Living the Church Year Lesson Plan:
4th Sunday of Advent

Ages 9-17

Fourth Sunday of Advent (Hisnag)

Length: 30-40 Minutes

Theme: ***Forgiveness, Faith, and Preparing for Christ During Advent***

Materials: Be ready to watch Fr. Vazken's Sunday Expressions video https://youtu.be/vJTsBTkGPJU

Scripture

- Luke 17:1-10

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, students will:

1. Understand why forgiveness is essential in Christian life.
2. Explain what Jesus teaches about faith as a mustard seed.
3. Connect forgiveness and faith to preparation for Christ's coming.
4. Reflect on Holy Communion and forgiveness in Armenian Orthodox spirituality.

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1. Opening Prayer & Greeting

Offer a brief prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, as we prepare our hearts for Your coming, help us to forgive others as You forgive us. Increase our faith and make us worthy to receive You in our lives. Amen.

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2. Video Review & Introduction

Ask:

- What stood out to you most from the video?
- Which seemed harder: forgiving others or having faith?
- What do you think the speaker wanted us to remember during Advent?

Transition:

Today we're looking at two Advent gifts Christ wants us to develop before Christmas: forgiveness and faith.

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3. Teaching Segment: Forgiveness

Scripture Focus

Luke 17:3-4 "If he repents, forgive him… seven times in a day."

Discussion

Ask:

1. Why is forgiveness so difficult?
2. What happens when we refuse to forgive?
3. How does anger affect us spiritually?

Highlight Fr. Vazken's point: **Unforgiveness hurts us more than the person who offended us.**

Use the phone example: Sometimes our phones freeze and need a reset. Christ gives our souls a reset through forgiveness and repentance.

Armenian Orthodox Connection

Explain:

- Before receiving Holy Communion, we seek reconciliation.
- During the Divine Liturgy we pray for forgiveness.
- Christ teaches that we must forgive others if we want God's forgiveness.

Read together from the Lord's Prayer: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

Reflection Question

Is there anyone in your life you need to forgive, even if it's difficult? (Allow silent reflection.)

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4. Teaching Segment: Faith Like a Mustard Seed

Scripture Focus

Luke 17:6

"If you have faith as a mustard seed…" Show a tiny object (grain of rice, seed, etc.) if available.

Explain: Jesus is not saying we need huge faith.

He is saying: Even small faith placed in a great God can accomplish amazing things.

Small Group Discussion

Ask:

- What challenges do teens face that require faith?
- What does faith look like at school? What does it look like online?
- What change would you like Christ to make in your life?

Key Point

Faith grows when we:

- Pray. Attend Badarak. Receive Holy Communion. Read Scripture. Trust God through trials.

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5. Activity: "Release and Receive"

Provide two index cards or sheets of paper.

Card 1: Release

Write: "Something I need to forgive."

Students do not need to share.

Card 2: Receive

Write: "Something I need faith for."

Examples:

- Family situation, Anxiety, Friendship problem, School challenge, Spiritual growth

Invite students to fold the papers and place them near a cross or Bible as a symbolic act of giving them to Christ.

Main Takeaways

- Forgiveness frees us.
- God forgives us as we forgive others.
- Even a small amount of faith can transform our lives.
- Advent is about preparing our hearts, not just celebrating a holiday.

Challenge for the Week:
Practice one act of forgiveness and one act of faith before Christmas, and be prepared to share your experience at the next youth gathering.