



Colors in Church

WEEK 7

(3 days of lessons)

OPENING PRAYERS:

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen
Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee!

Prayer to Holy Spirit

O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Trisagion Prayer

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Before Study

Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart that I may hear thy word and understand it and so fulfill thy will. Amen.

LESSON / ACTIVITY: See pages below. For each topic, please note Parent roles, notes, and (child responses).

Prayers

Before and after each lesson, please say a short prayer in front of an icon according to your family's prayer rule or the following, taken from the red St Tikhon's Prayer Book:

CLOSING PRAYERS:

"Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb: for thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.

Pray to God for me, O holy [name of your patron saint], pleasing to God, for with fervor I run to thee, swift helper and intercessor for my soul.

O Lord, save thy people and bless thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by virtue of thy Cross preserve thy habitation.

It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos: ever-blessed and most pure and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim; without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word: true Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the prayers of thy most pure Mother, of my holy guardian angel, of [name of your patron saint], of [saint(s) of the day], and of all the saints: save me, a sinner. Amen."

Day 1: Colors have special meanings

Parent Asks: “Do icons have symbols?” (Yes) “What are some examples?” (Cross, Sword for soldiers, Vestments for priests or bishops, scroll for prophets, Gospel for apostles, yellow ribbon for apostles, red head coverings for martyrs, etc.) “Colors can be important symbols. Sometimes in Church the colors we see around us can be changed for special reasons. Where do you see the colors that can change in Church?” (Priest’s vestments, fabric on icon stands, altar covering, flowers, etc.)

Parent Explains: “We see lots of colors in Church, and sometimes they change, depending on the day. Did you notice any colors that change during the service? Think about when we walk back into the Nave after hearing the Gospel Reading on Pascha and seeing all the bright gold and white. On Sundays we celebrate Christ’s Resurrection. You can say that each Sunday is a Little Pascha. What color do you see on most Sundays?” (Gold) “Even during Great Lent, you will still see Gold on Sundays. What colors do you see during other days of Great Lent, like during the Presanctified Divine Liturgies on Wednesday evenings?” (Dark red or purple) “Just like many places the colors green and red together remind us of Christmas, the colors we see in Church remind us of God and the holy event or saint we are celebrating that day. This week we will learn about the colors and the symbols they represent.”

Activity: Look at the picture below and talk about when the feasts happen and what colors you might see. Talk about what the colors might be during the times in between feast days.



Day 2: White/Gold, Red, and Purple

Parent Asks: “Do you remember seeing the priest’s vestments that are red or purple? When was this?” (During Lent, Wednesday Lenten Presanctified Liturgies, etc.) “Do you remember what color the priest wears on Pascha?” (White or Gold)

Parent Explains: “The dark red or purple vestments that you see in Church can be a symbol for penitence during Great Lent. When we celebrate the feast day of the Exaltation of the Cross or a feast of martyrs, we can see red or purple, or sometimes gold. The color red can be a symbol for the blood shed by Christ on the Cross and by martyrs--saints killed for the sake of Christ. During Great Lent, the dark colors, red or purple, are used as a symbol for being away from God, the Light of the world. On Pascha we celebrate Christ’s Resurrection. Each Sunday is like a little Pascha, so we are also celebrating the resurrection of Jesus Christ each Sunday. Think of the hymns we sing...can you remember hearing the word, ‘resurrection’? On Pascha, we see not just gold, but also white, like the brightest and purist light. Look at the pictures below and talk about what you see.” (Bishop Alexander when he visited us during Lent, white and gold vestments and candles on Pascha, red and gold veil over the chalice, red fabric, Exaltation of the Cross feast day with red/white/green flowers, green and white flowers)



Day 3: Blue, Green, and Gold/Yellow

Parent Asks: “What icons do you see?” (Transfiguration--left, Annunciation--right) “Who do you see in the Transfiguration icon?” (Jesus Christ, Moses, Elijah, Peter, James, John) “What color do you see under the Holy Transfiguration icon?” (Gold)

Parent Explains: “The color gold is used in Church when we celebrate a feast of Jesus Christ, and also the Apostles, Prophets, and Hierarchs, or Christ’s Resurrection. Gold is a bright color, like a gold crown for kings, or ‘King of Kings,’ -*Revelations 19:16.*”

Parent Asks: “Who do you see in the Annunciation icon?” (Archangel Gabriel, Virgin Mary) “What color do you see under the Annunciation icon?” (Blue with gold)

Parent Explains: “The color blue is used in church when we celebrate a feast of the Virgin Mary, the mother of God, the Theotokos--she has many names! In icons, she also wears blue because blue is used as a symbol for divinity or heaven, and as the mother of Jesus Christ, she has held God--divinity--in her body. We can also see blue on the feast of Theophany--the blessing of the waters.”

Parent Asks: “The last color we can see from fabrics in church is green. What do you think of when you see green?” (Earth, nature, plants, etc.)

Parent Explains: “The color green is used in church when we celebrate Palm Sunday, Pentecost, or a feast of a monastic saint, ascetic saint, or a fool for Christ--a saint who people thought was crazy because of what he or she did in life to live on for Christ, not for one’s own self. Green often symbolizes life, like the Life-giving Cross--the Greek Church uses green rather than red for that feast--or branches of Palm Sunday.”



Activity: Match the Colors with the Feast Day Icons

Children can color the outline or back of their Feast Day Icon Banner.

[\(click here for activity\)](#)



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Draw lines to match the Feast Day Icons and the liturgical colors. (activity on next page)

