

Unit Four: A World Church

Lesson 5

The Community As Bedrock



Pray Together

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

Oh Christ, guardian of all, let your right hand be over us day and night, while at home and traveling, sleeping and rising, that we may never fail. Have mercy upon all your creatures and especially upon us, the sixth grade Sunday School class. Amen.

Adapted from I Confess With Faith, St. Nersess Shnorhali

Quick Quiz

Mark the correct answer.

1. The only Armenian Seminary in North America was established in 1962 and called

- a St John's b St. Gregory c St. Vartan d St. Nersess

2. St. Vartan Cathedral, mother Cathedral to the Eastern Diocese, was built and finally consecrated in

- a D1898 b 1915 c 1968 d 1990

3. What are the three Dioceses of North America?

- a California, Eastern USA, Canada b Western USA, Eastern USA, Canada
c Canada, America, Mexico d California, Western USA, Eastern USA

4. On December 7, 1988, a catastrophe shook the Armenian nation and Church to its foundations. Devastating the local Armenian population, this sent shockwaves throughout the world. This was

- a a massive flood in Cairo, Egypt b civil war in Lebanon
c an earthquake in Armenia d Turkish protests in Istanbul

5. In 1991, the Armenian Church was once again deeply affected by an event beyond its borders. In this year

- a The Canadian Diocese separated from Etchmiadzin's jurisdiction
b the Armenian Patriarchate lost its hold over sacred sites in the Holy Land
c the euro became the monetary unit of the European Union
d Armenia became a free Republic as the Soviet Union collapsed

Holding the Ladder

Did you ever climb a ladder or hold it for someone who did? Ladders are meant to stand up on their own, but even when all the legs are firmly on the ground, it makes you feel much more secure to have someone on the ground holding it still. Your church community is like the person holding your ladder. You may be high up in the air, buffeted by the wind, but you know you will not fall because you have something holding you steady. Christ is the safe ground, and your community of believers can help to keep you anchored to him and his Holy Word.

- How do you behave differently at Sunday School than you do in regular school?
- Do you feel that what you learn in Sunday School or regular school is more important? Why?
- If you studied Christianity online by yourself at home, how would your experience differ from attending Sunday School and participating in church life?
- What are some of the benefits of being a community of believers together?

We're All in This Together

The world we face from Monday through Saturday is a sea of noise, confusion, and mixed-up feelings. On Sunday, we can turn down the noise level in our minds and in our lives when we come together as a faith community. We help prepare each other to face the ups and downs of life in many ways.

When we worship together in the Divine Liturgy, we are surrounded by others who feel the same way about God as we do. We are free to show him our love and reverence, as well as our need for his salvation and protection. We are made stronger in our unity of purpose, because everyone in the church is there for the same reason.

As we observe our ancient rites and learn the Biblical teachings of Christ from our church fathers, we have a well-traveled path to truth about God. Our famously unchanging teachings can correct our course when we may be vulnerable to straying. Our parents, clergy, Sunday School teachers, and other members of the parish are available to keep us grounded in Christ's love and our body of knowledge accurate.

Next time you feel overwhelmed by the outside world, stop for a moment. Think of the church and the sanctity of the sanctuary: remember the fragrance of the incense, the peaceful atmosphere, the majestic hymns, the calm surroundings and the power of the communion chalice. You can look forward to that experience again each Sunday as you and your faith community are refreshed and instructed by Christ himself in the Divine Liturgy.



Bringing the Peace Wherever You Go

What can you do to keep focused on what you learn in church and Sunday School? We are instructed to pray and read the Bible often.

Write a prayer that you can offer to God as you go about your busy week.

Did You Know?

The word "Liturgy" comes from two Greek words that mean "work" and "people" so liturgy means "doing" rather than sitting back.

A People Belonging to God

Read Acts 2:42-47. Answer these questions:

1. To what four things did the faithful devote themselves?

2. What did the apostles do that filled the onlookers with awe?

3. What happened to the worldly goods of the believers?

4. How often did the faithful meet in the temple courts?

5. What happened to the number of people being saved?

Words to Live By

“There is more happiness in giving than in receiving.”

Acts 20:35

Our Armenian Way

Life in a parish of the Armenian Church is a rich and varied experience. We celebrate the life-giving mystery of the Holy Sacrifice—Soorp Badarak, we see our beautiful vestments and our special architecture, we smell the incense during liturgical sacraments and the aroma of Armenian food being prepared for bazaars and picnics, we learn about our common history, our language, and so much more. We are involved in a shared responsibility to care for the church, financially, physically, and spiritually. Our contributions in these areas give us a place to worship that reflects our love for the Lord. Together with our personal prayer life and Scripture study, our participation in a worship community keeps our faith alive and growing in an increasingly complex world.



Congratulations! You've completed the Sixth Grade. Now celebrate!