

Walking With God

Mother of the New Creation: St. Mary



Prayer Starter

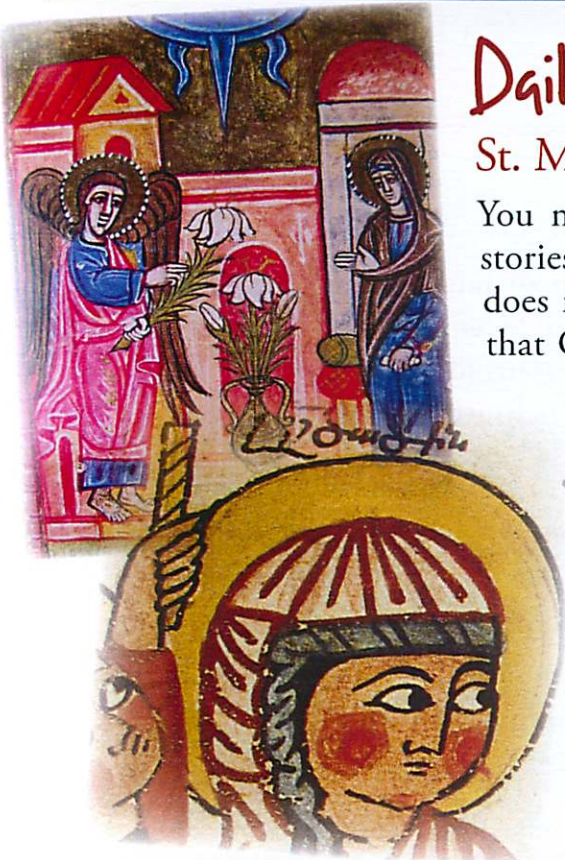
In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit...
Dear Lord, we grow closer to you as we learn about all the amazing people of the Bible whom you called to walk with you. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was faithful and full of love for her son and for the world. Help us to be like her. Amen.

Hye-Q

Answer the questions below with one of these names.

Mordecai Esther Haman King Sanadrook Princess Santookht

1. Who married the King of Persia and helped to save the Jews from being killed? _____
2. Which King threatened his daughter? _____
3. Who tricked the King? _____
4. Who died for her Christian beliefs in Armenia before the country became Christian? _____
5. Who raised Esther as his own child? _____



Daily Bread

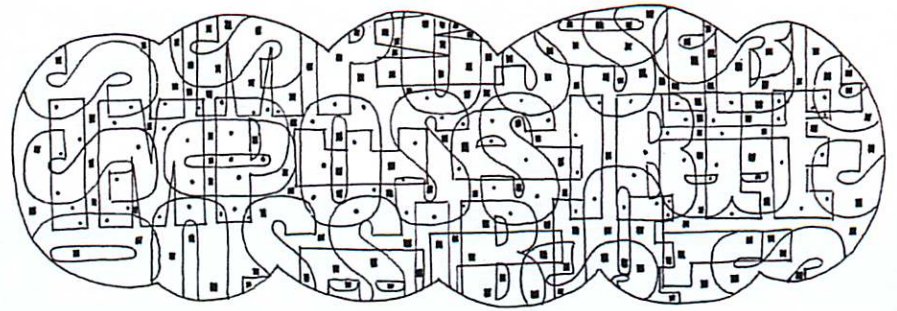
St. Mary Soorp Maryam Սուրբ Մարիամ

You may remember the story of St. Mary from the Christmas stories that you have heard. Mary is the mother of Jesus. The Bible does not tell us much about the life of Mary, but it does tell us that God chose her for her faith and devotion and that she was brave and willing to follow God's plan for her and her family. She gave birth to Jesus, loved him, raised him, and believed in him. Not only was she devoted to Jesus as his mother, she was also his first disciple. Think about it! She was the first to love and follow him, which she did, all the way to the cross.

This is why she is really the most important of all the saints of the church – those people who have shown themselves to be deeply committed to following Jesus. The Armenian Church devotes prayers, worship services, and special feast days just to our beloved St. Mary.

SCRIPTURE SOURCE

“NOTHING IS



WITH GOD.”

Shade in the shapes that have a small dot •

Mary's Song (The Magnificat)

Luke 1: 46-55

After Mary heard that she was going to have a baby, she went to visit her cousin, Elizabeth. Elizabeth was also going to have a son. Elizabeth's son grew up to be John the Baptist, who spent his life preaching the word of God and telling everyone that Jesus was coming. (He baptized Jesus in the Jordan River.)

Immediately after Mary visited her cousin, she was so happy that she sang a song which has come to be called “The Magnificat” (which means a song that praises God).

Here it is, from the book of Luke, chapter 1. The numbers are the verse numbers.

⁴⁶And Mary said: My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me and holy is his name.

⁵⁰His mercy extends to those who are in awe of him, from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵²He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”



Armenian Christians love St. Mary. In Armenian, she is called *Asdvadzadzin* (Asd-va-dza-dzin, with the accent on the last syllable). This means "Mother of God." Most Armenian churches have a blessed painting (icon) of St. Mary holding the baby Jesus on their main altars.

Did you know...!?



In the Armenian Tradition

After Jesus rose to heaven, his mother Mary lived on for many years. She was kind, comforting, and patient with everyone who came to her looking for the love of Jesus Christ. She helped the disciples with their work of teaching and helping the poor.

Tradition tells us that when she died as an old woman, 11 of the 12 disciples came to her burial. St. Bartholomew could not be there for her actual burial. He was far away and took days to get there after he heard that she died. When St. Bartholomew arrived, they opened the tomb so that he could say his prayers over her body, but her body was not there. We believe that Mary rose up to heaven just as Jesus did. We call this rising of the body into heaven an "assumption."

Every year, on the Sunday that falls between August 12 and 18, we celebrate this amazing event. It is one of the five major feast days.

Why do you think Mary was taken up to heaven this way?

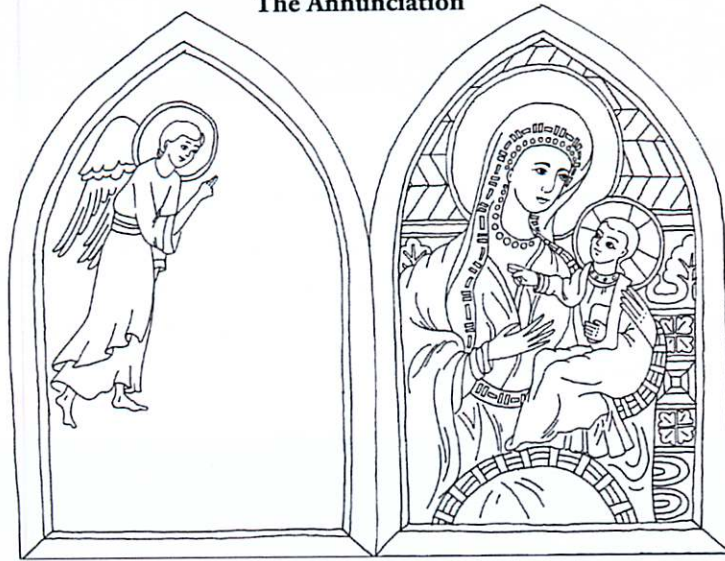
What are the Five Major Feast Days of the Armenian Church? Write them here:

On the Feast of the Assumption, Armenians bless grapes in a special ceremony. The grape is usually the first fruit of the autumn harvest. In blessing grapes, we are thanking God for all he gives us throughout the year!

Even before Christianity came to Armenia, people had special ceremonies using grapes as the symbol of a good food harvest and a happy life. For Christians, the grape also became important since Jesus Christ shared wine (made from grapes) and gave it to his disciples as a symbol of his life blood. The image of grapes is often on khachkars (Armenian crosses carved into stone) and other pieces of art in the Armenian Church. In past times, Armenians would not eat grapes until they were properly blessed on Assumption Day.

CELEBRATE WITH GOD

The Annunciation



What do you think Mary was doing when the Angel came to her? She is often pictured reading a book.
What do you think? Draw what she might have been doing.

BIBLE BYTES

Mary's song is often referred to as the "Magnificat." This simply comes from the words in Latin for "magnifies or glorifies" from the first words of the song which say: "My soul glorifies the Lord."

Well Versed

"In a loud voice she exclaimed: 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!' "

Luke 1:42

Family Focus

Today we learned about St. Mary, the mother of Jesus, focusing on her qualities of love and faith-filled obedience. We had a chance to look closely at her song of praise, "the Magnificat," and learned more about the Feast of Assumption and the blessing of grapes. Students imagined what St. Mary might have been doing when the angel Gabriel visited her.

Living Your Faith

1. Read the Magnificat with your child and ask him or her to explain it to you.
2. On a happy occasion when you feel like celebrating, make up a song of praise for God as Mary did.