



KHACHKAR STUDIOS

EMPOWERING GOOD NEWS

USING GROUPME TO BUILD THE KHACHKAR STUDIOS MOVEMENT A NEAR-ZERO-COST TOOL WITH THE POTENTIAL FOR INFINITE SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT (I-SROI)

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Executive Summary

GroupMe is a free group messaging platform owned by Microsoft that enables churches to communicate with members through text, images, videos, polls, and event reminders. For Khachkar Studios, GroupMe offers the potential to become one of the most cost-effective digital outreach tools available. The financial cost is essentially zero, while the potential social return—increased weekly Divine Liturgy attendance, greater engagement among young adults, stronger community, and more invitations to newcomers—can be substantial. If every participating Armenian parish established and actively managed a GroupMe community, the cost would be negligible while the potential benefit could continue indefinitely, making it a strong candidate for an Infinite Social Return on Investment (I-SROI) initiative.

World-Class Benchmarks

Several highly successful organizations use persistent digital group messaging as a core engagement tool.

- * FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students) – Missionaries routinely use GroupMe and similar messaging platforms to organize Bible studies, discipleship groups, retreats, and weekly Mass invitations.
- * Catholic campus ministries at major universities (e.g., University of Notre Dame, Texas A&M, University of Michigan) commonly use GroupMe to coordinate young adult activities and maintain regular communication throughout the week.
- * InterVarsity Christian Fellowship – Campus chapters rely on group messaging to organize events, encourage participation, and maintain peer-to-peer engagement.
- * Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ) – Student leaders use group messaging platforms extensively for follow-up, invitations, and leadership communication.
- * Chabad on Campus – Chabad centers frequently use WhatsApp and similar messaging platforms to maintain close relationships with Jewish students and encourage participation in weekly events.

Five Best Practices

1. Post consistently—one or two meaningful posts each week rather than overwhelming members with messages.
2. Use photos and short videos from parish life to create a welcoming community rather than relying only on text.
3. End every weekly invitation with:
“Bring a friend. Bring a family member.”
4. Assign a dedicated young adult administrator who responds promptly, welcomes newcomers, and keeps discussions active.
5. Measure performance. Track membership growth, active participation, event attendance, and the number of first-time visitors who learned about the church through GroupMe.

Three Worst Practices

1. Using GroupMe only as a bulletin board.
If communication flows only from leadership to members, engagement quickly declines.

2. Posting too frequently.

Numerous daily messages often lead members to mute or leave the group.

3. Allowing inactive or unmoderated groups.

An abandoned GroupMe group signals organizational weakness and discourages participation.

Conclusion

Digital community has become an essential component of effective ministry. GroupMe enables churches to remain connected with members every day of the week—not just on Sunday morning.

For Khachkar Studios, GroupMe is not merely another communication platform. It is a practical tool for building The Khachkar Studios Movement, strengthening relationships, encouraging peer-to-peer invitations, and supporting the simple weekly habit that can help revitalize Armenian churches:

Bring a friend. Bring a family member.

Potential I-SROI: Extraordinary. Financial investment is minimal, while the long-term potential for increased engagement, stronger community, and sustained growth in non-holiday Sunday attendance is significant. As with any outreach initiative, results should be measured against defined KPIs to determine actual impact and guide continuous improvement.