that time to worship and understand the Bible. With the help of St. Mesrob Mashdotz, St. Sahag, and others, Armenians finally had their own alphabet in 406 A.D. The children made a gospel bookmark for use in their Bible or storybooks.

Living Our Faith

1. Get a copy of an Armenian language Bible - if you don't own one, go online or borrow one from a friend or the church - and show it to your child. Explain that this was (and still is) the everyday language of the people living in Armenia.
2. Read a Bible story together from the Gospels. Before you begin, sing *Aseh Asdvadz*.