



Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA Office of Youth Ministry

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Dear Reverend Fathers, Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Glory to Jesus Christ!

The **Great Lent Giveaway (GLG)** is designed to give our youth the opportunity to do good works for others during Great Lent. In addition to doing good works, they learn more about their faith and devote additional time to learning, prayer and fasting during this season of preparation for Pascha. The GLG is a joint project with the Jr. Ukrainian Orthodox League.

One of our most successful Great Lent Giveaways (GLG) was collecting Icons for the churches in Brazil. You and your youth can research and find out where icons may be needed in the Orthodox Church – mission parishes, elderly homes, and even still in Brazil. You will find a suggested program for conducting this particular Icon program. We encourage you to construct a program using these materials, as well as your own ideas, to make the GLG more than just a fundraising effort. His Grace Bishop Jeremiah of Brazil would be thrilled to receive more icons for use of the people and the parishes in Brazil and Paraguay. A program that is carried out through the expanse of Great Lent will help the youth of your parish to more fully understand the importance and beauty of mission work during fasting periods.

This programming may be used during anytime of the year.

1. Sets of Festal Icons for the Tetrapod (Festal icons depict great feasts of the Church and change with Church seasons.)
2. Icons up to 8.5 X 11 in size of any Saint or feast day (these icons would be used in the parishes and by families.)

If you are going to choose the Church in Brazil as the recipient of you collected icons, please send them along with money to help aid with shipping cost to the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry.

In Christ's Love,

Natalie M. Kapeluck - Director

GREAT LENT GIVEAWAY

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry - Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA 2002

Icons

Objective: To instill in our youth the true meaning of Great Lent by:

1. introducing the beauty and responsibility of missions work.
2. learning more about their faith.
3. developing fellowship and responsibility for one another in being caretakers of God's creation.

GLG Project: Collecting Icons for the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Brazil or other communities in need

Icons requested: Sets of Festal Icons for the Tetrapod
Icons no larger than 8.5 X 11 to be used in parishes and by the parishioners

Steps for initiating and sustaining the Great Lent Giveaway through out great lent:

1. Gather the youth to discuss the Great Lent Giveaway. What is Great Lent, why do we fast, what is the purpose of Great Lent? What is the importance of missions work? What does performing missions work have to do with Lenten periods? Incorporate these ideas with the objective of the Great Lent Giveaway. At this gathering you will want to decide how you will collect the icons ie.raise money to purchase Icons or raise funds to donate in helping to defray shipping cost.
2. With the participants devise a game plan as to how you will accomplish your goal.
3. Determine with the participants a weekly time to gather and learn more about icons and discuss progress with the collection. You may want to have an iconography project for the participants to work on through out lent.
4. Conduct the collection and forward the icons to the Office of Youth Ministry, bring them to the Church Offices in South Bound Brook, NJ on St. Thomas Sunday or bring them to All Saints Camp Memorial Day Weekend. If you are not purchasing the Icons yourselves, all monies collected for purchasing or mailing icons should be sent to Emil Skocypec, treasurer of the Church.
5. Wrap up the project and have a fun celebratory event with the youth on St. Thomas Sunday.

Sample Schedule:

Week Prior to Great Lent: Discuss the Great Lent Giveaway (GLG), ask the participants to furnish suggestions in the upcoming week for developing a plan for the collection of icons. This might be an

opportune time to devise a Lenten meeting schedule. Share the letter from the Children of Chernobyl Relief Fund. This may help demonstrate how important their work with GLG was the previous year. Conduct a fun/fellowship event in preparation for the quiet time of lent. Explain why we hold to this practice of a quiet life during Lenten periods.

First Week of Great Lent: Have the youth present their ideas for collection of the icons. Take time to discuss all of the proposals. Ask them to decide, based upon the presented plans, upon a plan for the GLG. Begin a discussion about icons, their history and meaning. Have the youth read the article by Natalie Ashanin and lead them in a discussion about how we use icons in our lives.

Second Week of Lent: Perhaps invite an iconographer to come and speak to the youth or take them to a monastery/iconographers studio. Begin an iconography project which will last through out lent. This project could be worked on at home or on a weekly basis. The youth could learn to write icons and work on a Paschal or patronal saint icon. They could draw the icons, make mosaic icons from different mediums or write/paint icons. Explain that these icons will become a reminder of what they learned about Great Lent, Pascha, Missions Work and their accomplishment of the GLG. The icon that they write can also become a beautiful gift from God to help keep them centered in Christ during non-fasting periods.

Third Week of Lent: Begin session with reading the additional iconography material provided in this packet. Discuss how we are living icons. Discuss how this might pertain to Great Lent. Continue work on icon projects.

Fourth Week of Lent: You could visit an area church that may have unique iconography, healing icons or holy relics. Continue working on the icon projects.

Fifth Week of Lent: Begin session with reading the included material which discusses Creation as an icon. Discuss this concept while continuing work on icons and with collection of icons.

Sixth Week of Lent: Complete your icon projects and have them ready to be blessed on Pascha.

Holy Week: Encourage the youth to participate in all of the service during Holy Week. The project that has been planned to either collect or raise money for the icons should be completed by Holy Week.

Bright Week: By Friday of Bright Week the icons/donations should be sent to the Church Center in South Bound Brook, NJ or to your designated area.

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1810 Sidney Street
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Prayer at Blessing of Icons

O Lord, without beginning, unseen and unattainable, who of old ordered in the Old Testament the likeness of the cherubim in wood and gold and embroidery to be fashioned in the ark of testimony and in Solomon's temple, and now accepting not only the icons made in memory of your acts of salvation and divine manifestations for the sake of mankind in honor and glory of your most holy name but also not rejecting those designed in memory and imitation of your Saints who worthily served you, hear our humble prayer: bless these icons and sanctify them, and grant them grace and power to drive away the demons and heal all infirmities.

Excerpts from: Icons- Portraits of Heaven By Natalie Ashanin

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Do you have pictures of your family and friends in your living room? Most people do. Perhaps you have a bulletin board with pictures of people you admire.

Orthodox Christians also have images of their spiritual family and heroes, Jesus Christ and the saints. These are people who lived holy lives and who now live with God and pray for us. We call these pictures icons, which is the Greek word for "image". Icons do not look like other paintings. The figures on them do not look like the people we see around us. The figures on them do not look like the people around us. The figures on icons are meant to show the spiritual nature of the people shown on them. They are meant to inspire us and to guide our thoughts to heaven. Greek style icons usually have a plain gold background. Russian style icons often show some landscape in the background, but this too is drawn differently so that you know it shows another world.

Because icons are special pictures, we do not speak of them as being "painted". We say that an icon was "written". In the early days of the Church most people could not read, so icons were often used to show the events of the Bible. Sometimes there are smaller pictures around the main figure. An icon of St. John the Baptist, for instance, might have scenes from his life around the edges – his birth, his naming by his father, Zechariah, his life in the wilderness, his baptizing Jesus, his beheading. These serve to tell the story of St. John. Other saints are shown holding things that are associated with them. St. Panteleimon, who was a physician, is shown holding a medicine box and a spoon. St. Thekla, who is called "Equal to the Apostles" because of her work with St. Paul, is shown holding a church. The Three Hierarchs are pictured in vestments holding the Book of Gospels because they preached and taught. St. Barbara the Great Martyr is shown with a cross, because she suffered pain and death for her faith in Jesus Christ. Kings, Queens, Princes wear crowns. Warrior saints wear armour. Prophets hold a scroll.

Some icons use symbols to represent what we cannot see. For instance, while we can show Jesus because He came to earth as a human being, we don't know what God the Father or the Holy Spirit "look" like. The Holy Spirit is represented by a dove on the Epiphany icon. A famous icon of the Holy Trinity was written by St. Andrei Rublev, a Russian iconographer of the 15th century. The icon shows the three angels who visited Abraham as a symbol of the Holy Trinity.

During the 8th century some people thought that making icons was wrong because the first commandment forbid the making of images. They tried to do away with icons. They were called 'iconoclasts' or breakers of icons. Those who loved the icons were called 'iconodououles' or lovers of icons. They said that while it was wrong to make an image of the invisible God of the Old Testament, when Jesus, God's Son, came to earth He became a man who could be seen and so He could be shown on icons. The argument raged back and forth and was finally decided in favor of icons at the 7th Ecumenical Council held in Nicea in 787. Opposition, however, continued until 849 when, in the reign of the Empress Theodora, icons were finally and permanently restored to the churches. We still celebrate this victory of the icons during the first Sunday of Lent.

We have icons in our home because they show our spiritual heroes. When we stand and pray before their icon, they inspire us and join their prayers to ours. In many predominantly Orthodox countries, every home had an icon corner with an icon of Christ. When a visitor entered the house, he would make the sign of the cross and bow to the icon before greeting his hosts because it was Christ who was the real master of the house. Often families keep the icon of the patron saint of their home on the east wall of the main room. We have icons in our cars to protect us. St. Nicholas, patron of travelers, is a favorite. But it is not the actual image itself that protects. Rather, it is the saint himself who watches over us that we have asked St. Nicholas to pray for us.

Sometimes people ask why we kiss icons as if we worshipped them. It is important to understand that we do not kiss the wood and paint but are showing our love for what is shown on the icon – Jesus Christ, His Mother, or one of the saints. We do not need icons to pray to Him anywhere and wherever we may be when we need to pray. But icons help us pray by helping us concentrate. When we stand in church or before our icon corner, we know we are in a special place and are not distracted by worldly things. We do not pray 'to' icons, we pray with them.

There are some icons though which God has chosen to show us His special love. Because she is our friend and protector these are usually icons of the Theotokos (Bohoroditsa in Church Slavonic), the Mother of God. These icons shed tears or sometimes oil. Such icons are a special gift from God and very often God heals people through them. There have been many such icons in the past and we still have them today. There is one such icon in St. George Antiochian Orthodox Church in Cicero, Illinois. The flow of tears from the eyes of the Theotokos began on April 22, 1994 and still continues even though the church was ravaged by a fire. The icon was saved from the flames and is now kept in a special room in the building next door to the church. Many people come to pray before this icon and many receive healing.

In Church there are icons all around us to remind us that we are surrounded by saints and the heavenly hosts who join us as we offer our prayers before the throne of God. It is almost as if a little bit of heaven came to heaven. That is why some people say that icons are "windows into heaven".

GOD'S ICONS YOU, ME, & CREATION

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry – Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA

God's Icons...aren't all icons in essence written or guided by the Holy Spirit? Yes. However, there are some icons that were originally created by the hands of God alone. When God created the universe he formed a masterpiece of beauty, love, unity and an intertwined existence. Each element in God's Creation from the smallest frog to the tallest red wood is dependent upon the well being of one another. We believe that God gave us the written word to live by, but we forget to acknowledge the visual gospel that surrounds us every day of our life, an icon of the greatness, goodness and perfection from God. All of the cosmos is God's gift to man. A loving, well prepared home that gives us everything we could ever need and all that God asks is that we care for it as a King and Queen should care for their kingdoms.

Only God's last creation, man, was given the responsibility to care for the rest of the world. God made the universe as a living icon of love. Man was created as a living icon in the image and likeness of God. It is this distinction that makes man special. We carry in us the icon of God. By the way we live our lives we either shine in God's image or we hide His image in sin. When we protect the universe and all that is in it as if we were caring for a very special gift – we come closer to the image of God within us.

How can we live in the image and likeness of God?

How can we care for God's Icons – creation and man?

ICON PROJECT #1

Mosaic Icons

This icon project was designed by Cheryl Pituch for Diocesan Church School Camp and Teenage Conference.

ITEMS NEEDED:

Foam Core Board (size is at your discretion – no smaller than 8.5” X 11”)

High Gloss Magazines or Gloss Paint Samples

Gold Foil Paper or Gold Metallic Paper

Modge Podge or clear drying craft glue

Black and White line drawing of an Icon that will fit the foam core Board

Scissors

Paint Brushes

Black Permanent Markers

1. Choose the Icons that you would like to make into a mosaic. Decide if the youth will make individual icons or work on several larger icons or one large icon.
2. Locate line drawings of the icons and apply them to the foam core board with the clear craft glue.
3. Locate a color copy of the icon/s that you are working on for reference.
4. Search the magazines for large blocks of the colors needed in your icon. The colors do not have to match perfectly. Multiple shades of any given color will enhance the mosaic effect. If using paint samples collect the colors that you need for your chosen icon.
5. Cut the magazine/paint sample colors into small pieces. Size of the pieces should depend upon the size of the icon. Shapes of the pieces should not be uniform
6. Begin gluing the pieces of color into the appropriate places on the line drawn icon. The colors may go over the lines a bit. It will eventually be fixed with the markers.
7. Fit the colored pieces tightly together, edge-to-edge as if building a puzzle.
8. When the process is complete trace the original icon drawing lines with the black permanent markers.
9. Have the Icons laminated and/or framed.
10. Have the Icons Blessed on Pascha

This project is like painting by number. Be sure to have two copies of the line drawn icon – one to be used as the frame work for the project and one to use as the guide to reapply the lines onto the finished project.

ICON PROJECT #2

Mosaic Icons

This icon project was designed by Michael Kapeluck for Sts. Peter & Paul UOC Church School in Carnegie, PA

ITEMS NEEDED:

Wood Plaques 5" X 7"

Craft Beads Seed or rocaille beads round (not glass – purchase colors needed for icon) and Seed or rocaille flutes(tubes)(not glass—mostly for outlining)

Color copy of icon 5" X 7"

Elmer's Glue

Extra thick/sticky craft glue

Scissors

Paint Brushes

Clear polyurethane

1. Choose the icons that you would like to make into a mosaic. Locate color icons that you would like to use.
2. Make color copies of the icons that you have chosen.
3. Dilute the Elmer's Glue with water for a thinner consistency but not too thin .
4. Trim and apply the color copy icons to the wood plaques using the paintbrushes—do not use too much of the diluted Elmer's Glue. It may warp the wood and paper.
5. Purchase the color craft beads needed to match the colors in the icon. You may want to purchase shades of the same color to enhance the mosaic.
6. Use the craft beads (tubes) to outline important sections of the icon (see drawing) apply these with the Extra Thick Craft Glue
7. Once the outline is complete begin applying the colored beads to the correct areas. Use the Extra Thick Craft Glue. Use an ample amount of the glue for the beads to hold. The glue will dry clear.
8. **DO NOT PLACE BEADS ON ANY FLESH AREAS!** The face, hands and if you choose gospels, censurs etc.... will be seen as is in the color copy with no beads to cover them.
9. Apply a thick layer of polyurethane to the icon to help cement the icons.
10. Have the icons blessed on Pascha.

