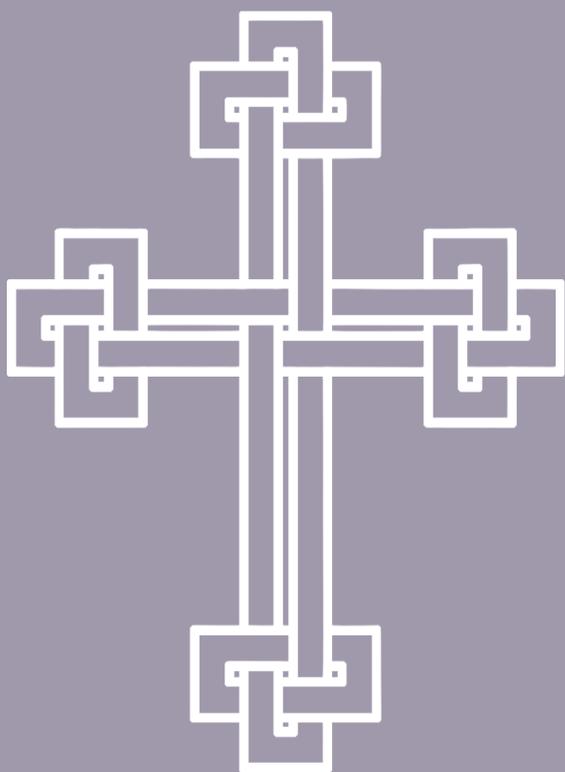


LIVING THE CHURCH YEAR AS A FAMILY

A Monthly Guide for Prayer, Worship, and Service in 2026



Welcome to Living the Church Year as a Family, a guide designed to help families grow together in faith within the life of the Armenian Church. Throughout the year, each month offers simple and meaningful opportunities to engage in prayer, worship, Scripture, and acts of service, both within the Church and beyond its walls.

This guide is meant to encourage, not overwhelm. Every family's rhythm is different. Some months you may take part in several activities; other months, perhaps only one. What matters most is intention: making small, steady choices that help your family remain rooted in Christ.

These suggestions are flexible and meant to be adapted to your family's unique circumstances. Families with young children, teenagers, or adult members will naturally experience the Church year differently. The goal is not perfection, but faithfulness: walking together in Christ and learning to recognize God's presence in everyday life.

May this guide strengthen your family's connection to the Church, nurture your shared faith, and deepen your joy as you journey through the Church year together.

JANUARY

New Beginnings in Christ

Liturgical Focus: New Year; Feast of the Nativity and Theophany of our Lord Jesus Christ (January 6)

Scripture Verse: *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation."* (2 Corinthians 5:17)

- Make family New Year resolutions focused on spending more time together in prayer, conversation, and service.
- Attend Christmas Eve and Christmas Badarak as a family and receive Holy Communion together when prepared.
- Invite your pastor to bless your home, dedicating the year ahead to God.
- Pray before dinner each evening, allowing each family member to take turns leading.
- Read at least one Bible story together each week, especially with younger children.
- Create a family sacramental album featuring baptisms, weddings, and other sacred moments, including short reflections from family members.
- Invite an elder to dinner and have children interview them about their childhood and life experiences.
- Parents: begin writing occasional letters to your children to preserve memories of their growing years.
- Prepare sandwiches together and deliver them to a local soup kitchen.
- Create a recipe collection of traditional Armenian dishes meaningful to your family.

FEBRUARY

Community, Mercy, Joy, and Preparation

Liturgical Focus: Poon Paregentan/Good Living (February 15) – the joyful threshold before Great Lent.

Scripture Verse: *“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”* (Acts 2:42)

- Celebrate Poon Paregentan (Good Living) as a joyful family day before the start of Great Lent (February 16). Share a festive meal together, emphasizing thankfulness rather than excess.
- Speak with children about joy, gratitude, and God’s gifts, while also preparing the heart for repentance.
- Explain that the Church invites us to experience joy so that Great Lent may be entered freely and intentionally, not reluctantly.
- Connect Poon Paregentan with upcoming Lenten “math”: what the family will lovingly set aside and what spiritual practices will be added. As a family, decide what you will “add” and “subtract” during Lent to grow closer to God.
- Read Acts 2:42–47 together and discuss what it teaches about the early Christian community. Identify one way your family can be more involved in parish life.
- Review current events together and identify people and places in need of prayer. Pray for them and remember them again at church the following week.
- Attend Lenten services (usually on a Wednesday or Friday) together whenever possible.

MARCH

Great Lent: Repentance, Discipline and Renewal

Liturgical Focus: Golden Chain of Lenten Sundays

Scripture Verse: *“Create in me a clean heart, O God.”* (Psalm 51:10)

- Help one another remain faithful to Lenten commitments.
- Continue participating in parish Lenten services and charitable efforts.
- Support one another in Lenten commitments.
- Establish a brief nightly prayer reviewing the day with God.
- Organize or participate in a canned food drive.
- Pray before meals together, using traditional prayers.
- Call or visit an elderly or lonely family or community member.
- Perform an intentional act of kindness without expectation of return. Include someone who may not expect or “deserve” it, reflecting Christ’s mercy.
- Plant beans or wheat seeds in damp cotton on a small dish – perhaps arranged in the shape of a cross – place it in a sunny spot, and watch new life emerge as a living symbol of the Resurrection.

APRIL

Holy Week, Resurrection, and Remembrance

Liturgical Focus: Holy Week (March 28-April 6); Easter (April 5); Holy Martyrs' Day (April 14)

Scripture Verse: *"Why do you seek the living among the dead?*

He is not here, but He is risen." (Luke 24:5-6)

- Participate fully in Holy Week and Easter services.
- Read Resurrection Gospel passages, including Armenian readings when possible.
- Learn the meaning behind Holy Week and Easter traditions.
- Prepare simple Resurrection-themed crafts or foods together .
- Reflect on April 24 with age-appropriate conversations about faith, loss, and renewal.
- Pray for peace, perseverance, and hope rooted in the Resurrection.

MAY

Pentecost, Vocations, Growth, and Service

Liturgical Focus: Pentecost (May 24) - Descent of the Holy Spirit

Scripture Verse: *"There are different gifts, but the same Spirit."* (1 Corinthians 12:4)

- Celebrate Pentecost by attending Badarak as a family and reflecting on the gift of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church.
- Speak with children about the Holy Spirit's role in guiding, strengthening, and uniting the Church.
- Read Acts 2:1-21 together and discuss how the Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles to proclaim the Gospel.
- During Vocations Month, discuss how God calls each person to serve - as clergy, teachers, parents, professionals, volunteers, and faithful disciples.
- Pray together for those discerning vocations to the priesthood, diaconate, church ministry, and Christian family life.
- Encourage children and youth to reflect on their gifts and how they might use them for the Church and the world.
- Create a family "gifts inventory" where each person names their talents and how they can serve others.
- Honor mothers and grandmothers on Mother's Day by praying together for God's blessing upon them.
- As the school year ends, offer prayers of thanksgiving for teachers, classmates, and lessons learned.

JUNE

Family Bonds and Witness in Daily Life

Liturgical Focus: Post-Resurrection life of the Church

Scripture Verse: *"You will be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth."* (Acts 1:8)

- Celebrate Father's Day by honoring fathers and grandfathers with family prayer.
- Read stories from the Book of Acts about the early Church's witness and courage.
- Discuss as a family: How do we show Christ to others in our everyday lives?
- Invite children to reflect on what they learned during the school year.
- Donate unused clothing and belongings to charity.
- Establish a weekly family movie night with discussion.
- Take a nature walk and offer prayers of thanksgiving for God's creation.
- Create a family prayer list for the summer months.
- Visit or call someone who has been away from church and invite them to reconnect.
- Begin a summer rhythm of prayer, maintaining connection to God even when schedules change.

JULY

Vartavar - Transfiguration & Transformation in Christ

Liturgical Focus: Feast of the Transfiguration of Our Lord/Vartavar (July 12)

Scripture Verse: *"This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him."* (Matthew 17:5)

- Attend Badarak together as a family on Vartavar and reflect on Christ revealed in glory on Mount Tabor.
- Celebrate Vartavar with picnics, youth activities, or water games as a reminder of baptism, renewal, and light of Christ.
- Read the Transfiguration Gospel (Matthew 17:1-9) as a family and discuss what the disciples witnessed and how Christ's light changes us. What does it mean to "listen to Him"?
- Discuss with children: Where do we see Christ's glory today? (in creation, in acts of love, in the Church)
- Encourage children attending summer camp or parish programs to share what they are learning about faith.
- Perform an act of joyful service: bring cold water to someone working outdoors, help a neighbor with yard work, or assist with a church picnic.
- Spend one evening outdoors as a family, watching the sunset and offering prayers of gratitude for light, beauty, and God's presence. Create a simple craft or drawing depicting light, mountains, or transformation to remember Vartavar. End the month by naming one way each family member has grown in faith over the summer.

AUGUST

Feast of the Assumption - Faith and Trust in God

Liturgical Focus: Feast of the Assumption of the Holy Mother of God (August 16)

Scripture Verse: *"My soul magnifies the Lord."* (Luke 1:46)

- Attend Badarak for the Feast of the Assumption and participate in the Blessing of Grapes.
- Read about the Theotokos/Asdvadzadzeen (Mary) and discuss her faith, humility, and obedience to God.
- Share blessed grapes at home and pray together, thanking God for the harvest and for family. Take grapes to someone who didn't attend Church or the Blessing of the Grapes.
- Encourage children to reflect on how Mary said "yes" to God, even when it was difficult.
- Invite grandparents or godparents to share stories of faith from their lives.
- Begin preparing spiritually and practically for the new school year with prayer.
- Offer a family prayer asking for God's guidance, protection, and wisdom in the months ahead.

SEPTEMBER

Renewal in the Cross: Strength, Hope, and Commitment

Liturgical Focus: Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 13)

Scripture Verse: *“Whoever wants to follow Me must take up his cross.”* (Matthew 16:24).

- Attend Badarak for the Feast of the Holy Cross and speak about the meaning of the Cross in daily life.
- Help children understand that the Cross is not only suffering, but victory and love.
- As a family, renew your commitment to regular church attendance and parish involvement.
- Begin or resume Sunday School, youth group, choir, or ministry participation.
- Create a simple family prayer corner with a cross, candle, and Bible.
- Pray together for teachers, students, and church leaders at the start of the academic year.
- Perform a small act of sacrifice for someone else as a family.

OCTOBER

Faith in Action: Living the Cross through love and service

Liturgical Focus: Feasts of the Holy Cross Continue

Scripture Verse: *“By this everyone will know that you are My disciples.”* (John 13:35).

- Reflect weekly on how carrying the Cross means loving, forgiving, and serving others.
- Participate in parish stewardship efforts or volunteer opportunities.
- Read Gospel passages that speak about discipleship and discuss them together.
- Encourage children to see their schoolwork and responsibilities as offerings to God.
- Visit or assist someone who is sick, lonely, or struggling.
- Begin preparing spiritually for the coming winter and Advent season (November 16-January 5).
- Pray for peace in the world and for those who suffer.

NOVEMBER

Thanksgiving, All Saints, and Gratitude

Liturgical Focus: Feast of All Saints; Thanksgiving (November 26)

Scripture Verse: *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”* (Matthew 5:8)

- Celebrate All Saints by discussing what it means to live a holy life.
- Share stories of saints, ancestors, or faithful family members who inspire you.
- Visit a cemetery or memorial and pray for the departed.
- Create a family “gratitude list” and add to it throughout the month.
- Offer a prayer of thanksgiving before meals, naming specific blessings.
- Participate in parish outreach programs, especially those serving the needy.
- Reflect on how gratitude leads to generosity and faithfulness.

DECEMBER

Advent & Nativity - Waiting, Light, and Incarnation

Liturgical Focus: Advent and the Nativity of Our Lord

Scripture Verse: *"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."* (John 1:14)

- Light an Advent candle at home each week and read a short Scripture passage.
- Discuss what it means to "prepare room" for Christ in your hearts and homes.
- Attend Advent and Christmas services (December 24) as a family (if your parish has them).
- Set aside time for confession and spiritual preparation.
- Perform quiet acts of kindness and generosity, especially toward those in need.
- Read the Nativity story together on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day (December 24 or 25).
- Celebrate the birth of Christ with prayer, joy, and gratitude for God's love made flesh.

LIVE, PRAY, PRAY!

Living the Church year as a family is a journey of grace, not a performance of perfection. Some months you will embrace many of these practices; other months, life's demands may allow for only one or two. What matters is not how much you accomplish, but that you remain faithful to the journey itself.

The rhythms of the Armenian Church connect us to centuries of faithful Christians who have walked this same path. As you celebrate the feasts, practice the virtues, and serve others in Christ's name, you join a great communion of saints across time and space.

Be patient with yourselves. Be kind to one another. Let these practices draw you closer to God and to each other, not burden you with guilt or pressure. The goal is not a flawless family, but a faithful one.

May God bless your home, strengthen your faith, and fill your hearts with His peace. May the prayers, worship, and service you offer together bear fruit in your lives and in the life of the Church.

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

-Joshua 24:15

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