

For St. James Sunday School Students – 1/17/2021

Sunday School continues with 1 p.m. Zoom connection

Your Sunday School teachers hope you can join us and your classmates for a Zoom connection this Sunday. As the school year unfolds, our No. 1 priority is to keep you and your families safe and healthy. For our 18th session of the 2020-21 school year, please join us on Zoom at 1 p.m. on Sunday, January 17, for a half-hour virtual get-together to talk about home blessings and keep each other up to date on how things are going in these challenging times! Please remember to ask your parents about Der Hovhan's invitation for families to visit St. James.

Meeting Link, ID and Passcode for 1 p.m. Sunday

Join Zoom Meeting

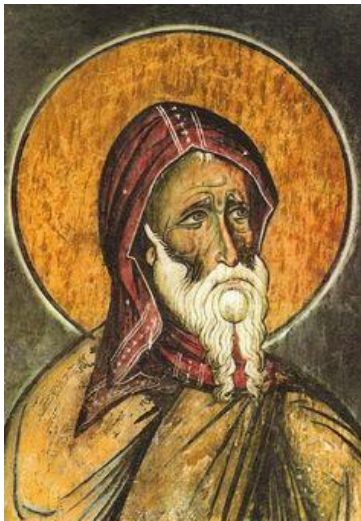
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86828492623?pwd=Vlo3OUtQWWxuTDd2OVluTVdrZ3lQdz09>

Meeting ID: 868 2849 2623

Passcode: Nr65Et

Also, please view this [video](#) about the home blessing, a special service in the Armenian Church that invites God to be present in our homes and protect us under the cross. Click on the [link](#) to find out how the life-sustaining elements of water, bread and salt figure into the ceremony!

Monday, January 18, St. Antony the Hermit



St. Antony was one of the most beloved and well-known of the “desert fathers and mothers” who in the 3rd century chose to live in prayerful solitude or in small communities in the desert wilderness in the Middle East and, primarily, Egypt. By the time St. Antony had died in the mid-4th century, thousands of faithful had been drawn to this lifestyle following his example. Another revered saint of the Armenian Church, St. Athanasius (who is remembered on January 23 this year), wrote in his famous life of St. Antony that so many had followed him “the desert had become a city.” This astounding movement was the early foundation of Christian monasticism. *The sayings of the desert fathers and mothers are widely available in collections. One of the many attributed to St. Antony: ‘I saw the snares that the enemy spreads out over the world and I said groaning, “What can get through such snares?” Then I heard a voice saying to me, “Humility.”’ Would you agree? Can you think of examples of this in your own life? In the life of a public figure?*

Bible Readings for Sunday, Jan. 17

From Today's Readings

Luke 4:14-30 Although everyone was praising His teaching elsewhere, Jesus experiences open hostility in his hometown of Nazareth. In the synagogue, He reads from Isaiah, proclaiming His mission to lift up the poor, give sight to the blind, and free the oppressed. When He foresees that many from Nazareth might not understand this well enough to be healed, they angrily turn Him out. *Discuss/reflect: What are the five mission promises Jesus details in vv 18-19? Can you paraphrase them for today?*

John 2: 1-11 Jesus attends a wedding in Cana with his mother and disciples. At Mary's humble prompting, Jesus performs what John describes as the first of his miraculous signs. Our Lord turned water into wine, an act not only of celebration and life but a foreshadowing of the sign of the New Covenant. Most importantly, this "best" wine speaks of the abundant life that Jesus offers (typically, hosts would dilute the wine at evening's end since revelers would not know the difference). *Discuss/reflect: How could the presence of Jesus heighten the sense of joy and celebration in your life?*

1 Timothy 1: 1-11 St. Paul urges Timothy to take a strong position on the false teachings that abound in Ephesus. He reminds the young missionary that faith is not about rules and regulations but is about (v.5) the love that comes from "a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." This inner relationship of faith and life echoes the gospel charge that "by their fruits you shall know them." (Matthew 7:16) *Discuss/reflect: What specific ways might a sincere faith change what you think, do, or say?*

Isaiah 54: 1-13 The prophet joyously proclaims God's love for his people, described as the relationship that exists between a husband and a wife. Marriage, abandonment, and restored relationship are strong Old Testament themes (Hosea). Underlying the metaphor of marriage is the idea of covenant, a binding mutual commitment, as well as deep personal love. *Discuss/reflect: If you thought of your relationship with God as one of a deeply loving commitment, (think perhaps of the dearest loved one in your life), what might such a relationship entail? (More time spent with God? Doing what would please God? Etc.)*



For a video about the home blessing ceremony, please click this [link](#)

