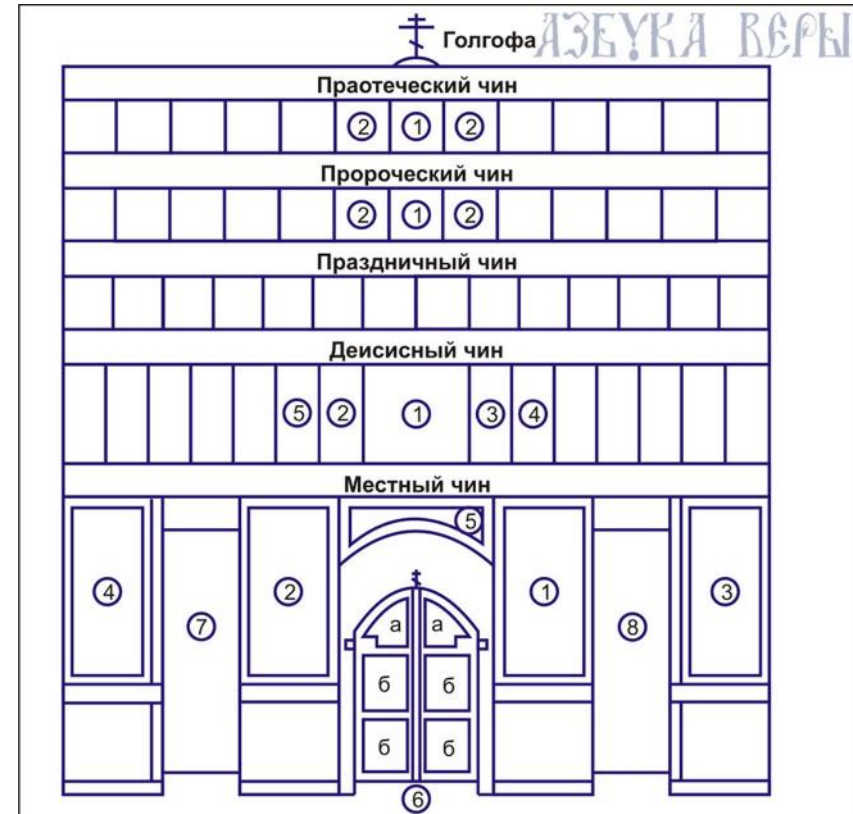


# Defining the Sacred Space: the Iconostasis in Orthodox Worship.

Lisa Priebe, 2024



# The Iconostasis in Orthodox Worship

## ❖ Introduction

## ❖ Historical Development

- Old Testament
- Early Christianity
- Byzantium
- Slavic
- 20<sup>th</sup> c. : more open look; unusual designs

## ❖ The Local Tier

## ❖ The Royal Doors & Pendentives

## ❖ Multi-tier iconostasis in Slavic churches

- Significance of each tier: Local, Deisis, Festal, others

## ❖ Portable iconostasis & mobile churches/chapels

## ❖ Questions?



When you walk into a church, what makes you think it's an Orthodox church?



Today (21<sup>st</sup> century), the defining physical feature of an Orthodox church is:

**The Iconostasis**

“Given the Jewish Temple tradition and that of virtually all other religions of having some form of **partition between the main sacred space and outlying areas**, it is probably safe to assume that the majority if not all of the early [Christian] churches had some such demarcation.”

-Aidan Hart, *Techniques of Icon and Wall Painting*

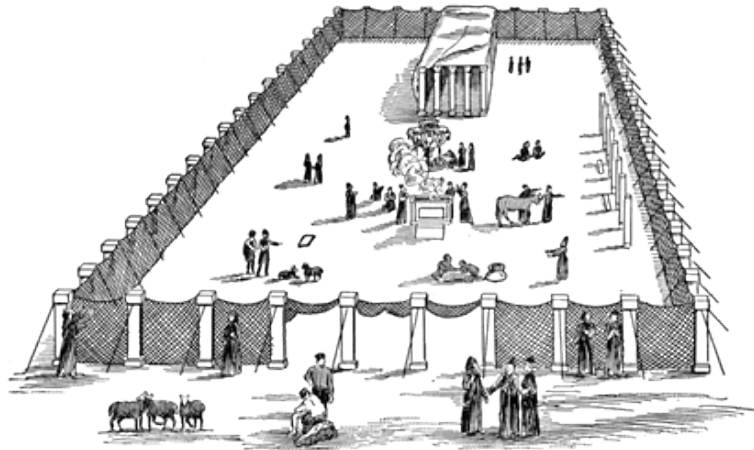


# Iconostasis Time Line

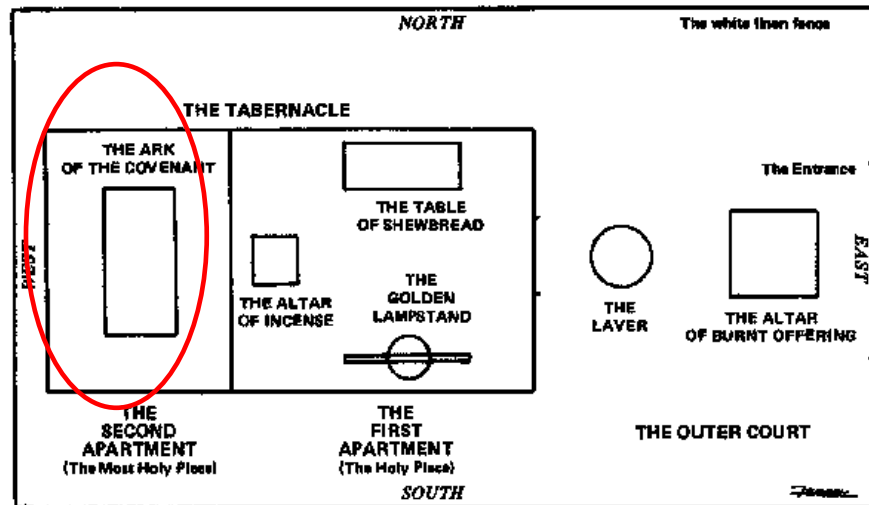


Old Testament

The Tabernacle



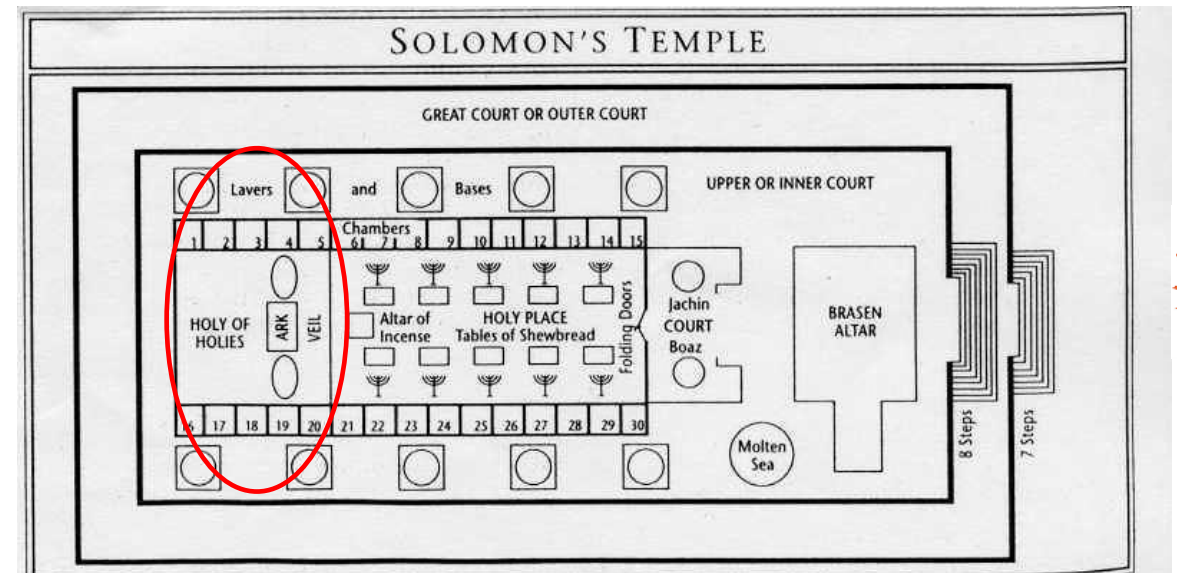
(Exodus 25-26)



Temple of Solomon  
(mid 10<sup>th</sup> c. BC)



Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east (Ezekiel 43)



Early  
Christianity to  
~313 AD

## Templon Style



Distinction between sanctuary and nave existed from the first centuries of the Church. Sometimes this was a low partition (supported by archeological finds).

Greek Chapel, Catacomb of Priscilla  
Rome, early 3<sup>rd</sup> c.



# Templon Example

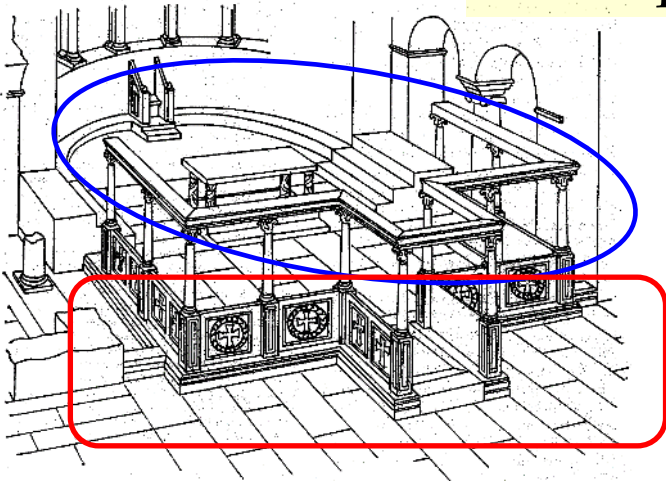


Church of Santa Maria Antiqua,  
Rome ~4<sup>th</sup> c.

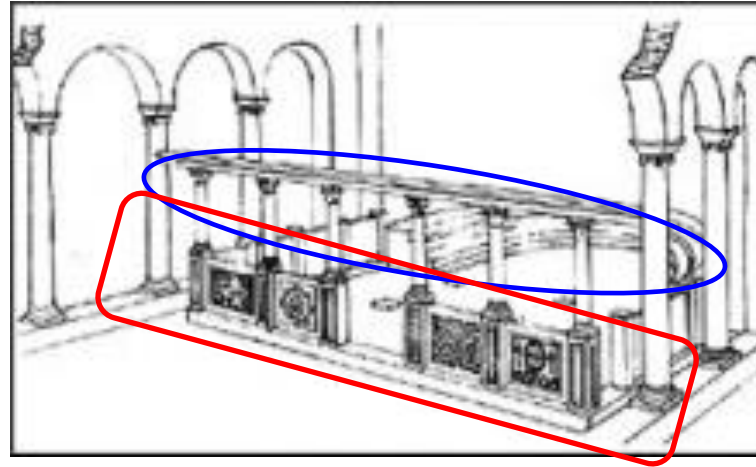


# Templon Examples

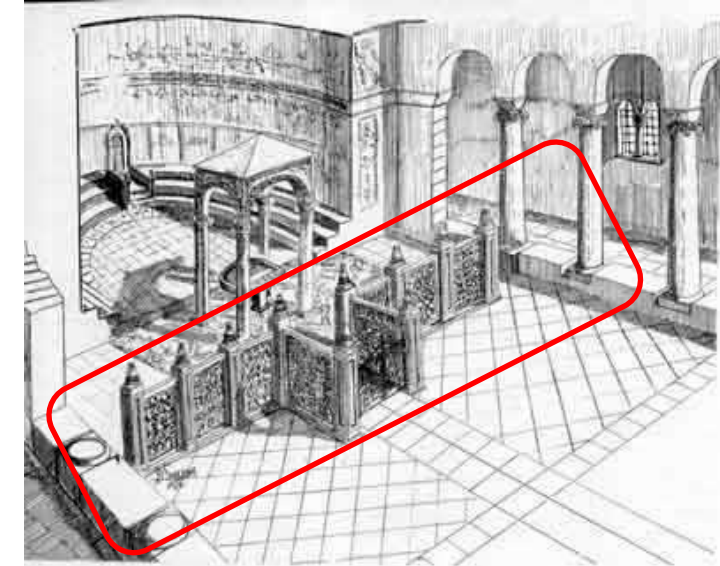
Pre-  
Iconoclasm  
(to ~726 AD)



Church of San Clemente,  
Rome, 4th c.



Aphantelli Basilica in Lesbos, ~5<sup>th</sup> c.  
reconstruction



Altar and chancel at Veliko  
Tarnovo, Bulgaria, 6<sup>th</sup> c.  
Reconstruction by N. Angelov.

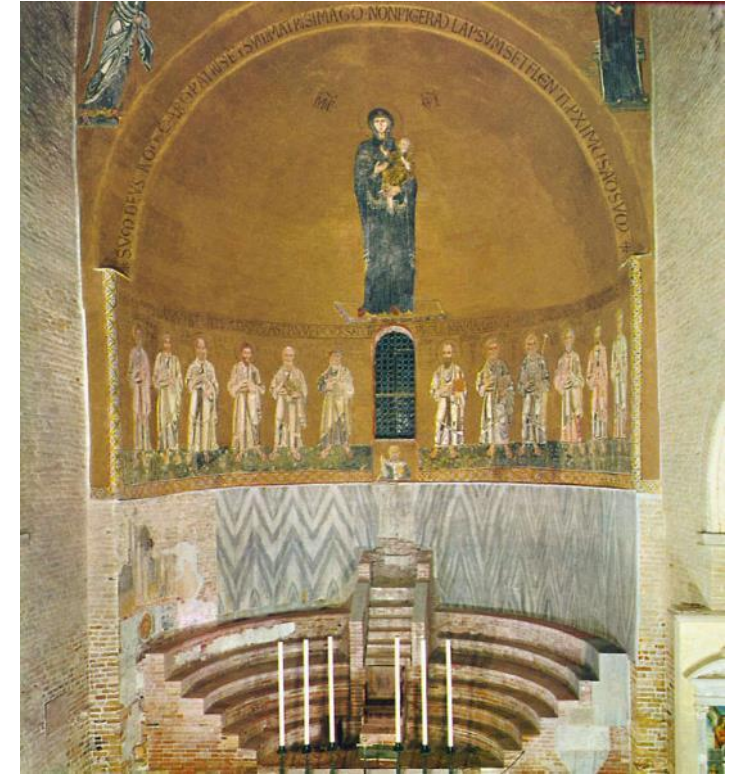


Church of Santa Maria Antiqua,  
Rome ~4<sup>th</sup> c.

- Basilica is the primary type of church structure (rectangle)
- **Partition** between altar and nave (about waist-high)
- Often extended into nave
- Columns added to the partition over time.
- Sometimes a beam (“**Architrave**”) across the tops of the columns.



# Templon Example



Basilica of S. Maria Assunta on Torcello,  
founded in 639 by the order of the Byzantine Exarch of Ravenna, renovated in 1008





N. Kizenko

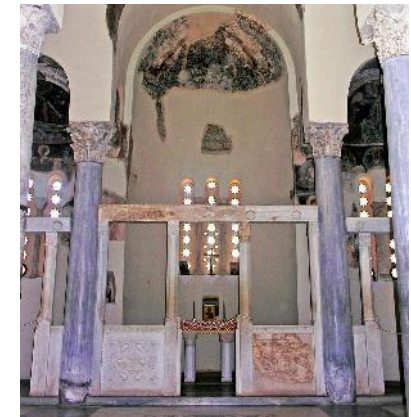
Evocation of Templon; Entrance to Gallery of Byzantine Icons  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC

## The Templon

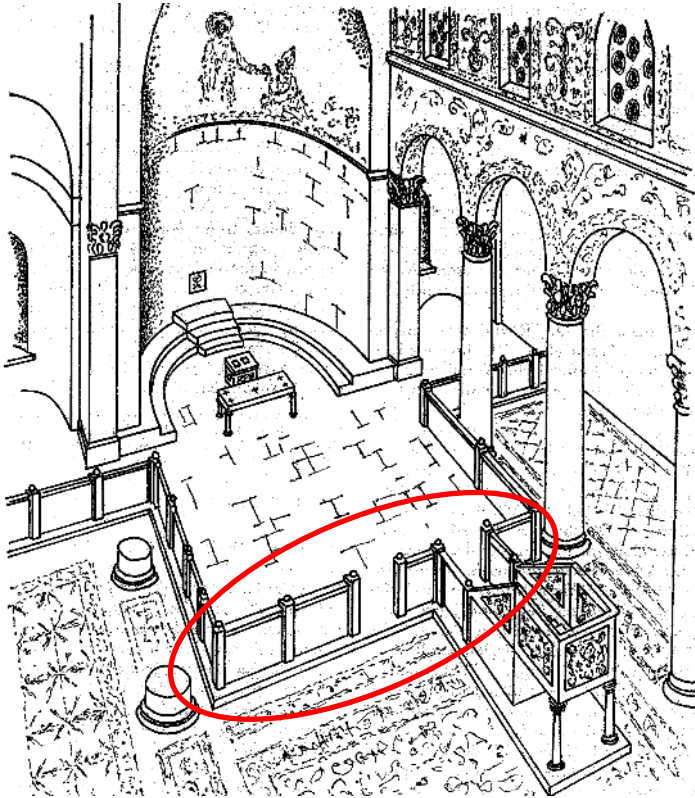
The templon was the barrier developed in Byzantine churches to separate the sanctuary, located in the apse, from the public space, or nave.

In the medieval period, the templon was a low barrier, often constructed of marble panels and supporting elements. A door in the center provided access to the apse (*altar*) for the clergy. Flanking the door were icons of Christ and the Virgin. Across the top were images or decorative carvings.

In late Byzantine churches, the barrier evolved into the wood-carved iconostasis with its elaborate tiers of icons. The barrier here, comprising marble panels [*~ 10<sup>th</sup> c.*] and painted and copper icons, is meant to evoke the medieval templon. The entrance has been deliberately widened to underline that sacred space is not represented here. [*in MMA exhibit*]



After  
Iconoclasm  
(After 843 AD)



Church of Sts Peter & Paul,  
Gerasa (Jordan)

On **these panels**, later icons  
were put, most of all after 843.

- Screen of partition became flatter, not extending into nave
- Side rooms created
  - prothesis, or sacristy on the north
  - diakonikon or vestry on the south
- 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> c: Fresco or mosaic images of the Saviour and the Theotokos begin to be added to piers at either end of screen
- 13<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> c. Byzantine church: icons of the Saviour, Theotokos, and saints placed in spaces between columns of screen.
- **Post-1453**: wooden screens built forward of the church piers (as opposed to between them) → **unbroken screen** between north and south walls.
- Wood (rather than stone) allowed extending additional tiers upward; **Early 15<sup>th</sup> c.** Russia: very high screen up to 5 tiers developed.
- **Late 17<sup>th</sup> c.** and onward: Baroque/Classicizing influence: more ornate, gilded, heavily carved → “**wall with icons**”, rather than a screen.
- **20<sup>th</sup> c.** (USA): more open screens; unusual designs



The iconostasis is seen as the boundary between two worlds:

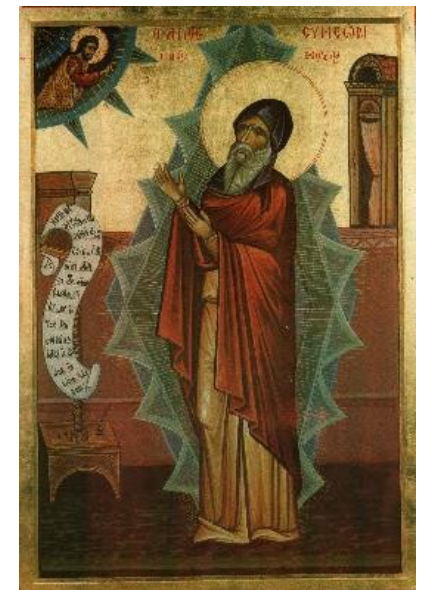
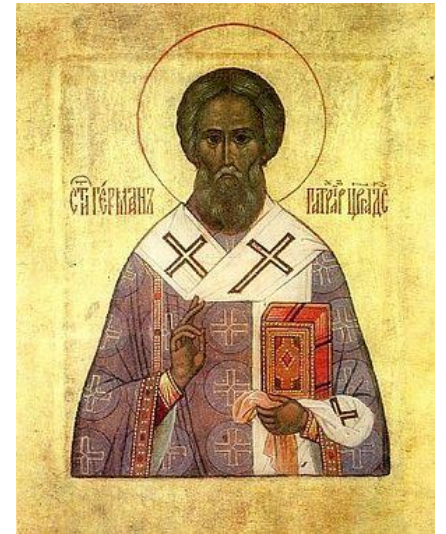
- the Divine and the human,
- the permanent and the transitory.

The Holy Icons denote that the Savior, His Mother and the Saints, whom they represent, abide both in Heaven and among men. Thus the Iconostasis both divides the Divine world from the human world, but also unites these same two worlds into one whole, a place where all separation is overcome, and where reconciliation between God and man is achieved. Standing on the boundary between the Divine and the human, the Iconostasis reveals, by means of its Icons, the ways to this reconciliation.

*-St Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople (+~740 AD)*

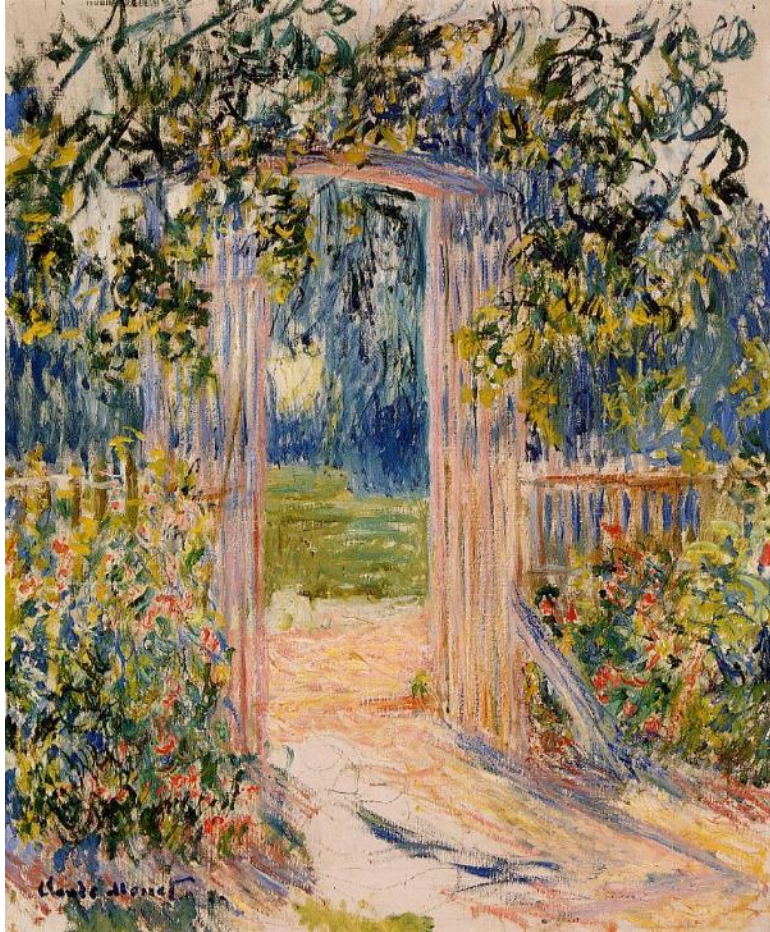
- the [Vestibule] corresponds to earth,
- the [Nave] to heaven,
- the holy [Altar] to what is above heaven [Book on the House of God, Ch. 12].

*-St Simeon the New Theologian (+1022)*



<https://orthochristian.com/103732.html>





The Garden Gate  
*Claude Monet, 1881*

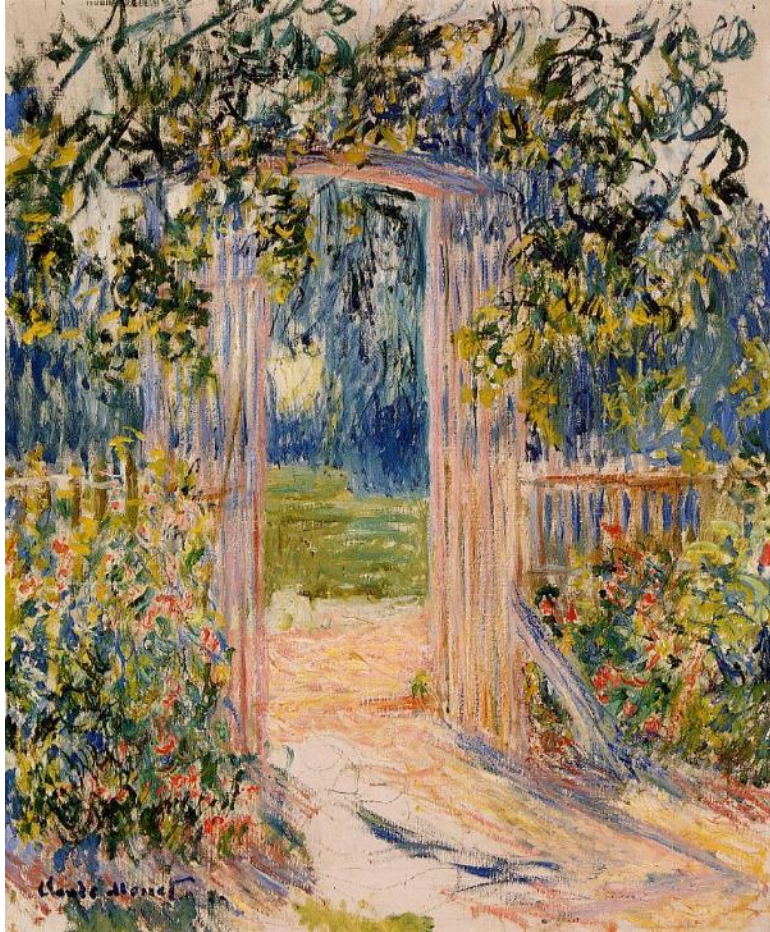


У Возлюбленного моего был виноградник на вершине утучненной горы, и **Он обнес его оградю**, и очистил его от камней, и насадил в нем отборные виноградные лозы, и построил башню посреди его, и выкопал в нем точило.

My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: **And he fenced it**, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein:

*Isaiah 5*





The Garden Gate  
*Claude Monet, 1881*



What should an iconostasis look like?

A solid wall with icons on it?

Or perhaps something like a garden gate where the garden space is defined and enclosed, but may be glimpsed from the outside?



# Rood Screens: Not exactly Iconostases; define altar

area.



[www.alamy.com](http://www.alamy.com) - A4154K

St Agnes' church, Suffolk, England  
14<sup>th</sup> c. rood screen

Choir may be located  
behind rood screen

The only iconostasis=rood screen that survived the Reformation. Nearly 1000-year old church in **Kinn, Norway**



3-tier, baroque style



Serbian Orthodox Church of St. George  
Novi Sad, Serbia

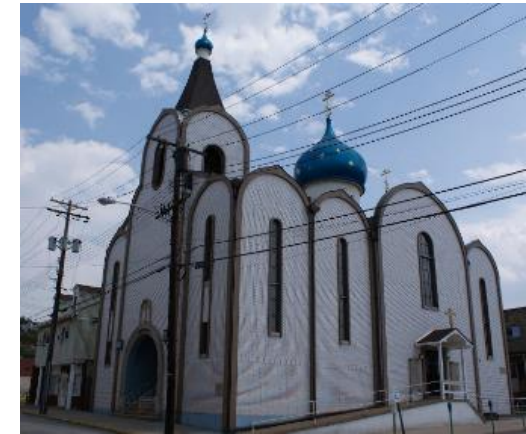
*Photo by Dennis Jarvis. Via Wikimedia Commons*



1905



# Ornate 3-tier



Holy Dormition Orthodox Church,  
McKeesport, PA

late 20<sup>th</sup> c. “More Open Screen” interpretations: *Pro*

“The Iconostasis of the Church needs to be open enough to give a view of the Altar and to let the people know they are co-celebrants of the Liturgy and not passive spectators to something performed for them by the clergy.”

Blog post on "taking Orthodoxy to America"

by Fr. Marc Dunaway, pastor of Saint John Orthodox Cathedral in Eagle River, Alaska.

<https://publicorthodoxy.org/2017/02/16/taking-orthodoxy-to-america/>

## late 20<sup>th</sup> c. “More Open Screen” interpretations: *Con*

In the modern spirit of compromise, many 20<sup>th</sup> century iconostases have been designed to attempt to strike a balance between a templon screen and an iconostasis. This compromise is usually manifest as a flimsy screen with a few icons and a lot of holes to see through.

Unfortunately, such screens perform neither the role of a templon screen nor an iconostasis.

Because they are still partially open during the consecration, they do not provide the veil of mystery (the curtain) that was the purpose of the templon screen. And because they leave holes between the icons, the icons do not visually integrate and work together as a theological whole. On the contrary, the partial blockage of the view is visually chaotic and only adds to the impression that the iconostasis is ‘in the way’.

**For the iconographic vision of the Kingdom of God to be effective, it must wholly replace the physical vision of the altar, not compete with it for our attention.**

Andrew Gould, [An Icon of the Kingdom of God: The Integrated Expression of all the Liturgical Arts – Part 3: The Role of Panel Icons, Frescoes, and the Iconostasis](#)

Article in Orthodox Arts Journal, July 18, 2012



late 20<sup>th</sup> c. "More Open Screen" interpretations



St Nicholas Orthodox Church,  
Mentor OH 1973+  
Ceiling Fresco functions as Deisis Tier



Holy Transfiguration Monastery,  
Ellwood City, PA 1967+



The Iconostasis style most familiar:  
“Local Tier” and 1-2 additional Tiers





# Local Tier

## Местный чин

### Mystical Supper



### The Annunciation:

Archangel Gabriel

Theotokos

St John

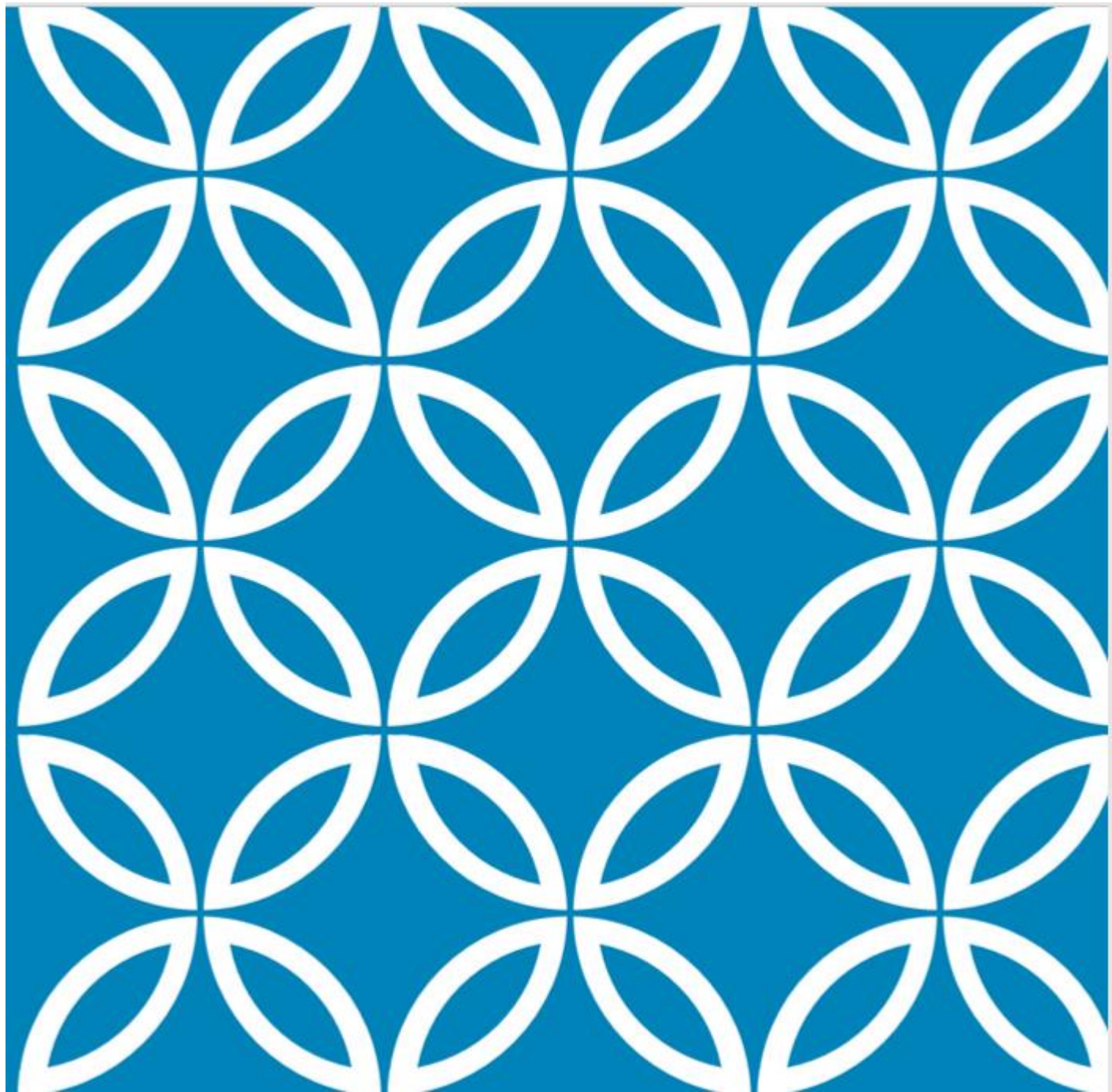
St Matthew

St Luke

St Mark

(This is a traditional arrangement, and should be the same as the traditional arrangement of the Evangelists on the pendentives)

# Single-Tier Examples





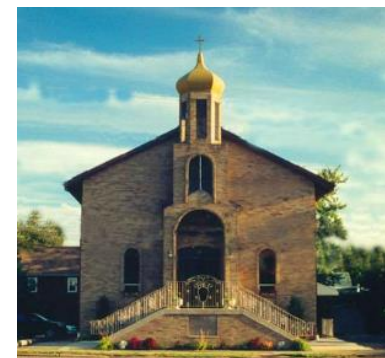
# Single – tier Iconostasis



Church of the Holy Trinity  
New Britain, CT



# Single – tier Iconostasis



St Elia the Prophet Orthodox Church  
Akron, OH

1946?



## Single – tier Iconostasis



ction Of the Mother Of God Church, Russian Orthodox Church Outside



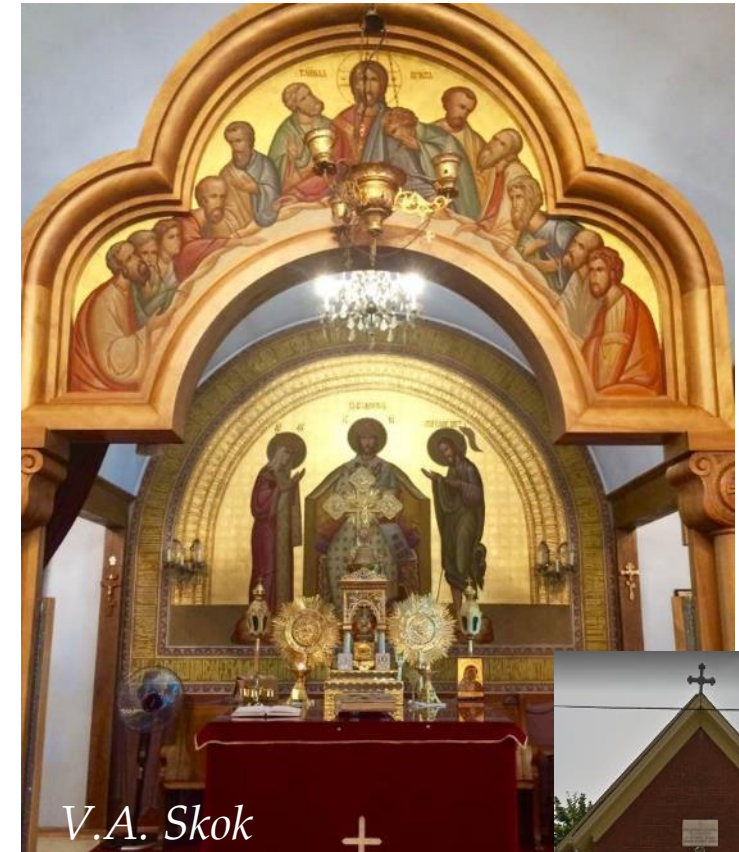
460 East Avenue, Rochester NY  
Home of POMOG parish ~1960 to 2002

POMOG Russian Orthodox  
Church, Rochester, NY

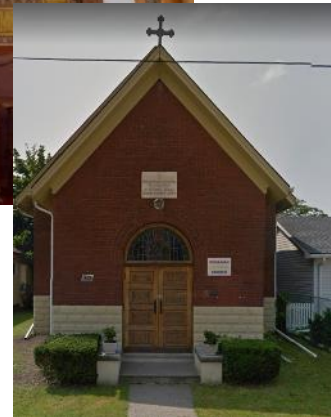
This Iconostasis was moved to the  
newly built church in 2002  
(shown here in the new church)  
and replaced in 2015



# Single – tier Iconostasis



V.A. Skok



original Serbian Orthodox parish of Archangel Michael  
Niagara Falls, Ontario  
(purchased by the Romanian community ~ 2016)  
*Iconography by Igor Petrovich Suhacev.*





original Serbian Orthodox parish of Archangel Michael in Niagara Falls, Ontario  
Iconography by Igor Petrovich Suhacev. *Photos by Anna Portoraro & V.A. Skok*





Decoration of the interior of the church was executed by two prominent Ukrainian artists in the United States:

- Iconographer Petro Cholodny, Jr.
- Wood-carver/sculptor Mykhailo Cheresniowsky.



*St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic Church  
East Jewett, NY*



# Single – tier Iconostasis

Note the columns and carved architrave.



St John the Russian Orthodox Church  
Ipswich, MA





# Single – tier Iconostasis



All-Merciful Savior Monastery  
Vashon Island, WA



# Single – tier Iconostasis



- Cherubim and Seraphim on deacon's doors
- Wall of Hymnographers and Poets in transept (*documented in book*)
- Iconography by Heather McKean



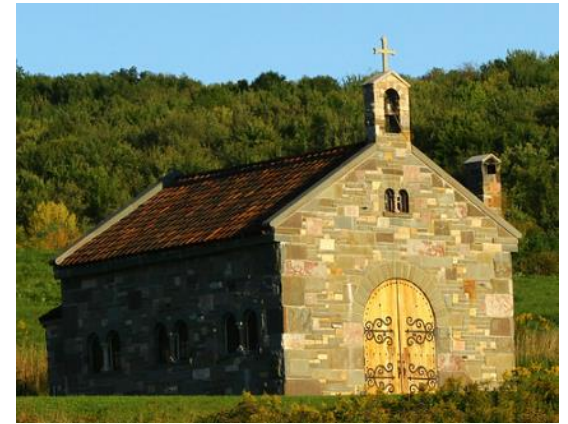
St Nicholas Orthodox Church  
Portland, OR

1996





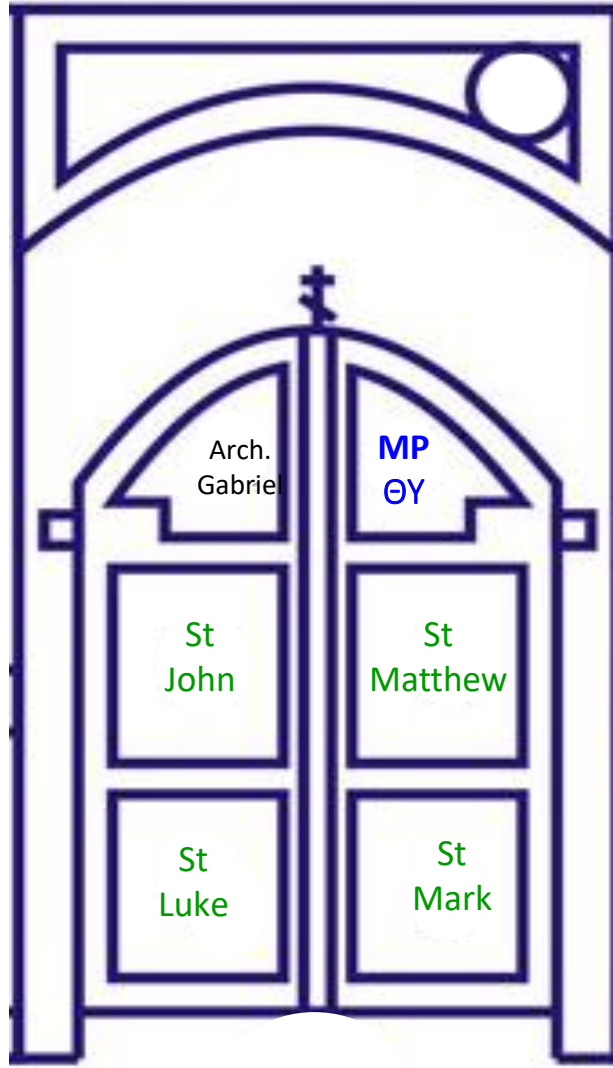
# Single – tier Iconostasis



St Maximus the Confessor Greek Orthodox Church  
Owego, NY



# Royal Doors: Examples



## The Annunciation:

Archangel  
Gabriel

Theotokos

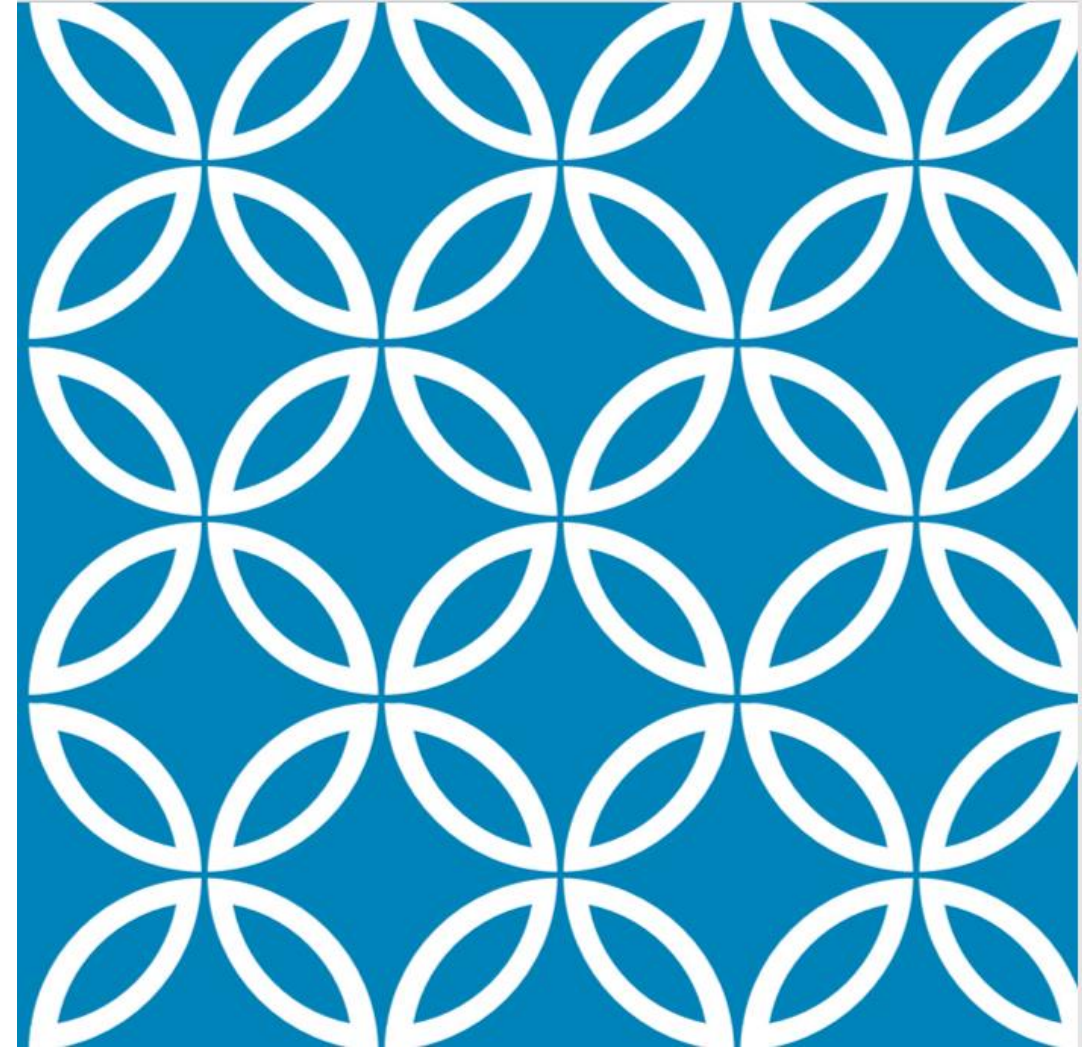
St John

St Matthew

St Luke

St Mark

*... sometimes.*



# Royal Doors at Hillwood Museum *(Washington, DC)*

Russian, 16<sup>th</sup> c.

The Evangelists.

**Left side:** On the top, **St. John** is seated on an elaborate bench on a hillside and dictating to his companion St. Prochorus.

Below, **St. Mark** is seated in an architectural setting, writing his gospel.

**Right Side:** On the upper right hand door is **St Matthew** in an architectural setting holding a beautifully bound book, while on the lower half is **St. Luke** in a similar architectural setting writing on a scroll.

In each instance, the symbol of the evangelist appears in a red reserve in the sky above.

Above the doors is the canopy on which the Eucharist is depicted in two parts. On the left, Christ stands at an altar, giving bread to six of his disciples; to the right he offers wine to the other six. The entire complex of scenes is united by the small, half-length figure of God Sabaoth in an elliptical mandorla in the middle of the canopy's upper edge.



**St John**

**St Matthew**

**St Mark**

**St Luke**



# Royal Doors at Museum of Russian Icons

Russian, 16<sup>th</sup> c.

The four Evangelists are shown on four separate panels. This set includes the symbol for each evangelist:

**John** is shown with a **lion** [*Eagle*], **Matthew** with a **man (or angel)**, **Luke** with an **ox**, and **Mark** with an **eagle** [*Lion*].

This symbology follows the interpretation of Irenaeus of Lyons (circa 120-202 AD) [*not the one followed currently*].

St John [lion]

St Matthew [man or angel]

St Luke [ox]

St Mark [eagle]

Order of **Evangelists** is order of Gospels, looking clockwise



# Royal Doors examples



St Xenia of Petersburg,  
Kanata, ON

St John      St Matthew

?                      ?



Mountain View, NY

St John      St Matthew

?                      ?



Intercession of the Holy Virgin  
& St Sergius Orthodox Church  
Glen Cove, NY

St Matthew      St Mark

St Luke              St John

*“One of these things is not like the others...”*



# Royal Doors examples



St Xenia of Petersburg,  
Kanata, ON



Mountain View, NY



Intercession of the Holy Virgin  
& St Sergius Orthodox Church  
Glen Cove, NY



St John      St Matthew

?

?

St John      St Matthew

?

?

St Matthew

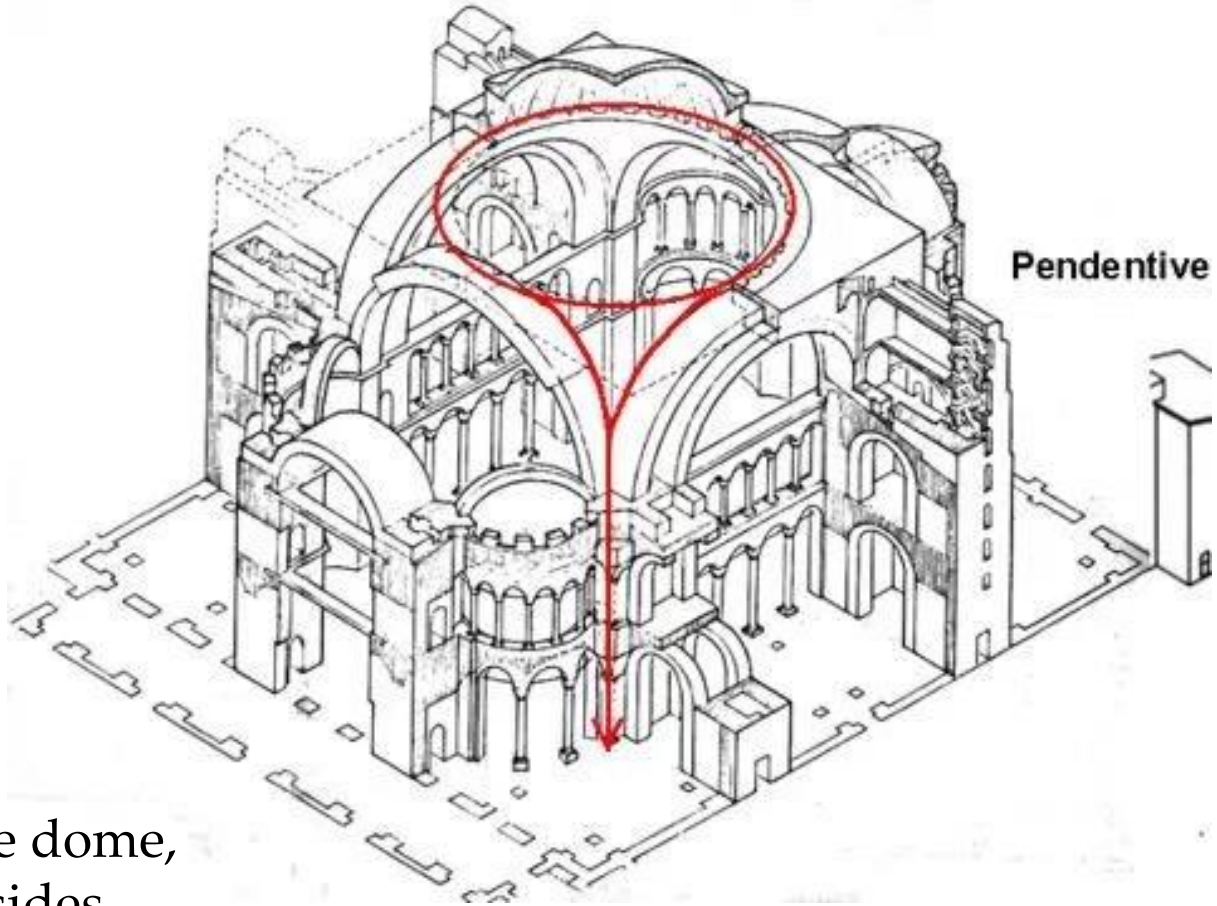
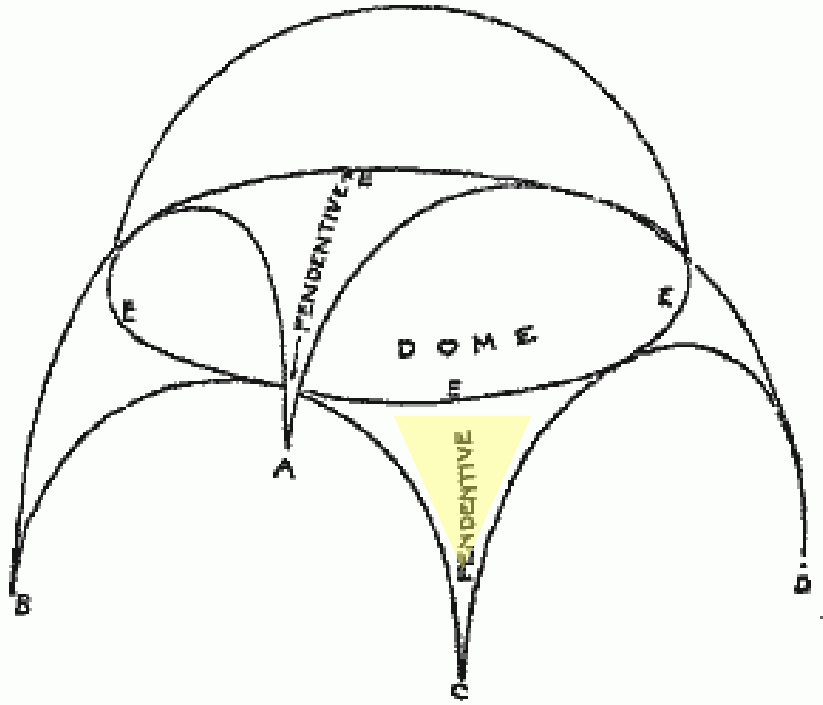
St Mark

St Luke

St John

*“One of these things is not like the others....”*

# Dome and Pendentives



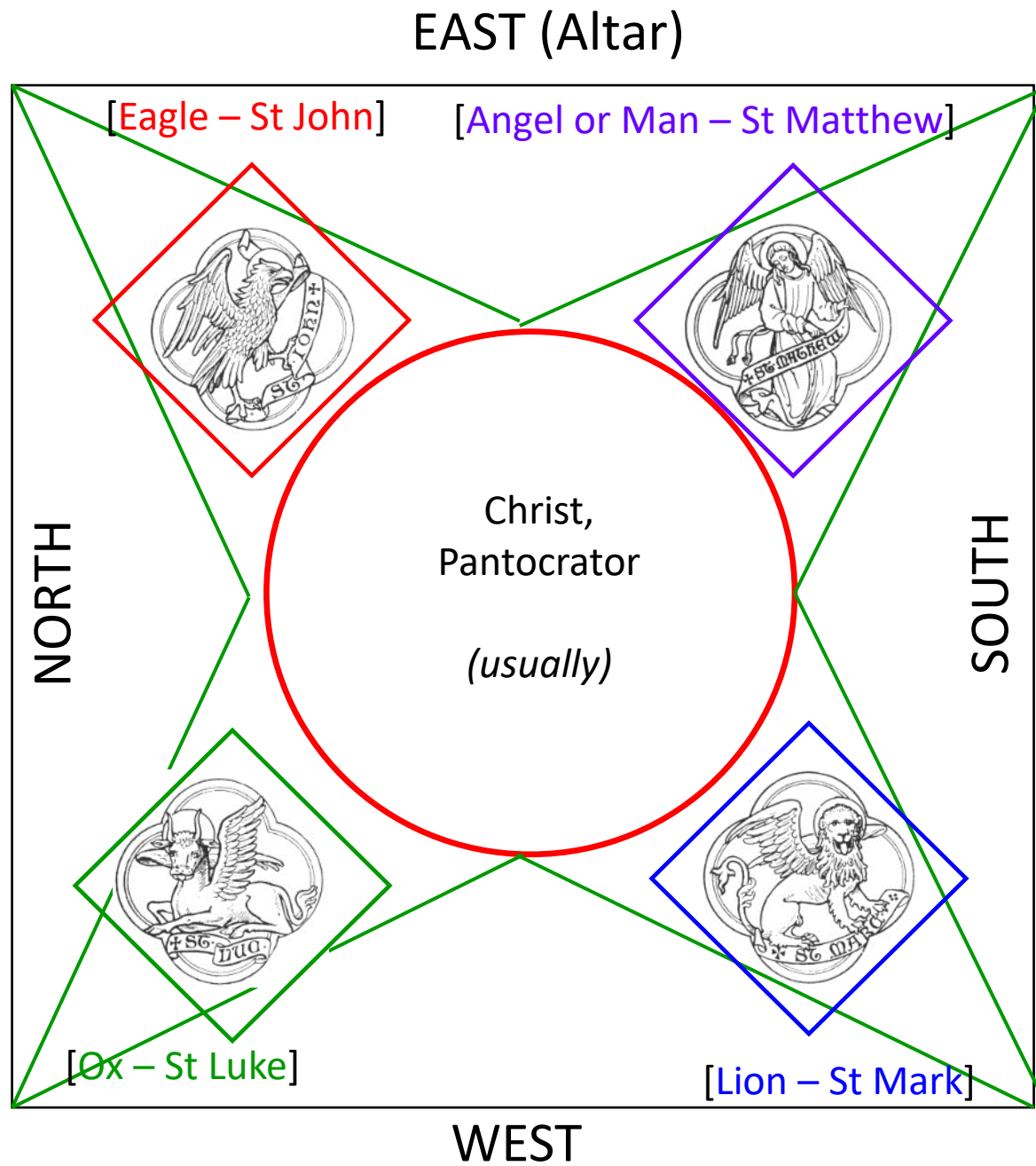
Pendentives support the weight of the dome, and also support the arches from the sides.

The **4 Evangelists** are depicted on the pendentives, and are placed in a traditional order.





# Pendentives (and Royal Doors) : Arrangement of Evangelists



If a church has a dome and pendentives, arrangement of Evangelists on both should match.

*This view is as though from the top of the church looking down,  
Not from the bottom of the church looking up.*

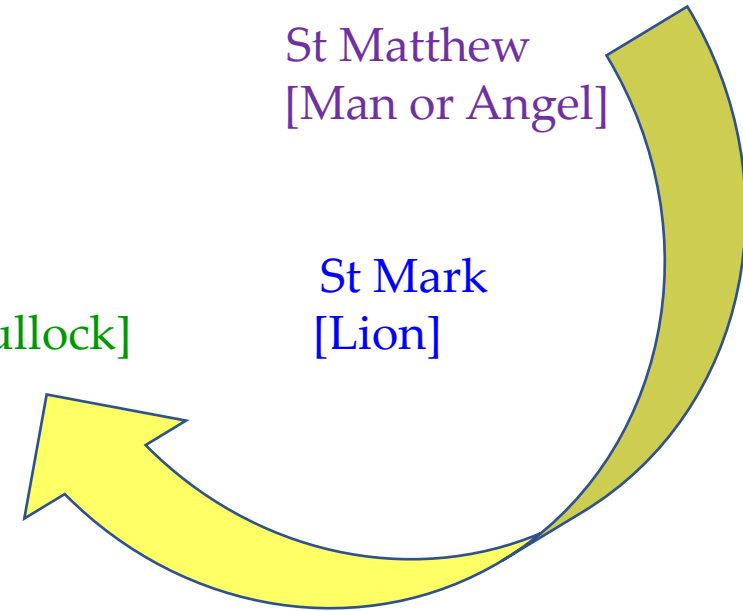
The arrangement shown here is that of the order of the Gospels:

St John  
[Eagle]

St Matthew  
[Man or Angel]

St Luke  
[Ox or bullock]

St Mark  
[Lion]



St Mark

St Luke



St Luke

St Mark



St Luke (NW)

St Mark (SW)



St Matthew

St John

**EAST (Altar)**

St John (NE)

St Matthew (SE)

**EAST (Altar)**

St John (NE)

St Matthew (SE)

**EAST (Altar)**

Petru Voda Monastery?  
Romania?

St Nicholas Cathedral,  
Washington DC

Holy Virgin Mary Russian Orthodox Church  
Colonie NY

Sometimes the order is modified (St Matthew NE and St John SE),  
but St John and St Matthew are portrayed on the East side (near the altar/front)  
They are given precedence, being among the original 12 disciples.



Dome and Pendentive Iconography:  
Example of Common Arrangement



St John (NE)



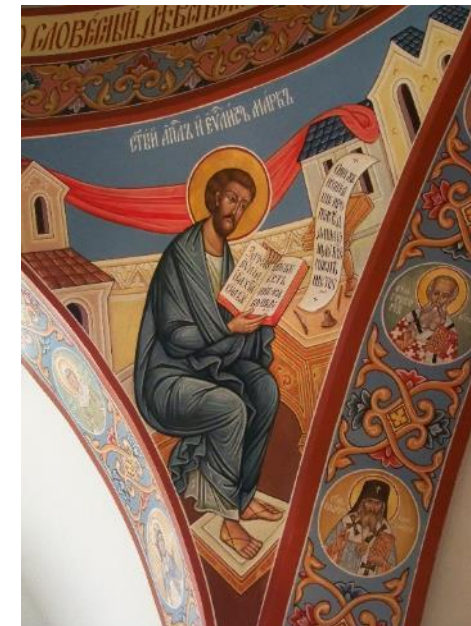
St Matthew (SE)



Holy Virgin Mary Russian Orthodox Church  
Colonie, NY



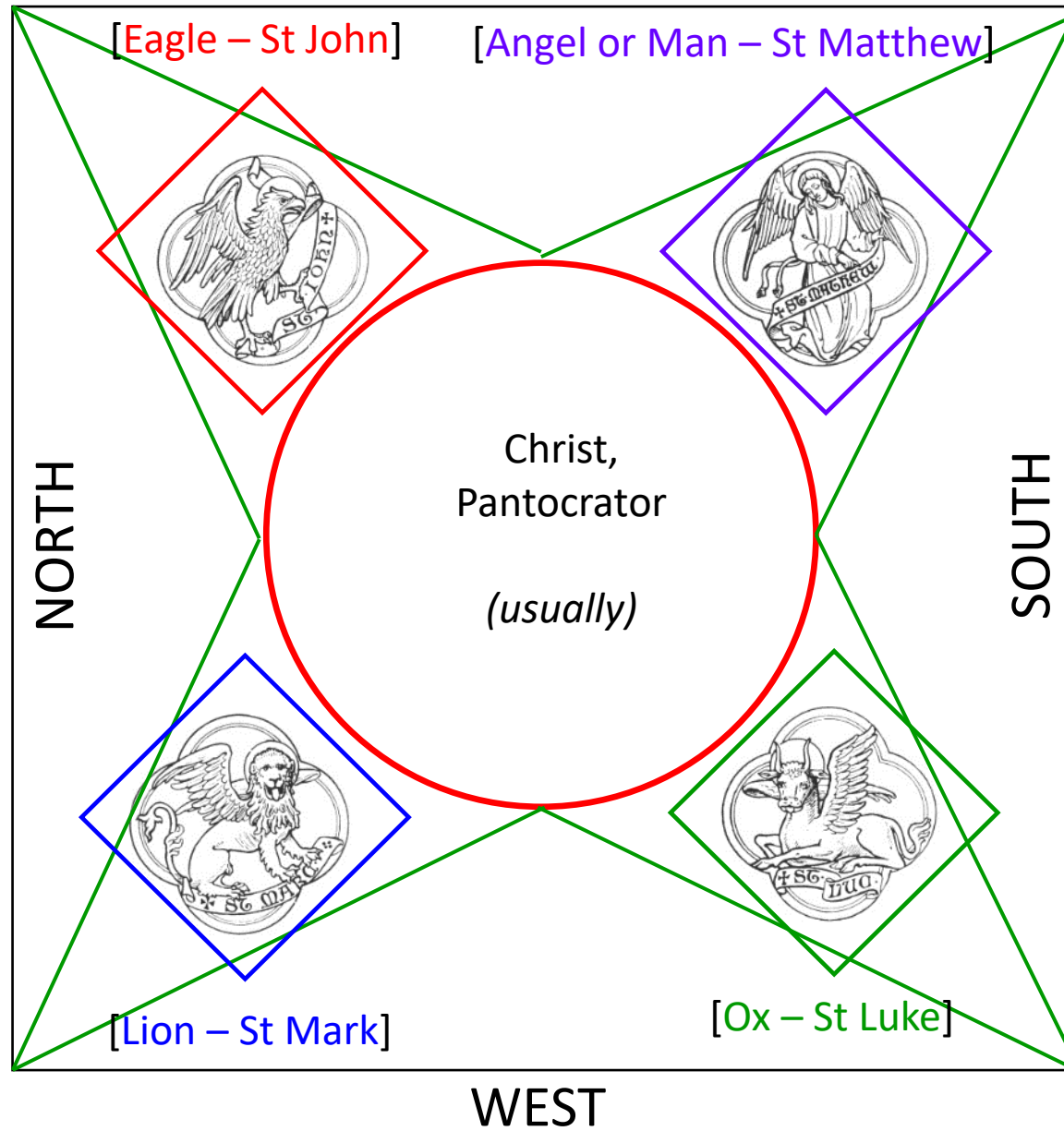
St Luke (NW)



St Mark (SW)

# Pendentives : Arrangement of Evangelists (Theological Explanation)

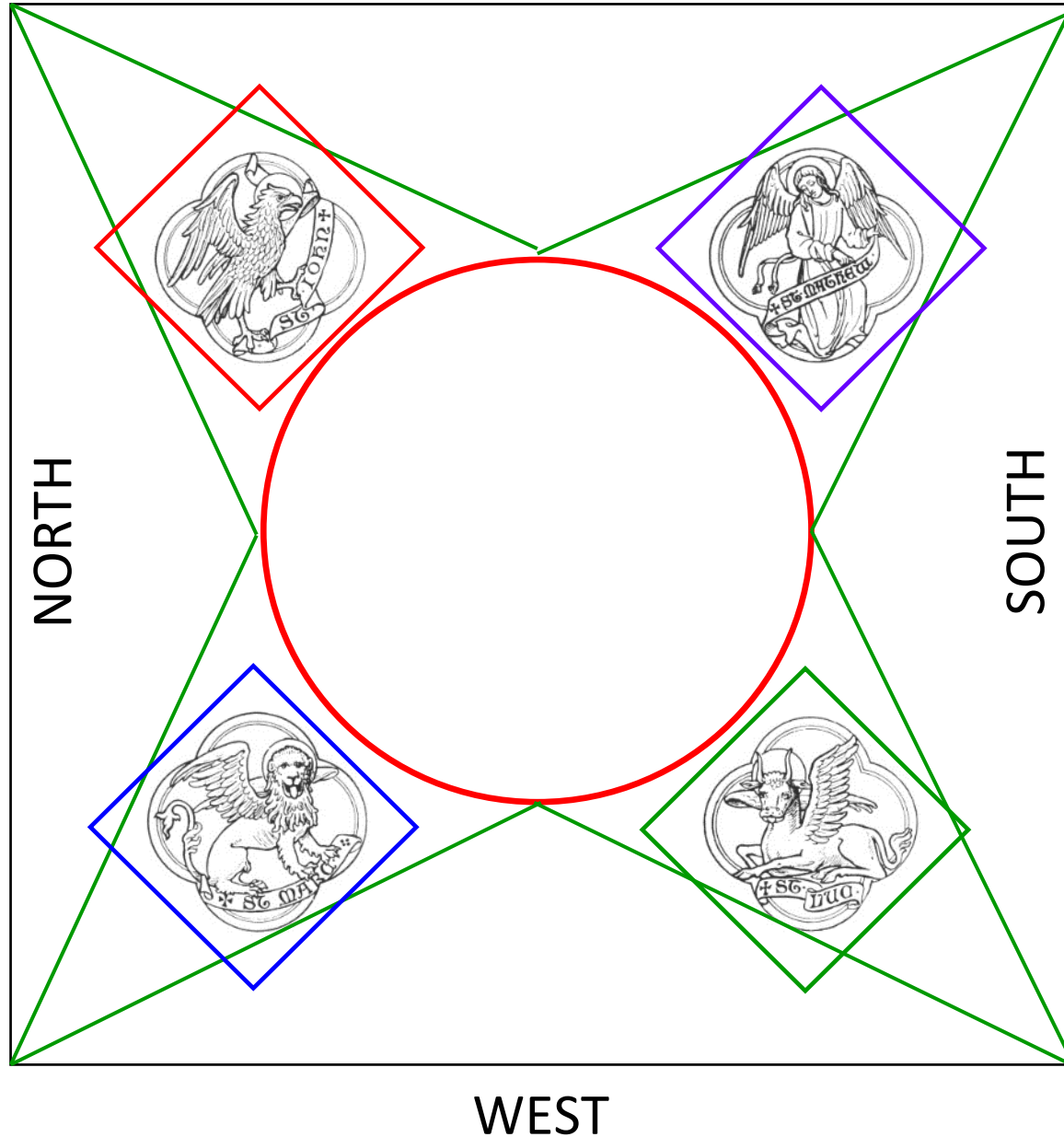
EAST (Altar)



This view is as though from the top of the church **looking down**,  
Not from the bottom of the church looking up.



EAST (Altar)



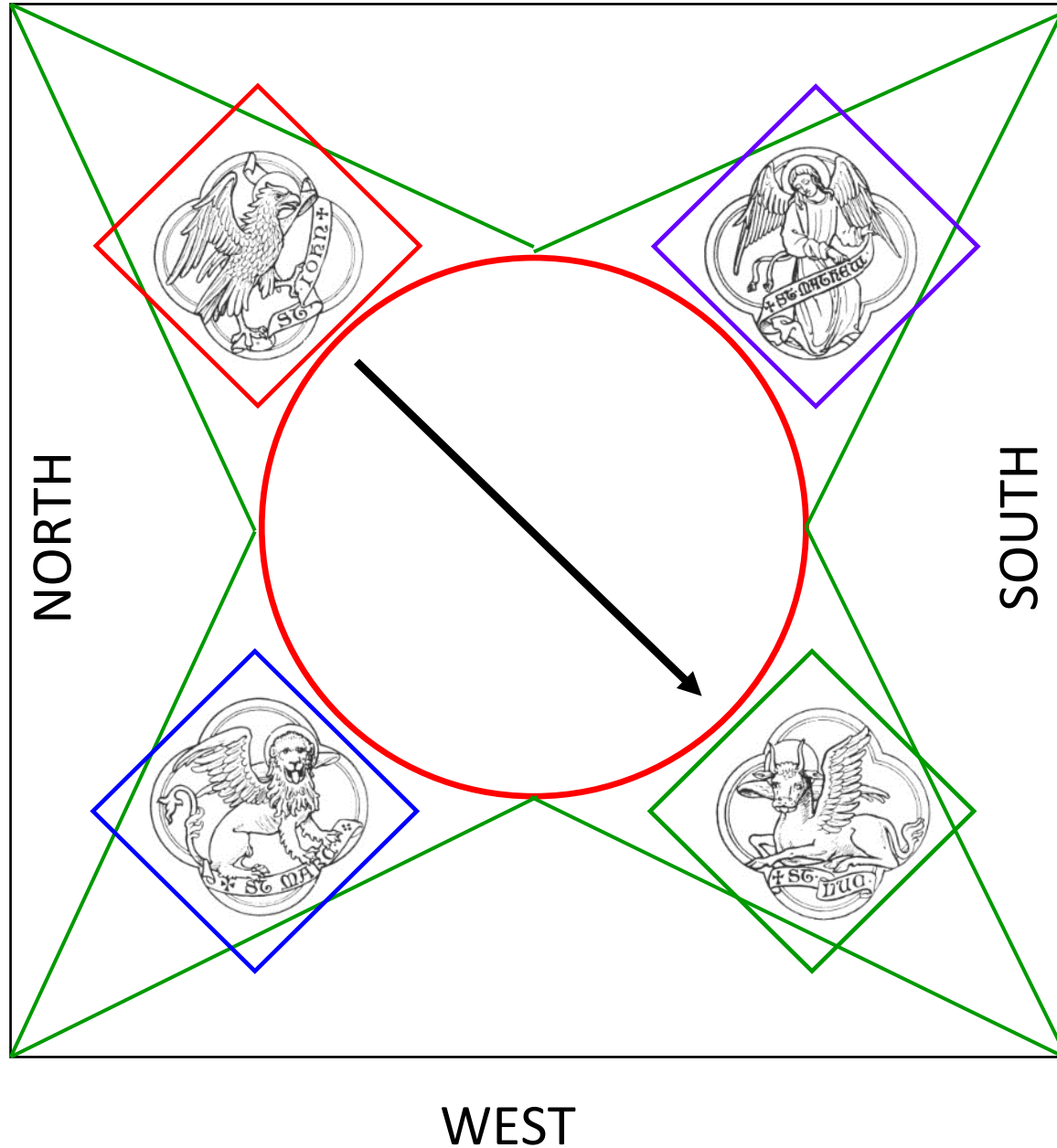
During the Eucharistic Canon (Anaphora):

*The deacon taketh the holy star from the holy diskos, maketh the sign of the cross above it, and kissing it, layeth it aside as the priest saith:*

**SINGING** the triumphal hymn, [Eagle – St John]



EAST (Altar)



*The deacon taketh the holy star from the holy diskos, maketh the sign of the cross above it, and kissing it, layeth it aside as the priest saith:*

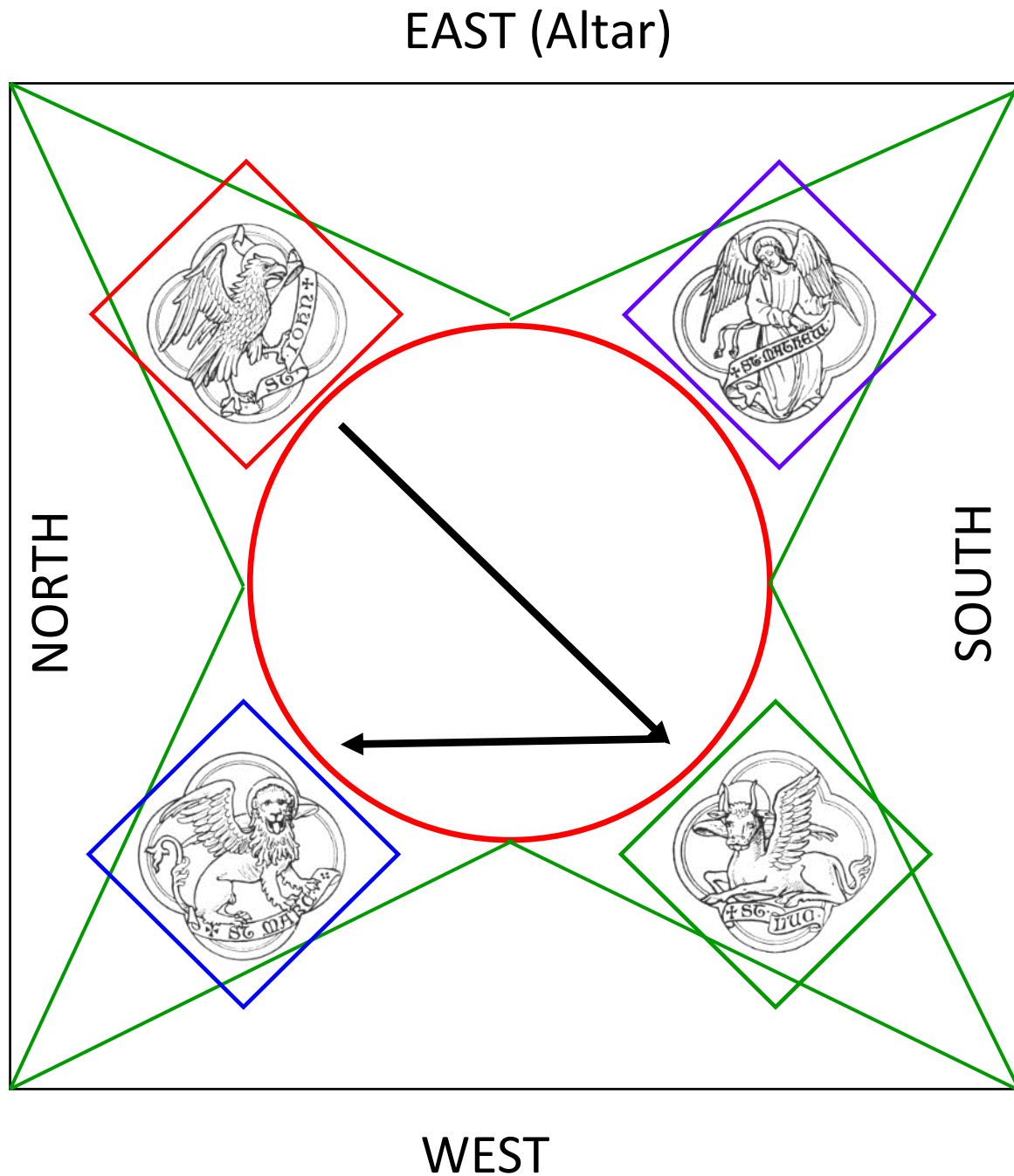
**SINGING** the triumphal hymn,  
**SHOUTING,**

[Eagle – St John]  
[Bullock – St Luke]



Bogoslovie Obraza , Ikona y Ikonopistsi p. 96

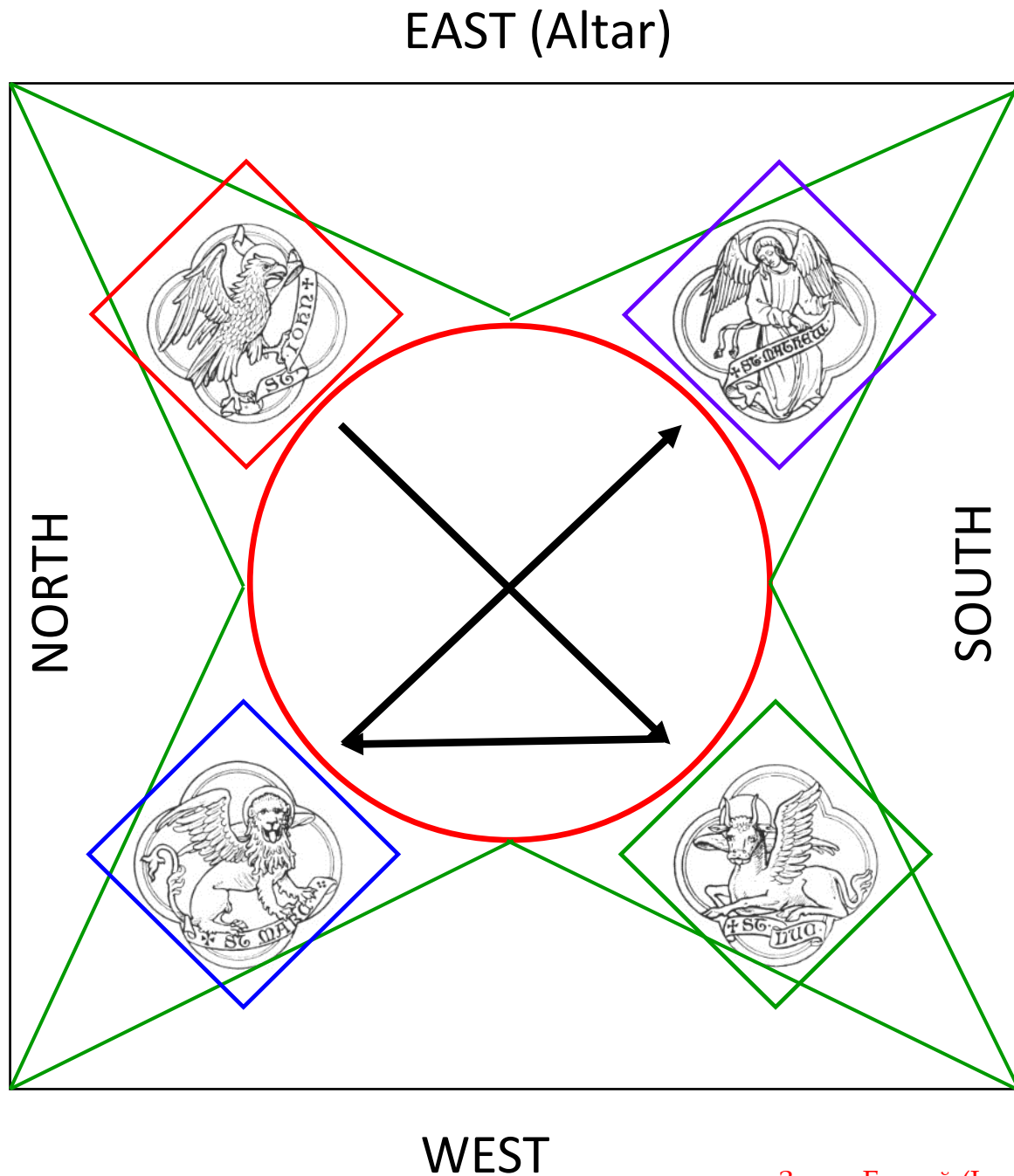




*The deacon taketh the holy star from the holy diskos, maketh the sign of the cross above it, and kissing it, layeth it aside as the priest saith:*

SINGING the triumphal hymn, [Eagle – St John]  
 SHOUTING, [Bullock – St Luke]  
 CRYING ALOUD, [Lion – St Mark]





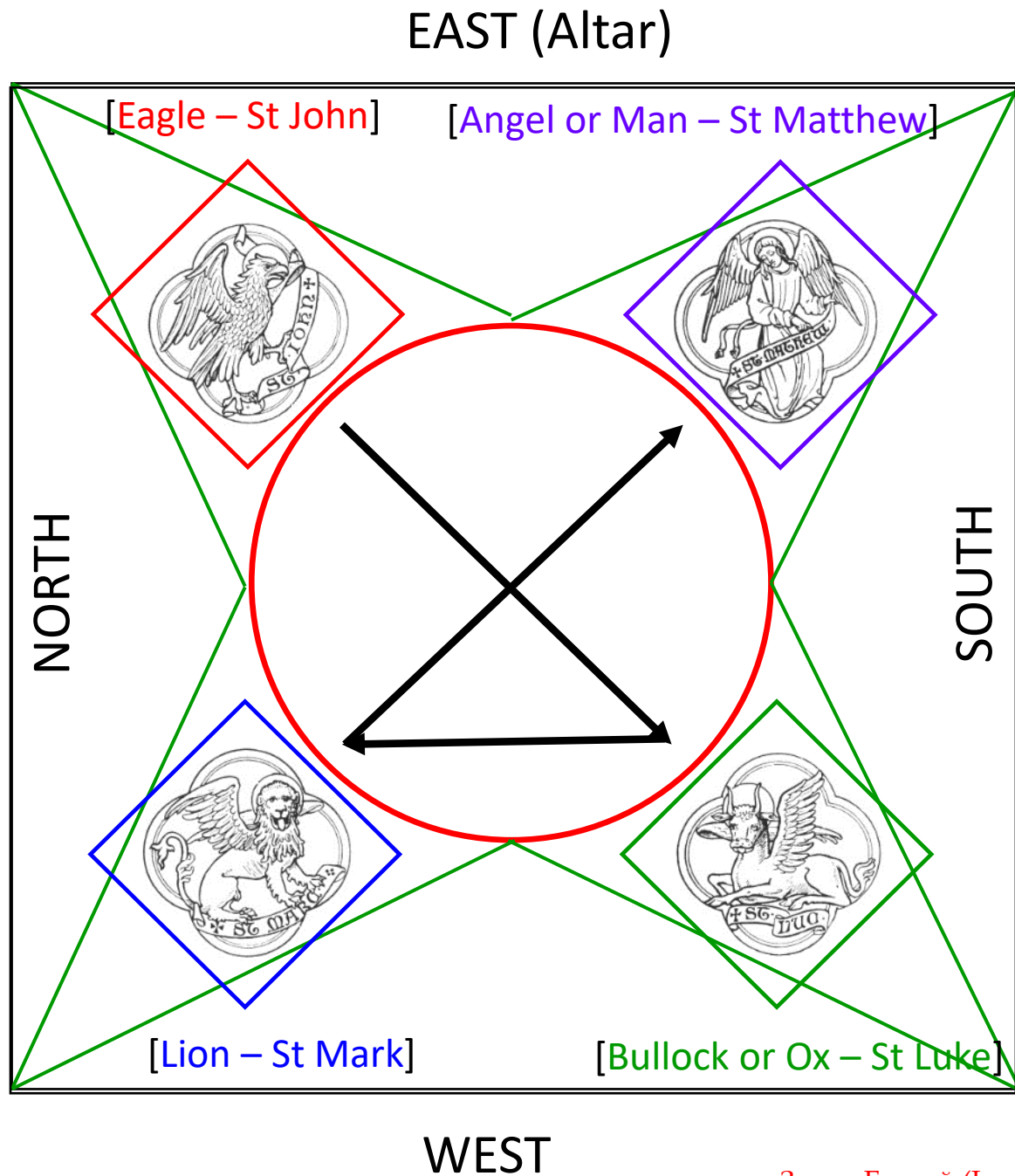
*The deacon taketh the holy star from the holy diskos, maketh the sign of the cross above it, and kissing it, layeth it aside as the priest saith:*

<p><b>SINGING</b> the triumphal hymn,  <b>SHOUTING</b>,  <b>CRYING ALOUD</b>,  and <b>SAYING</b>....</p>	<p>[Eagle – St John]  [Bullock – St Luke]  [Lion – St Mark]  [Angel or Man – St Matthew]</p>
--	--



Bogoslovie Obraza , Ikona y Ikonopistsi p. 96





*The deacon taketh the holy star from the holy diskos, maketh the sign of the cross above it, and kissing it, layeth it aside as the priest saith:*

**SINGING** the triumphal [Eagle – St John]  
 hymn,  
**SHOUTING,** [Bullock or Ox – St Luke]  
**CRYING ALOUD,** [Lion – St Mark]  
 and **SAYING....** [Angel or Man – St Matthew]



A theological justification for the traditional placement of the Evangelists on the pendentives relates to the vocalizations made by the symbolic creatures associated with them.

# Deacon's Doors: possible subjects

- Archangels Michael & Gabriel (found on either side)
  - If facing congregation: often Arch. Michael on South (Lord's side) door
  - If Deisis mode (facing center), should have Arch. Gabriel on South door (so he is facing the Theotokos, echoing the Annunciation)
- Deacons (St Stephen, St Lawrence)
- Wise Thief
- Patriarchs (Aaron, Melchisedec) (*these are more likely to be found on a secondary altar*)

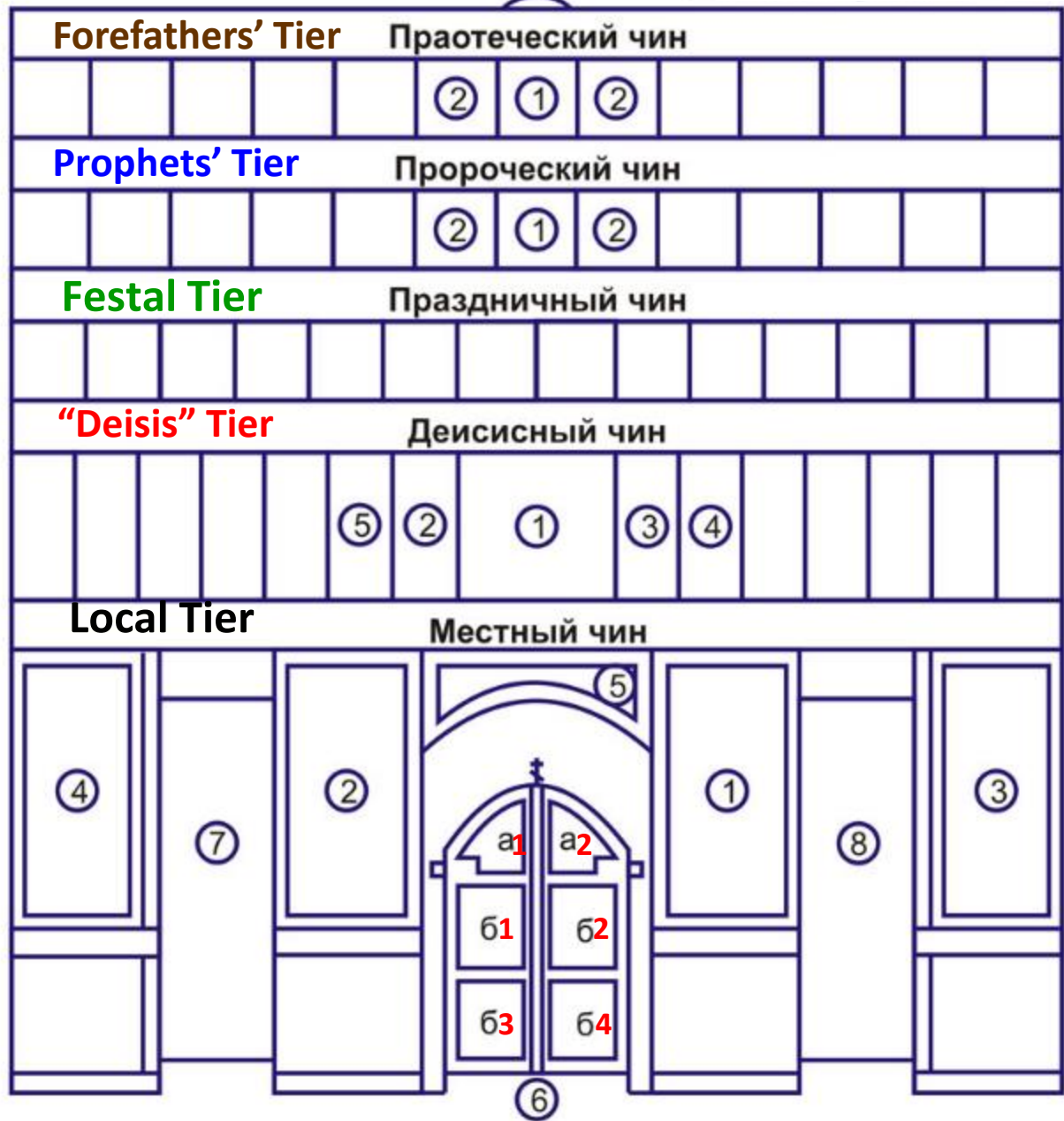


# Iconostasis Tiers and Their Significance

- Iconostases with **more than 3 tiers** developed in **Russia** after 15<sup>th</sup> century.
- Using wood rather than stone for the structure of an iconostasis enabled addition of more tiers.
- At ~10 icons/tier, a 5-tier iconostasis may contain over 50 icons (of varying size).



Golgotha Голгофа



**Местный чин**

1. Спаситель
2. Богоматерь
3. Храмовая икона
4. Местночтимая икона
5. "Тайная вечеря"
6. Царские врата
  - а) Благовещение
  - б) Евангелисты
7. Северные врата
8. Южные врата

**Деисисный чин**

1. Спас в силах
2. Богоматерь
3. Иоанн Предтеча
4. Архангел Гавриил
5. Архангел Михаил

**Forefathers' Tier**

1. Old Testament Trinity
2. Holy Forefather Adam & Holy Foremother Eve

**Prophets' Tier**

1. Theotokos "of the Sign", or enthroned
2. Holy Prophet David & Holy Forefather Solomon

**"Deisis" Tier**

1. Christ in Majesty	
2. Theotokos	3. St John the Forerunner
5. Archangel Michael	4. Archangel Gabriel

**Local Tier**

1. The Savior		
2. The Theotokos		
3. Icon of the Temple		
4. Locally Venerated Saint(s)		
5. Mystical Supper		
6. Royal Doors:		
a1: Arch. Gabriel	a2: Theotokos	
b1: St John	b2: St Matthew	
b3: St Mark	b4: St Luke	
7,8: Deacons' Doors		



# Iconostasis Tiers and Their Significance

- **Иконостás** – перегородка, разделяющая алтарь и среднюю часть храма. Состоит из икон, расположенных ярусами, символизирующими историю спасения человечества Богом.

Число ярусов бывает от **трех до пяти**. Их можно рассматривать, начиная с верхнего яруса, ибо Господь постепенно, словно по ступеням, низводил к людям спасение.

- **Пятый, верхний ярус** содержит икону Троицы и иконы **ветхозаветных праведников и праотцев** (Авраама, Исаака, Иакова и др.).
- **Четвертый** снизу – икону **Богородицы «Знамение»** и иконы предстоящих **пророков**.

• <https://azbyka.ru/ikonostas>

- The iconostasis is the screen dividing the altar from the nave. It consists of icons arranged in tiers, which symbolize the history of the salvation of mankind by God.
  - The number of tiers varies from **3 to 5**. They may be examined beginning from the topmost tier, for the Lord, as though by steps, sent down salvation to mankind.
- **The 5<sup>th</sup> (topmost) tier** includes a (central) icon of the Trinity and icons of **Forefathers and other righteous ones** from the Old Testament. (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc.)
- **The 4<sup>th</sup> tier** (from the bottom) includes an icon of the **Theotokos “of the Sign”** surrounded by icons of **prophets**.

# Iconostasis Tiers and their Significance

- Третий ярус снизу содержит иконы двенадцатых праздников.
- Второй ярус – иконы Деисиса.
- В середине нижнего яруса находятся Царские врата, справа (на южной стороне) от врат расположены икона Иисуса Христа и икона святого или праздника, которому посвящен храм. Над Царскими вратами помещается икона Тайной Вечери.
- Иконостас непременно венчается Крестом, как вершиной Божественной любви к падшему миру, отдавшей Сына Божия в жертву за грехи человечества.
- <https://azbyka.ru/ikonostas>

- The 3<sup>rd</sup> tier includes icons of the Great Feasts.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> tier includes Deisis icons.
- In the center of the lowest (“Local”) tier are the Royal Doors. To the right of these are icons of the Lord and the saint or feast to whom the temple is dedicated. An icon of the Mystical Supper is placed over the Royal Doors.
- The iconostasis is invariably crowned with a Cross, as representing the height of God’s love for the fallen world, which love gave the Son of God as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind.



# Upper Tiers of Iconostasis

Три верхних яруса икон представляют собой стройную и логически ясную картину Божественного домостроительства спасения.

- **Верхний пророческий ряд – Церковь Ветхозаветная.** Он состоит из поясных изображений пророков с развернутыми свитками в руках, на которых написаны тексты из пророчеств о Боговоплощении.
- **Следующий ярус – праздничный** – представляет новозаветный период, период исполнения пророчеств. Здесь изображены те события Нового Завета, которые составляют годовой литургический круг и торжественно празднуются Церковью как этапы промыслительного действия Бога в мире.
- Наконец, **третий ярус – деисусный** – зримо являет осуществление того, что показано в двух первых рядах: молитву вошедших в сонм святых перед престолом Бога.

- The three upper tiers (*of the 4-tier iconostasis at White Lake Monastery, Russia, late 1500's*) present a harmonious and logical, clear image of the divine “economy” of our salvation.
- The uppermost tier (of the **Prophets**) represents the **Old Testament church**. It consists of half-length images of prophets holding scrolls with texts concerning the Incarnation.
- The next (**Festal**) tier represents the New Testament era, the era of the fulfilment of prophecies. Here are depicted those events from the New Testament which form the yearly liturgical cycle and are solemnly celebrated by the Church as stages of providential action of God in the world.
- The third (**Deisis**) tier visually reveals the implementation of that which was depicted in the above tiers: the prayer of those who have entered into the company of the saints before the throne of God.

# “Deisis” | con:

The Lord in the center;  
Theotokos on the right of the Lord; St John the Baptist on the left



[Greek: δέησις, "prayer" or "supplication"]

After the development of the full iconostasis screen there was room for a larger "Deisis row" or "Great Deisis" of full-length figures, and the number of figures expanded, in both Byzantium and Russia.

Usually this row is above the level of the doors, and below the row depicting the Twelve Great Feasts, but sometimes the Deisis is above the Feasts.

The central Christ is therefore above the main door in the screen.

## Deisis Tier development:

Eventually seven figures, usually one to a panel, were standard, in order of proximity to Christ in the centre:

on the left: the Theotokos, the Archangel Michael and Saint Peter,  
on the right: St John the Baptist, the Archangel Gabriel and Saint Paul.

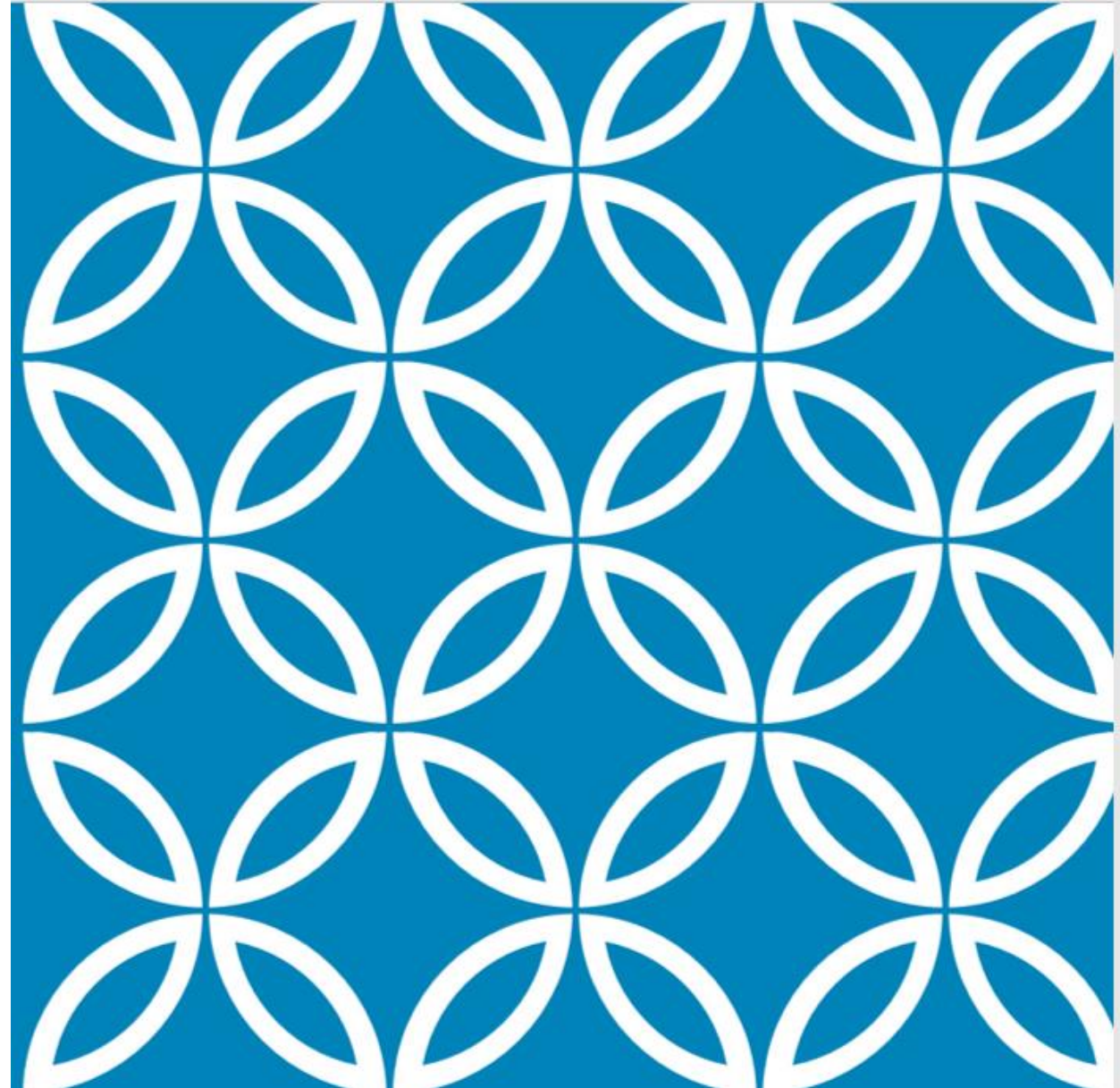
- In Russian examples, a number of saints of local significance are often included behind these, as space allows.
- In the Greek tradition the Apostles are more likely to occupy extra panels.



2-tier iconostasis examples follow:

*Historically, the **Deisis Tier** came into use **before** the **Festal tier**.*

*Today, most commonly the **2nd tier** from the bottom is the **Festal tier**.*



# 2-Tier with FESTAL - Examples





# Some Possible Arrangements for Festal Tier

## Calendar Order:



*Painted Post NY*

Nativity of Theotokos 8 Sept	Universal Exaltation of the Cross 14 Sept	Entry of Theotokos 21 Nov	Nativity of the Lord 25 Dec	Theophany 6 Jan	Meeting 3 Feb	Annunciation 25 Mar	Palm Sunday	PASCHA	Ascension	Pentecost	Transfiguration 6 August	Dormition 15 August
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## Life of Christ Order:



*Jackson NJ*

Annunciation 25 Mar	Nativity of the Lord 25 Dec	Meeting 3 Feb	Theophany 6 Jan	Entry into Jerusalem	The Crucifixion	PASCHA	Transfiguration 6 August	Ascension	Pentecost	Dormition 15 August	Universal Exaltation of the Cross 14 Sept
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## Chronological Order:



*Barcelona, Spain*

Nativity of Theotokos 8 Sept	Entry of Theotokos 21 Nov	Annunciation 25 Mar	Nativity of the Lord 25 Dec	Meeting 3 Feb	Theophany 6 Jan	Transfiguration 6 August	Palm Sunday	PASCHA	Ascension	Pentecost	Dormition 15 August	Universal Exaltation of the Cross 14 Sept
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## 6 & 6, radiating outward



*Jordanville & Valley Cottage*

Universal Exaltation of the Cross 14 Sept	Dormition 15 August	Meeting 3 Feb	Annunciation 25 Mar	Entry of Theotokos 21 Nov	Nativity of Theotokos 8 Sept	PASCHA	Nativity of the Lord 25 Dec	Theophany 6 Jan	Transfiguration 6 August	Palm Sunday	Ascension	Pentecost
--	------------------------	------------------	------------------------	------------------------------	---------------------------------	--------	--------------------------------	--------------------	-----------------------------	-------------	-----------	-----------



## 2-tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Sts Peter & Paul Orthodox Church  
(OCA)  
Syracuse, NY

СЛА́ВА ВЪ ВЪШНИХЪ БГҀУ, ꙗ НА ЗЕМЛѢ  
МІРЪ.

Glory to God in the highest, and  
on earth, peace.



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



St Spyridon Cathedral,  
Seattle, WA

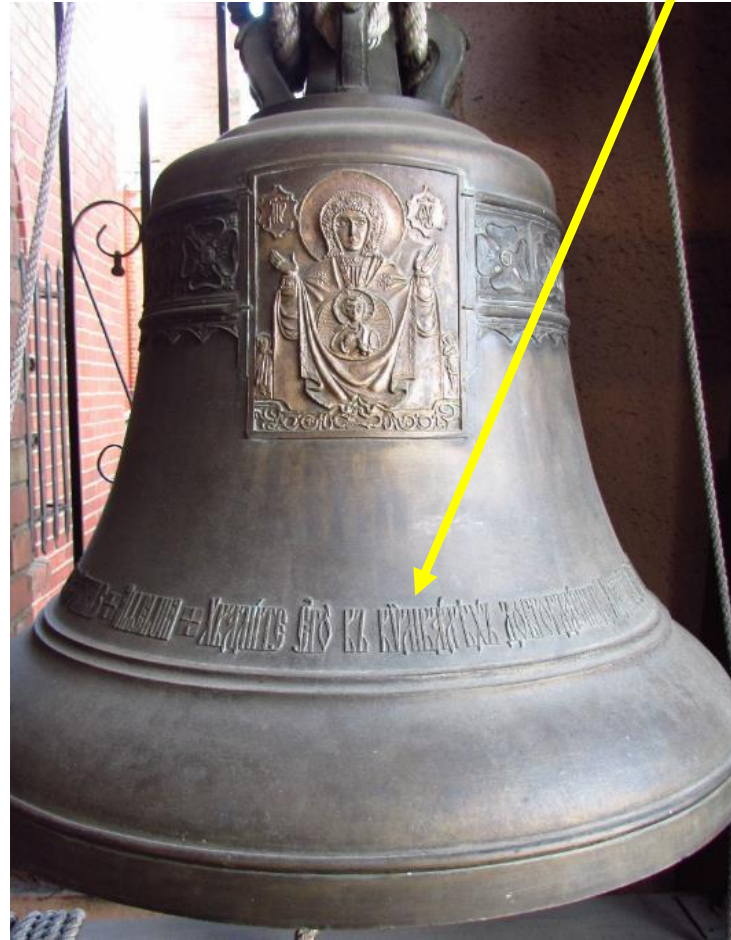


- Iconostasis background structure is latticework.
- Royal Doors have Evangelist icons only
- Annunciation is on large ceiling fresco above iconostasis



# Bells of St Spyridon's

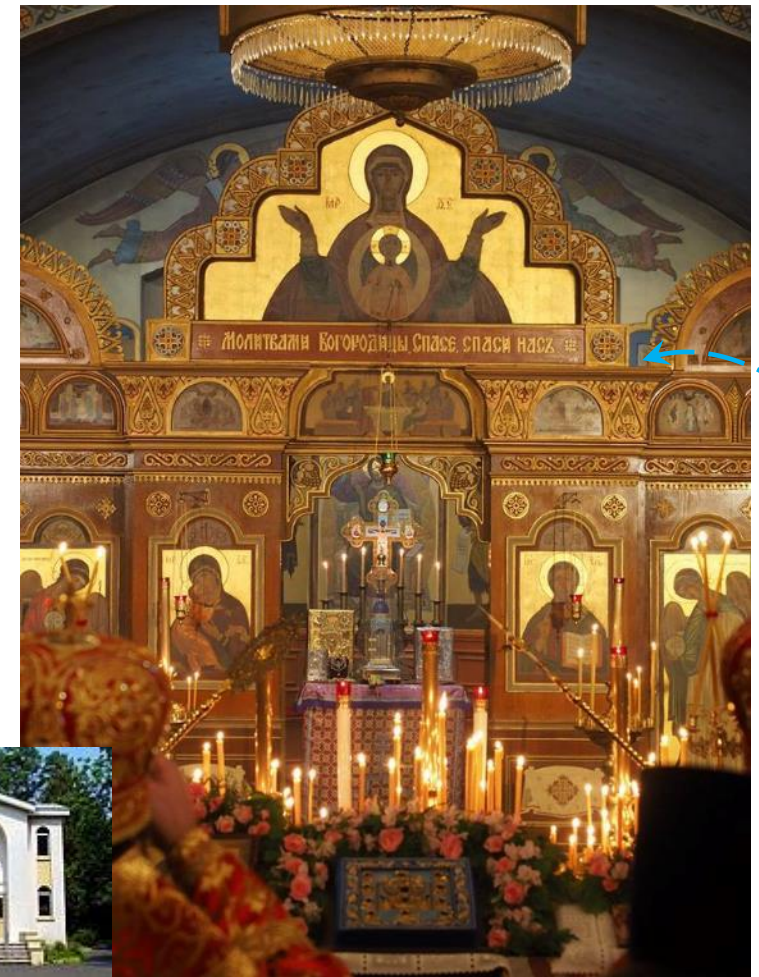
*"Praise Him in tuneful cymbals..."*



*The Lord is my strength and my song, and He is become my salvation. [Ps. 117:14]*  
Крѣпость моя ѣ пѣніе мое гдѣ, ѣ бѣста мнѣ во спѣніе.



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier

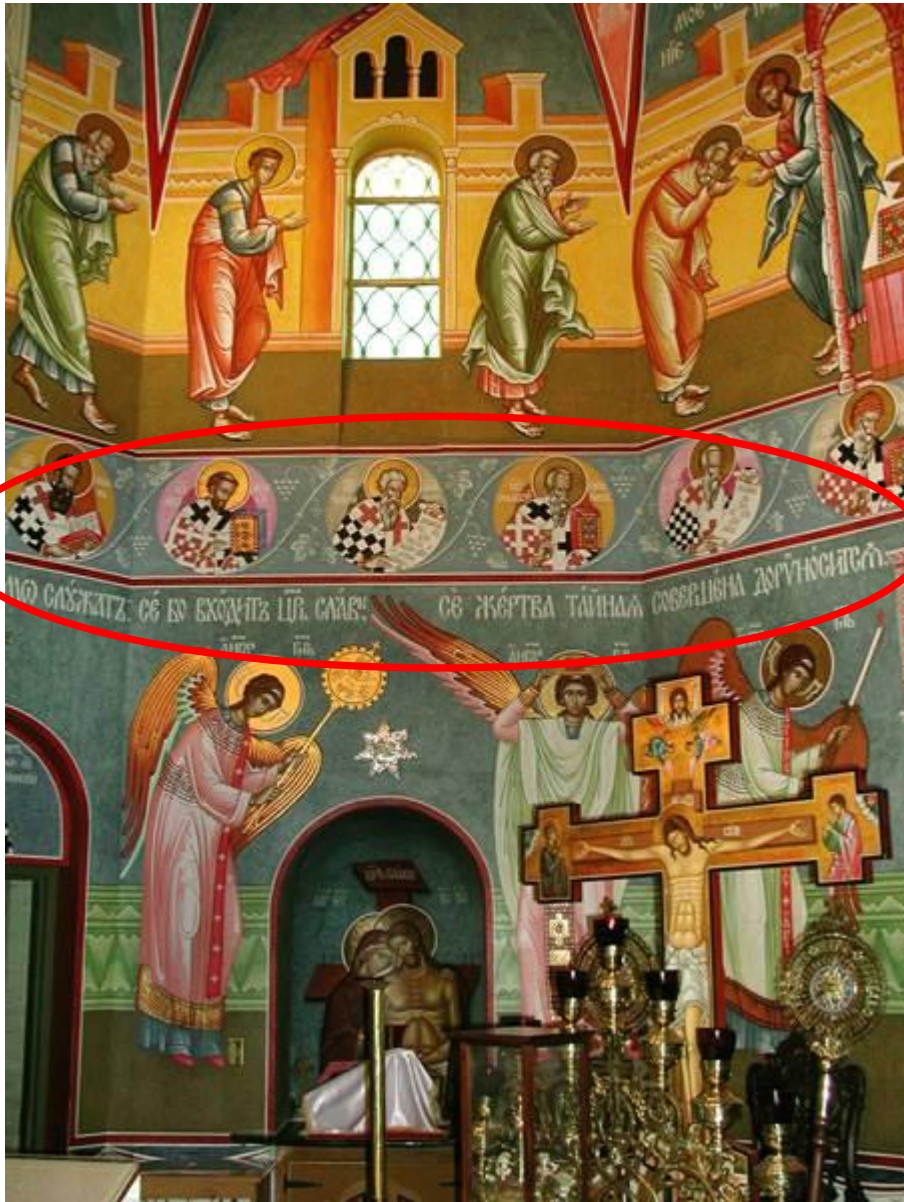


Russian Orthodox Convent of the Dormition: Novo-Diveevo  
Spring Valley, NY

Молитвами Бѣѣы, спсе, спаси насъ.  
Through the prayers of the Theotokos,  
O Saviour, save us.



## Altar interior



Ны́нѣ сѣ́лы нѣ́ныѧ съ на́ми не́вѣ́димѡ  
слѣ́жатъ: / сѣ́ бо вхо́дитъ црѣ́ь сла́вы, / сѣ́  
же́ртва та́йнаѧ со́верше́на до́рвѣ́но́ситсѧ: ///  
вѣ́рою ѿ лю́бовію прѣстѣ́пимъ, / да  
прича́стницы жи́зни вѣ́чныѧ  
бѣ́демъ. / а́ллилу́їа, а́ллилу́їа, а́ллилу́їа.

“Behold now, the powers of Heaven  
invisibly serve with us; for the King of  
Glory enters. Behold the mystical sacrifice,  
all fulfilled, is escorted in.”

Let us draw near with faith and love, that we  
may be partakers of eternal life.

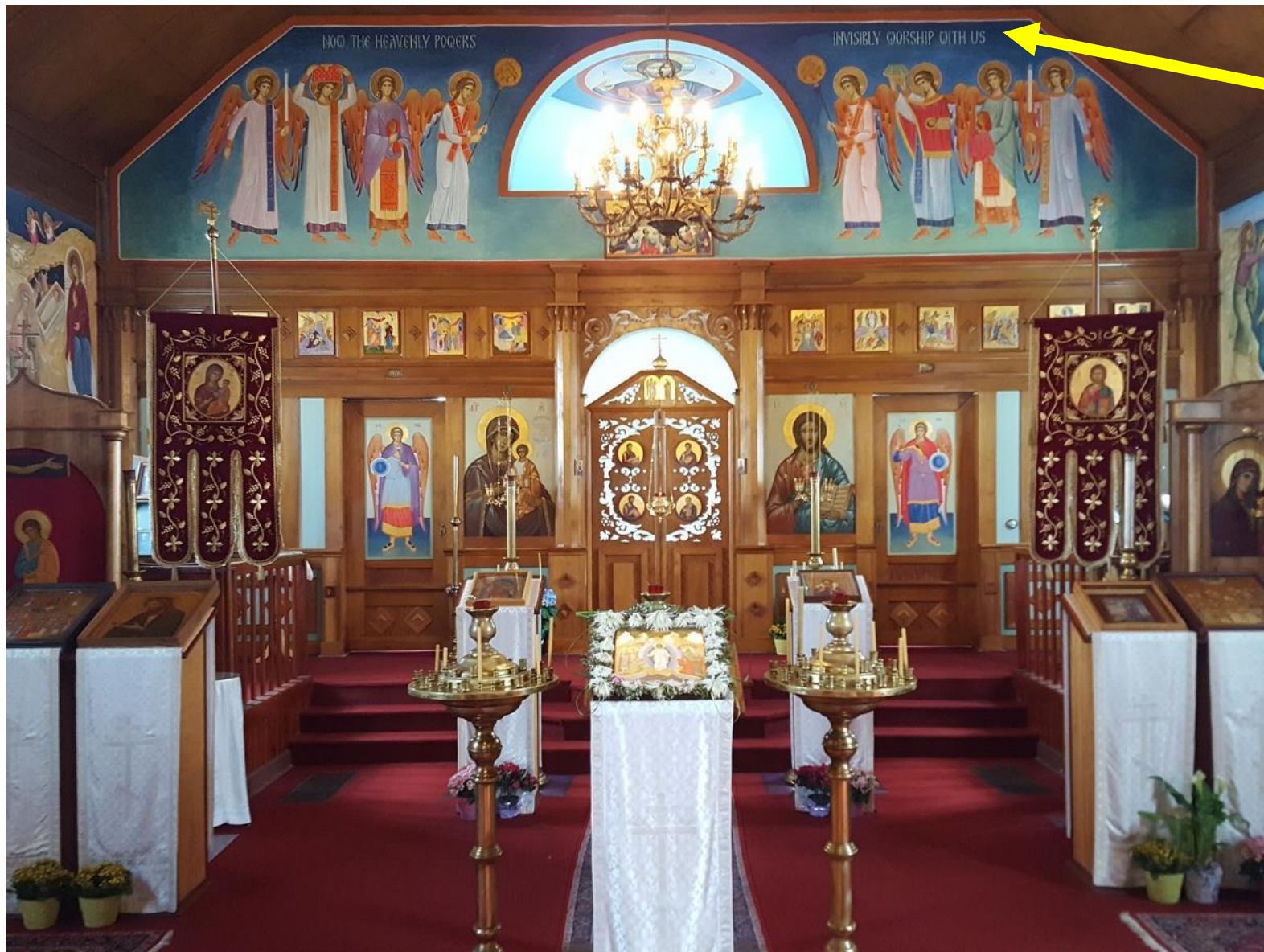
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Cathedral of St John the Baptist  
Washington DC

*Text from Cherubic Hymn at Liturgy of Presanctified Gifts*



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Now the Heavenly Powers  
invisibly worship with us

Ны́нѣ́ сѣ́лы нѣ́ныа съ на́ми  
невѣ́днмо слѣ́жатъ:



Saint Alexander Nevsky Church, Richmond, ME



## 2-tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



The Royal Doors:

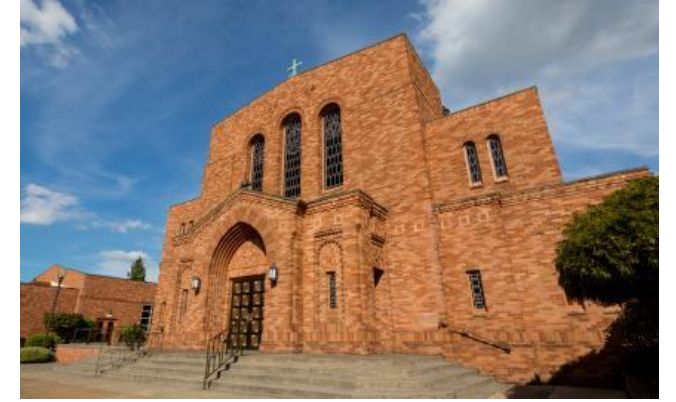
*What's wrong  
(or, not quite traditional)  
with this picture?*

Intercession of the Holy Virgin & St Sergius Orthodox Church  
Glen Cove, NY





## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Pointed pediments reminiscent of classical Greek architecture

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Cathedral  
Portland, OR



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



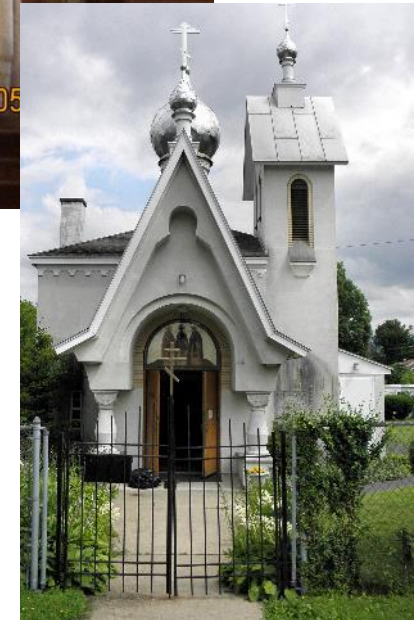
**St Sergius Synodal Chapel**  
New York, NY



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



St John of Kronstadt Russian Orthodox Church  
Utica, NY



1964?



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Да молчѣтъ всѣкаа плѣтъ челоувѣча, ѿ да стоѣтъ со страхомъ ѿ трѣпетомъ, ѿ ничтоже земноѣ въ себѣ да помышлѣетъ: црь бо царствующѣхъ, ѿ гдѣ гдѣствующѣхъ, приходѣтъ заклатица ѿ дѣтѣца въ инѣдѣ вѣрнымъ. // Предходѣтъ же семѣ лици аггльстѣн со всѣкнмъ начѣломъ ѿ влѣстѣю, многоочѣтѣн херувѣимъ, ѿ шестокрнлѣтѣн серафѣимъ, лица закрывающе, ѿ вопѣюще пѣснь: ѿллуѣѣа, ѿллуѣѣа, ѿллуѣѣа.

Let all mortal flesh keep silence, \* and stand with fear and trembling; \* and let it take no thought for any earthly thing. \* For the King of Kings and Lord of Lords \* draweth near to be sacrificed \* and given as food to the faithful. \* // Before Him go the choirs of angels \* with all the principalities and powers, \* the many-eyed cherubim and the six-winged seraphim, \* who cover their faces as they sing this hymn: \*\* Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Lesna Convent



~1965



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with combined Festal & Deisis Tier



ΚΤὸ εἶς βέλϊη ἰάκω εἶς ἡάωz  
“What God is as great as our God?”

St George Orthodox Church,  
Carlton, NSW, Australia



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral  
*Des Plaines, IL*





Liubov Kichakov  
2016

Holy Virgin Protection Cathedral  
Des Plaines, IL



## 2-tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



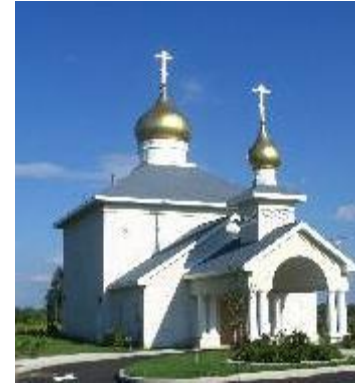
Да воскреснетъ БѢЗЪ, и разточатъ врази ѿгѡ  
“Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered...”

Blessed St. Xenia of Petersburg Cathedral  
Kanata, Ontario (Ottawa region).





## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Church of the Nativity of  
the Mother of God  
Colonie, NY

Consecrated 2010



# Icon of Sts Joachim and Anna, and the Theotokos Over the entrance to the nave

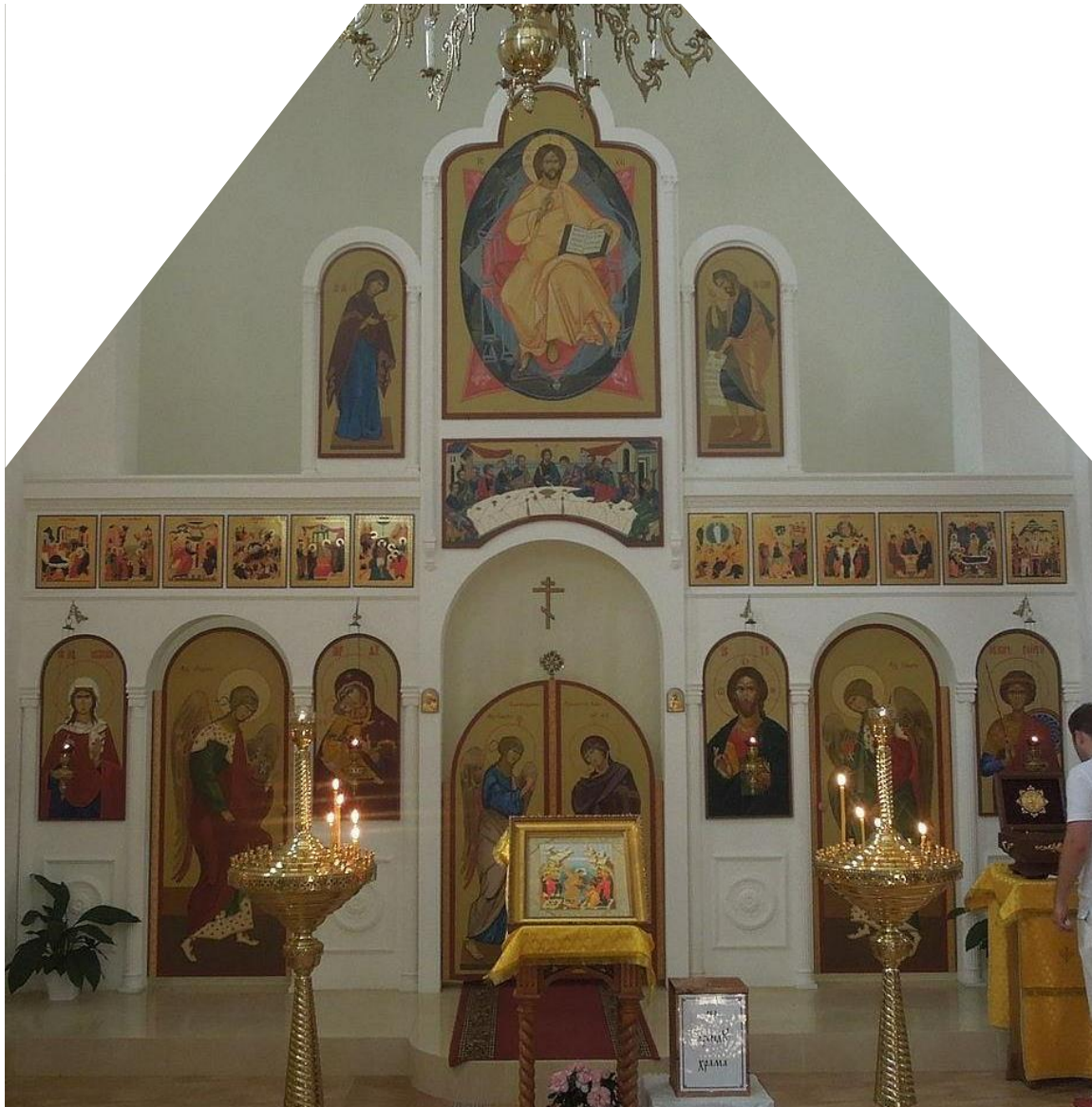


Βῆ χράμῃ στοάσῃ εὐρυ τῶεᾶ,  
να ἡβῆ στοάτῃ μνήμῃ,  
ἔξε, δῶερῃ ἡβῆα,  
ᾧβέρῃ ἡμῃ δῶερῃ μῆτῃ τῶεᾶ.

Standing in the temple of thy glory, we seem to stand in heaven;  
O Theotokos, thou gate of heaven, open to us the portal of thy mercy.



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Holy Annunciation Russian Orthodox Church  
Barcelona, Spain



<https://www.orthodoxbarcelona.com/gallery/proekt-rospsi-xrama-masterskoj-cargrad/>



# 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier

Mountain View, New York





## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Festal Tier



Interior design by Andrew Gould

St Mary's Orthodox Church (*Carpatho-Russian*)  
Painted Post, NY

2017

<https://newworldbyzantine.com/sacred/saint-mary-corning-ny/>

# 2-Tier with **Deisis** or **Apostles** - Examples





# “Deisis” | con:

The Lord in the center;  
Theotokos on the right of the Lord; St John the Baptist on the left



Cretan, 16<sup>th</sup> c.

[Greek: δέησις, "prayer" or "supplication"]

After the development of the full iconostasis screen there was room for a larger "Deisis row" or "Great Deisis" of full-length figures, and the number of figures expanded, in both Byzantium and Russia. Usually this row is above the level of the doors, and below the row depicting the Twelve Great Feasts, but sometimes the Deisis is above the Feasts.

The Theotokos is on the right side of the Lord.

- *πρὸς τὰς ἀριστερὰς τῆς βασιλοῦσας* [Ps. 44:10]
- At Thy right hand stood the queen

St John the Forerunner is on the left side of the Lord.

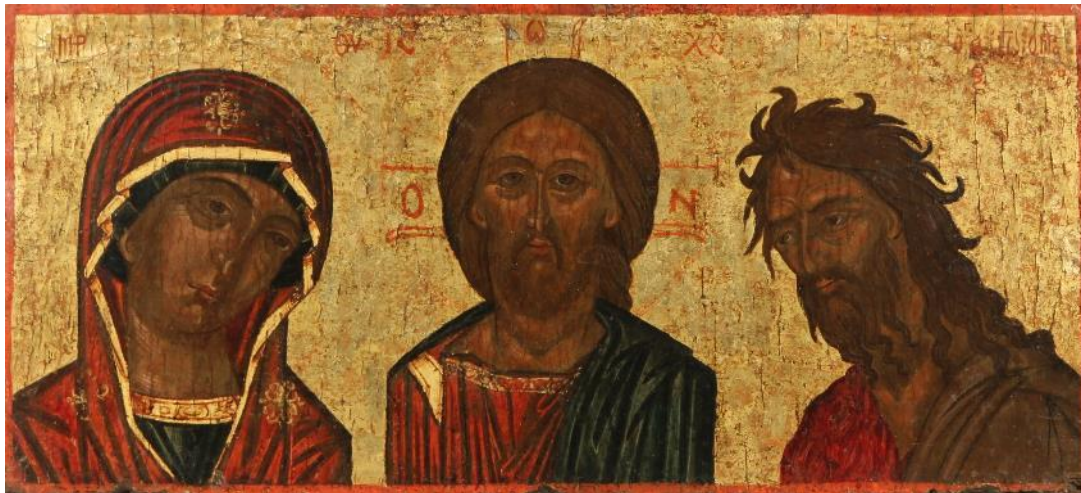
- *Μῆτις ἢ ἡσθηνα ἐφ' ἑσθ' ὅτι τὸ ἐξ ἑ* [Ps. 84:11]
- Mercy and truth are met together.



# “Deisis” Icon: Examples



Mosaic at Hagia Sophia, Constantinople (6<sup>th</sup> c.)



Crete, 17<sup>th</sup> c.



Deisis Icon at Holy Transfiguration Monastery,  
Ellwood City, PA



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with **Deisis Tier**

No Festal Tier; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier is various Saints



*N. Kizenko*

Church of the Annunciation  
Dubrovnik, Croatia

Приимите, ядите, сие есть тело Мое  
“Take, eat, This is My Body”



1887



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with **Deisis Tier**



Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos  
Cemetery Church at Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, NY



# 2-Tier Iconostasis with **Deisis Tier**

No Festal Tier; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier is various Saints



St Seraphim of Sarov Orthodox Cathedral

Santa Rosa, CA

2 Deacons  
on North door

2 Archangels  
on South door

2008?\_



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Apostles

No Festal Tier; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier is Apostles



*Photo by R.P. Kreek*

Holy Transfiguration Greek Orthodox Church  
Austin, TX

1991?



# 2-Tier Iconostasis with Apostles

No Festal Tier; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier is Apostles



Holy Cross Orthodox Church  
Linthicum, MD

Crosses are:  
**Greek,**  
**Celtic, Armenian,**      **Russian, Ethiopian**



## 2-Tier Iconostasis with Apostles

No Festal Tier; 2<sup>nd</sup> Tier is Apostles

Deacons' Doors: Wise Thief (North), St Stephen (South)

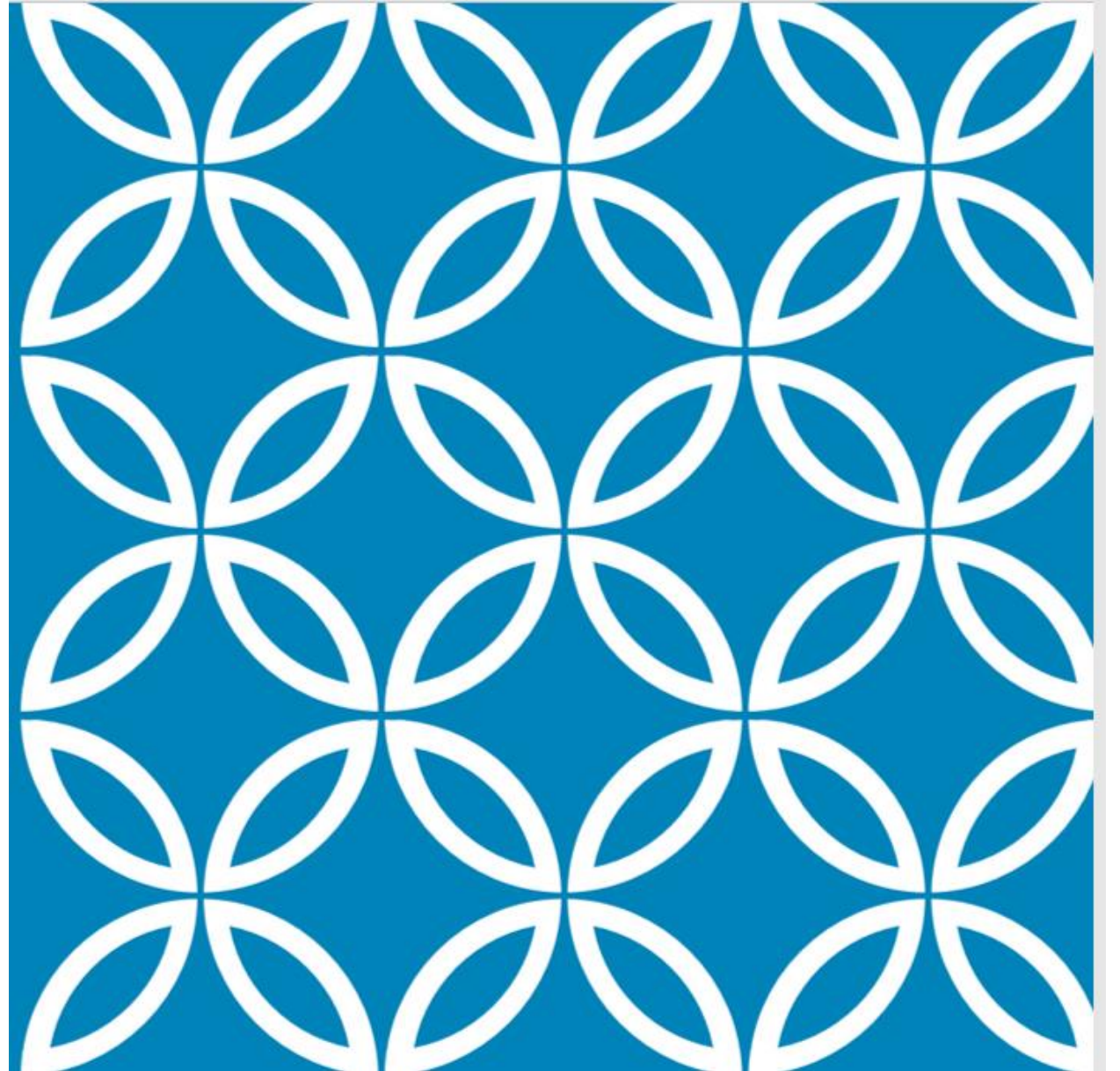


POMOG Russian Orthodox Church,  
Rochester, NY  
Iconostasis replaced previous one Dec 2015

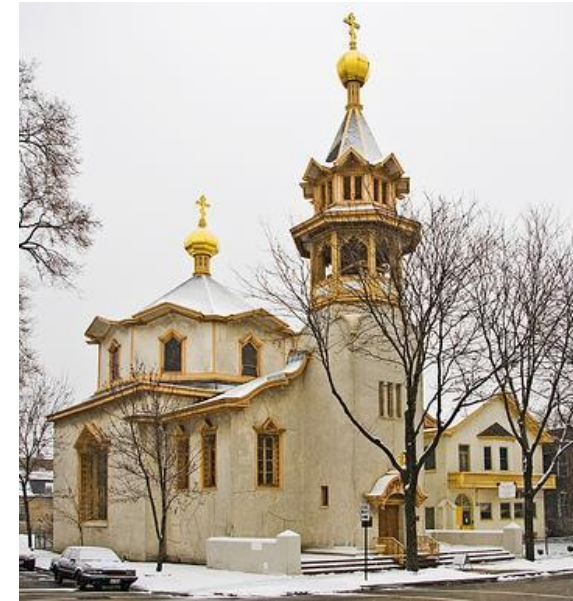
2002 /  
2015



## 3-Tier Examples



3-tier Iconostasis (looks like 4 but the top 2 seem to be a common theme)



Holy Trinity Orthodox Cathedral  
OCA Diocese of the Midwest.  
*Chicago, IL*

One of only two churches designed by Louis Sullivan, one of the seminal architects of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



## 3-tier Iconostasis



St Tikhon Monastery & Seminary  
South Canaan, PA



# 3-tier Iconostasis



St. Nicholas Orthodox Church  
in Beit Jala,  
built on the site of St. Nicholas' cave



1925

*Interior Photos by Mia Daniels Fotopoulos*



## 3-tier Iconostasis



St Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Church  
Pittsburgh, PA



Text on arch:  
“O great and only God, preserve Ukraine”

*(opening line of paraliturgical hymn)*

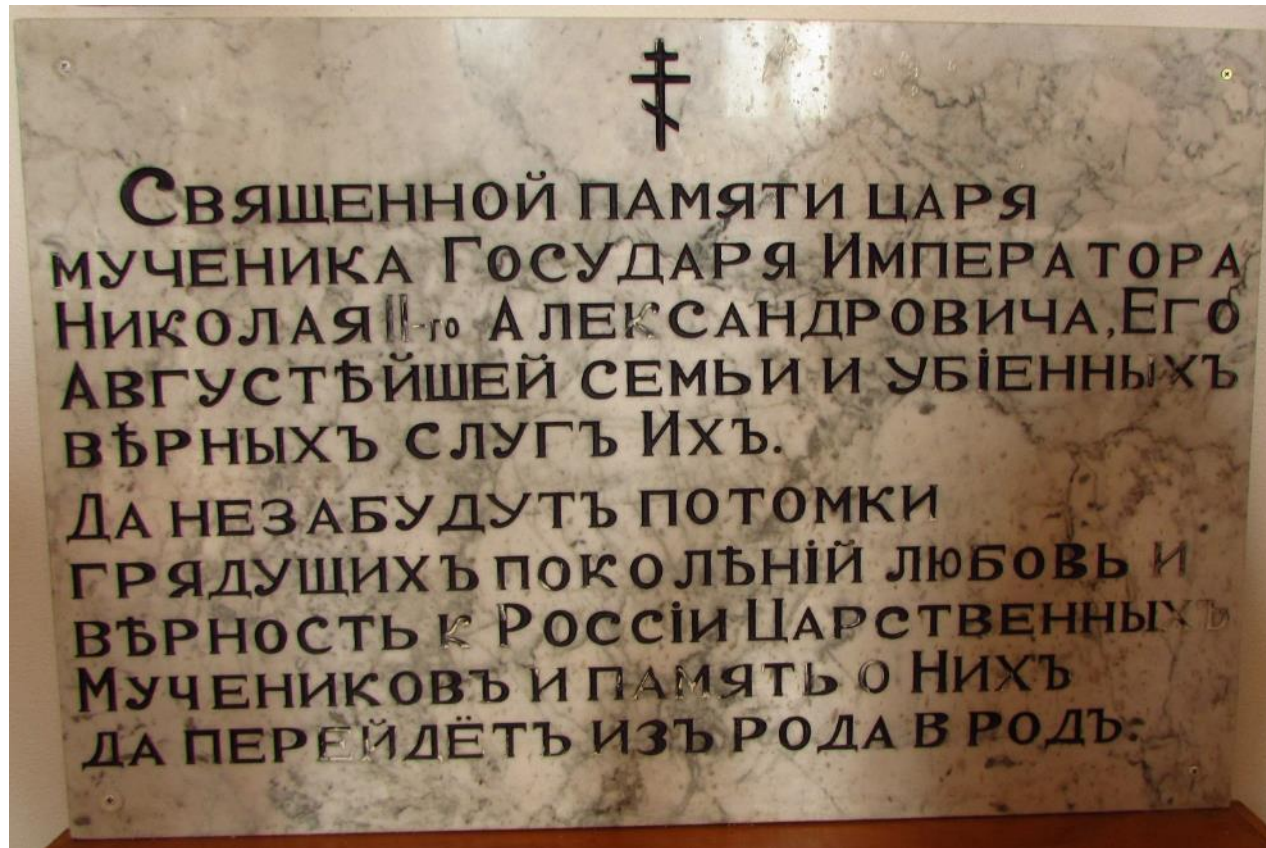


## 3-tier Iconostasis



St Nicholas Cathedral,  
Seattle, WA





St Nicholas Cathedral, Seattle, WA  
Consecrated 1937

*Dedicated to the holy memory of the Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II, his most august family, and their slain faithful servants.  
May the descendants of the generations to come, not forget love and faithfulness to the Royal Martyrs of Russia, and may their memory continue from generation to generation.*





### 3-tier Iconostasis



Holy Trinity Monastery  
Jordanville, NY







3-tier Iconostasis



St Sergius Orthodox Church  
Valley Cottage, NY



1950?



## 3-Tier Iconostasis (4 if you count the frieze)

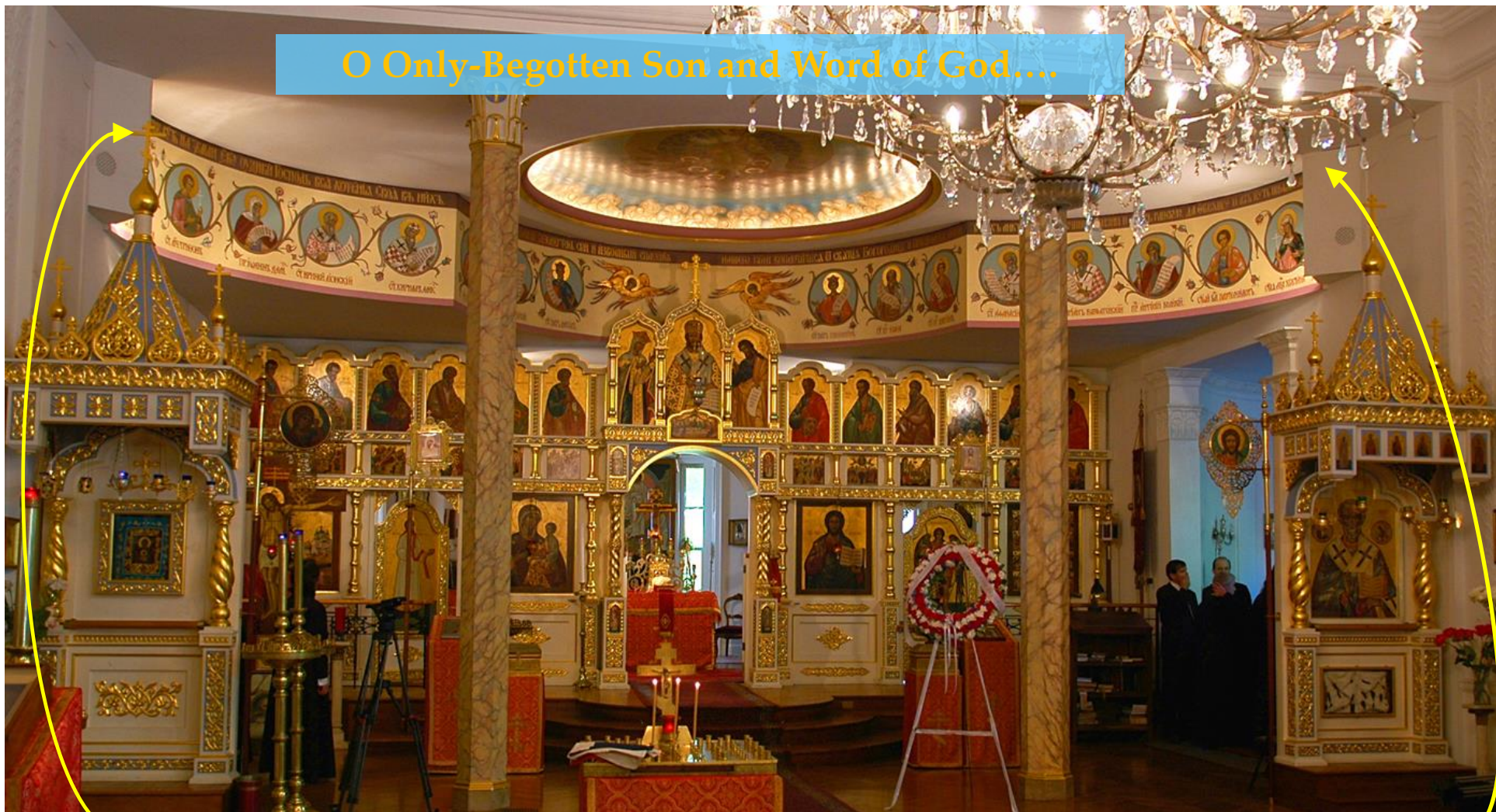


Cathedral of Our Lady of the Sign  
New York City, NY





O Only-Begotten Son and Word of God....



СѢ́ИМЪ, ѿже сѣтъ на землѣ сѣгѡ, оуднѣ гдѣ  
всѣ хотѣнїа своѣ въ нѣхъ. [Ps. 15:3]

Of all the saints that are in the earth, hath the  
Lord fulfilled His desires in them.

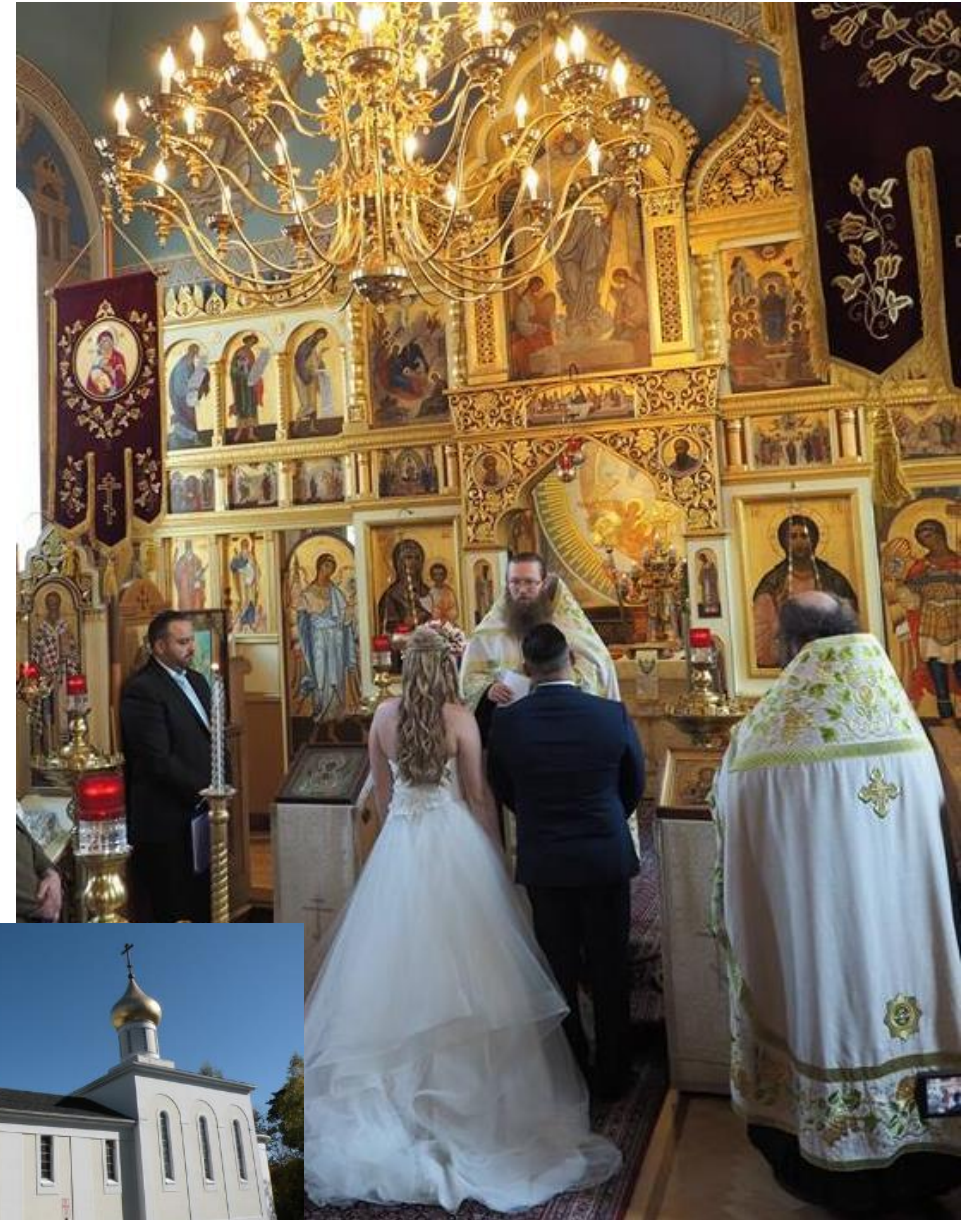
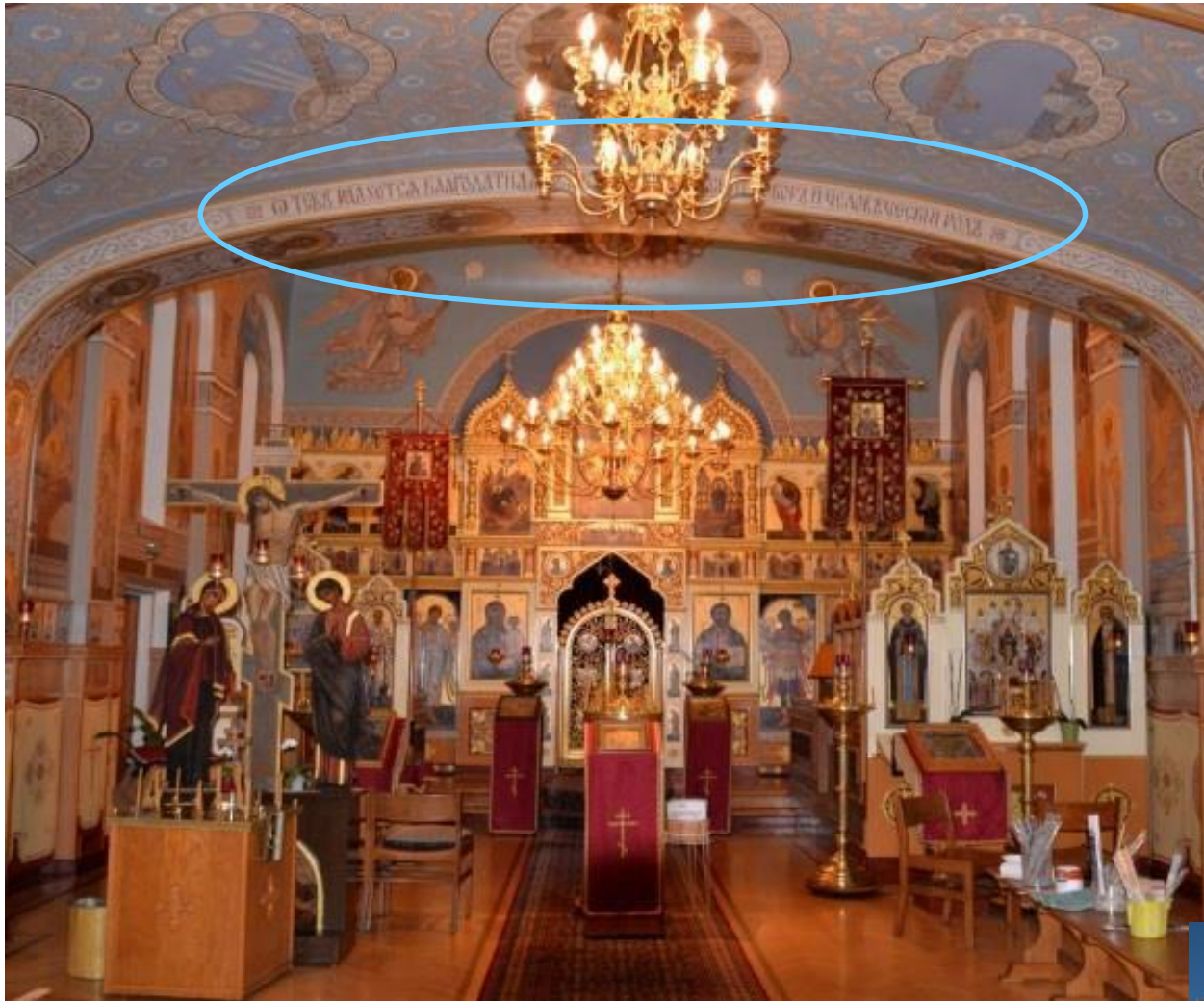
СѢ́ИХЪ лѣкъ ѡбрѣте истѡчникъ жїзни, ѿ двѣрь райскѣхъ:  
да ѡбращѣ ѿ азъ пѣть покаѣнїемъ.

The choir of the saints have found the Fountain of Life, and  
the Door of Paradise. May I also find the way through  
repentance.



# 3-tier Iconostasis

# Holy Virgin Protection Russian Orthodox Church Nyack, NY



Ω ΤΕΚΕ ράδζεται βλгодάтна вслкаа тварь,  
лггльсклй соворз, н члвчеческлй родз

“In thee rejoiceth, O thou who art full of grace, all creation, the assembly of angels and the race of man.”

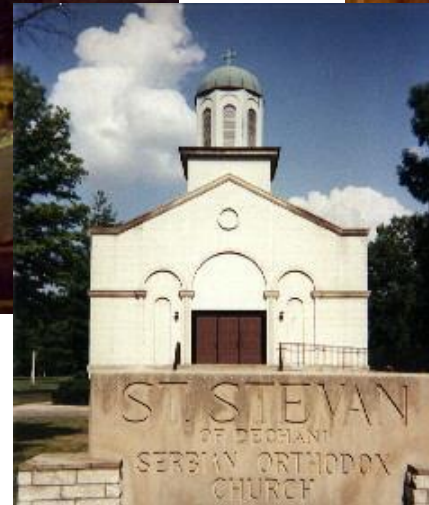




# 3-tier Iconostasis



St Stevan Decani Serbian Orthodox Church  
Columbus, OH



St Matthew	St Luke
St Mark	St John

*Iconostasis may have originally been a gift from the Russian Royal Family to a church in Pittsburgh*



# 3-tier Iconostasis



Tablets of the Law

The Cross

St Stevan Decani Serbian Orthodox Church  
Columbus, OH

St Matthew	St Luke
St Mark	St John



## 3-tier Iconostasis



Church of the Kazan Icon of the Mother of God  
Rawdon, Quebec

**Deacon's Doors:**

N: Archangel Gabriel; S: Archangel Michael





## 3-tier Iconostasis



Holy Dormition Orthodox Church  
McKeesport, PA (*Pgh. Area*)



### 3-tier Iconostasis



Holy Dormition Orthodox Church  
McKeesport, PA (*Pgh. Area*)

(small medallions above Local Tier icons depict the days of creation in Genesis)



## 3-tier Iconostasis



V. Skok



St Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church  
Hamilton, ON

Iconostasis design and iconography  
by Igor Petrovich Suhacev, c. 1974.  
Hand carved from walnut wood on  
the Island of Crete, Greece.  
Dedication February 1975.





## 3-tier Iconostasis



St Mary the Protectress  
Ukrainian Orthodox Church  
Irondequoit, NY

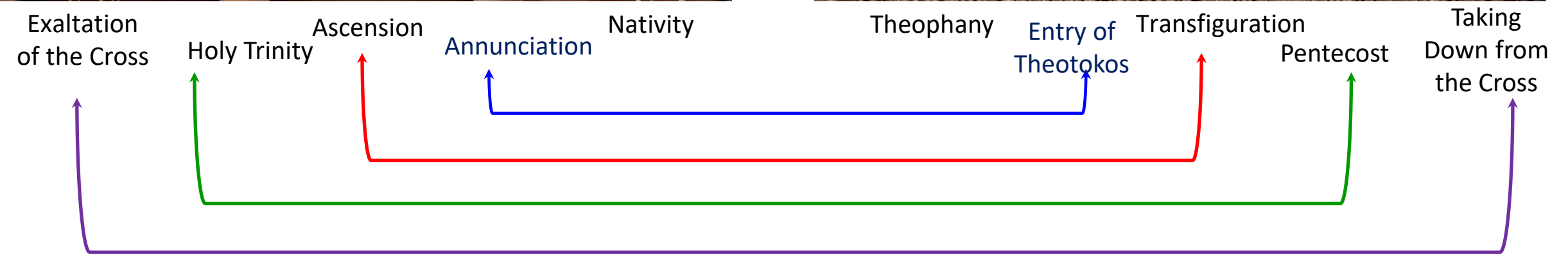




Exaltation of the Cross      Holy Trinity      Ascension      Annunciation      Nativity

Theophany      Entry of Theotokos      Transfiguration      Pentecost      Taking Down from the Cross



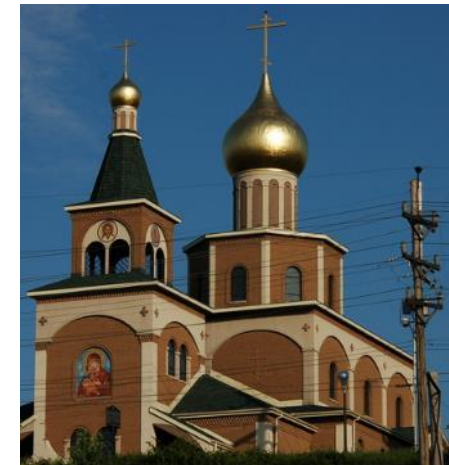


Festal Tier: Symmetrical by theme and composition



# 3-Tiered Iconostasis

Church of the Nativity, Erie, PA







Church of the Nativity, Erie, PA:

The fresco above the altar is the iconographic depiction of the stichera from the Vespers of Nativity:  
“What shall we offer Thee, O Christ?”

Что тебе приносимъ, христе



### 3-tier Iconostasis



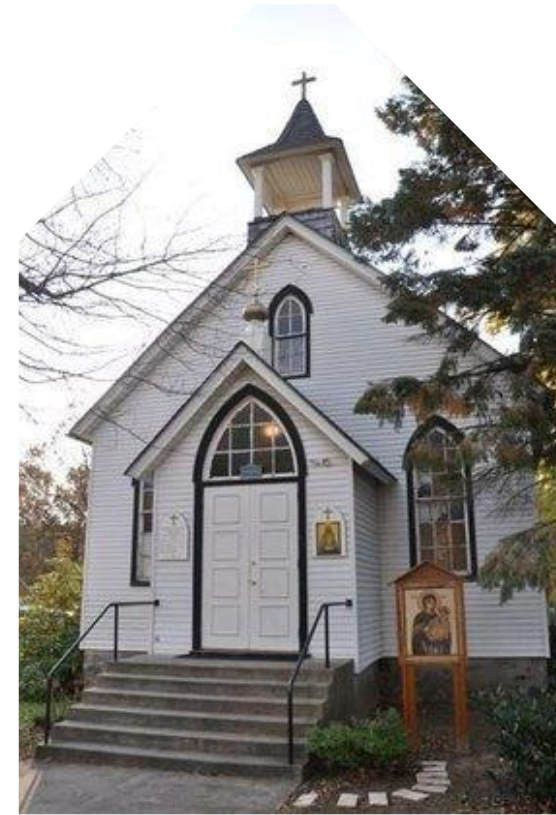
St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral  
Howell, NJ

Хвалѣте ѿмѧ гдѣне, хвалѣте, рабѣ гдѣа, стоѧщїи во  
храмѣ гдѣни, во двѣрѣхъ домѣ бгѣа нашегѡ.

“Praise ye the name of the Lord; ye who stand in the house  
of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God”



# 3-tier Iconostasis



Medallions below icons on Local Tier:

- troparia from 6<sup>th</sup> Hour,
- St Elizabeth the New Martyr (patron saint)
- St John the Baptist.

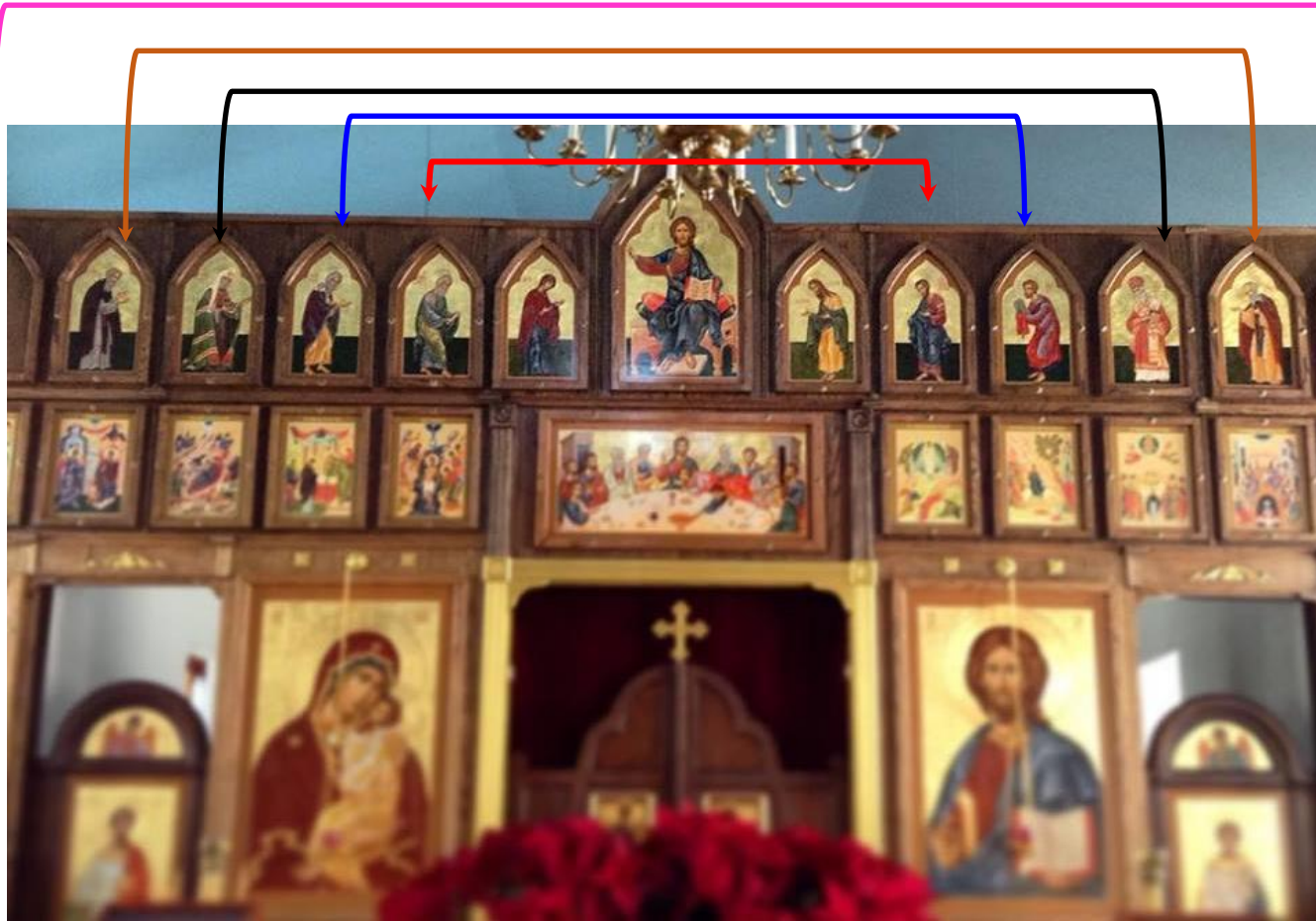
St Elizabeth the New Martyr Orthodox Church  
Rocky Hill, NJ  
by the hand of Dcn. Paul Drozdowski





St Elizabeth the New Martyr Orthodox Church  
Rocky Hill, NJ





Comments on the **Deisis Tier**  
by Fr. Dcn. Paul Drozdowski:  
(a **symmetrical arrangement**)

- Represented are **2 apostles**, **2 prophets**, **2 hierarchs**, **2 monastic saints**, **2 male martyrs**, and **2 female martyrs**.
- On the left side, after the **Theotokos**, are **the Apostle Andrew**, **the Prophet Elijah**, **St. Tikhon**, **St. Benedict**, and **St. Demetrios**.
- On the right, after **St. John the Baptist**, are the **Apostle James**, **the Prophet Moses**, **St. Innocent of Moscow**, **St. Sabbas the Sanctified**, and **St. George**. Further on the edges, not seen in the photo, are also **St. Katherine** and **St. Barbara**.
- The inspiration was the top (Deisis) row of the iconostasis in Jordanville.



# 3-Tiered Iconostasis

## Church of the Epiphany, Roslindale, MA



Remodeling project began  
fall 2016.  
Lower photo is from Jan 2017



## 3-tier Iconostasis



St Mary of Egypt Church  
Roswell (Atlanta), GA

[https://eadiocese.org/news\\_170705\\_3.html](https://eadiocese.org/news_170705_3.html)

The new iconostasis was hand-carved by Alexei Zamlinsky of Atlanta, GA. Icons were painted by Anna Pokrovsky, who resides in Boston, MA. They are painted according to the traditional Russian style of iconography of the fourteenth century.

Presently, the permanent icons consist only of the Christ in Majesty and the first tier of icons. The others are prints on canvas provided by Damascene Gallery in Wayne, WV. As time and finances allow, these will be replaced with hand-painted icons according to the traditional style.



2017



## 3-tier Iconostasis



St Michael's Orthodox Church  
Wayne, NJ



Marble iconostasis

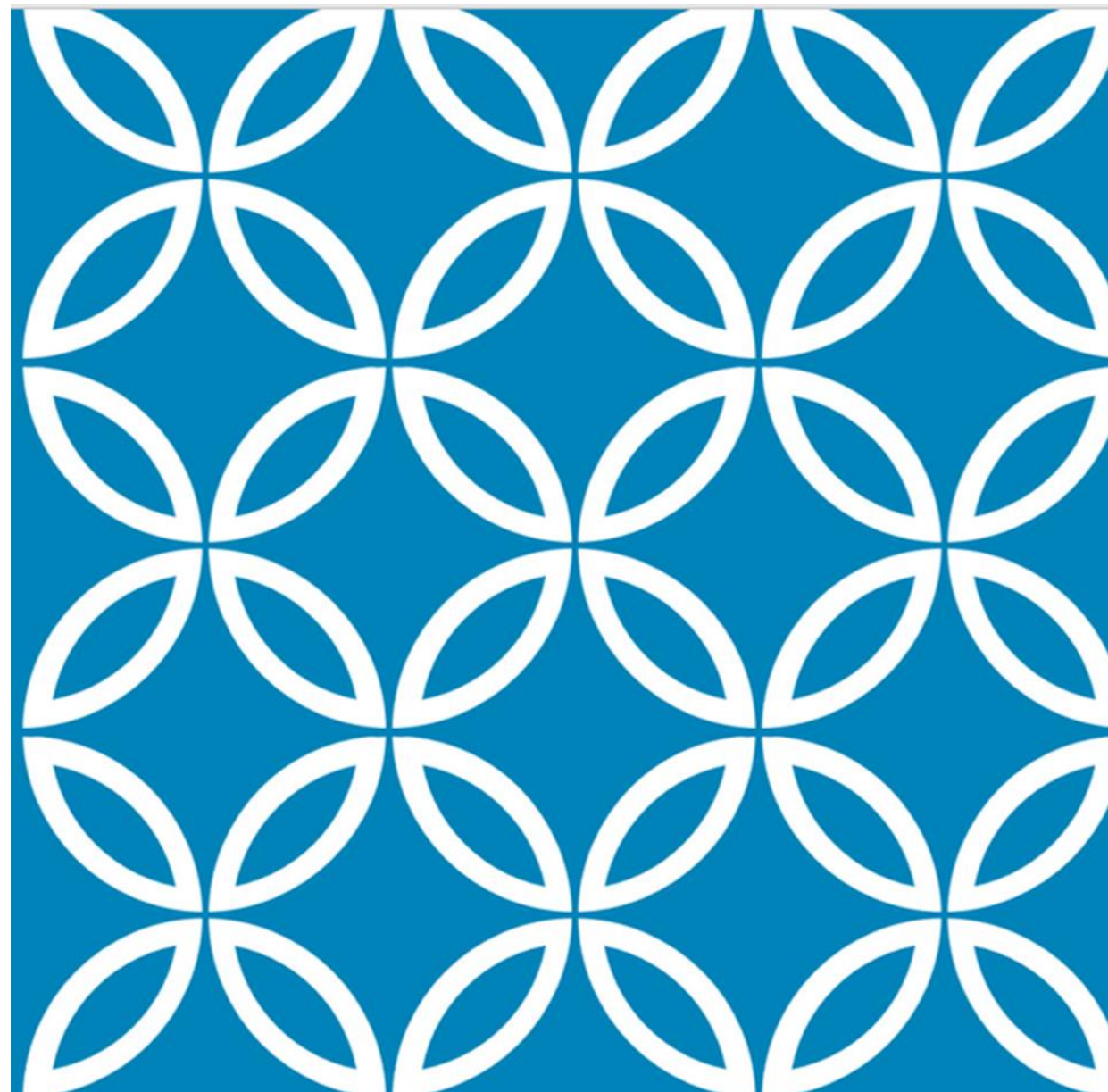


2017?

Described in "How to Build a Church"  
Presentation by E. Kulesha, Utah 2023  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=-HShM0-ZnYA>



## 4-tier Examples







Reconstruction of Iconostasis (c. 1500?) ,Monastery of St Cyril of White Lake, Russia





Reconstruction of Iconostasis (c. 1500?) ,  
Monastery of St Cyril of White Lake, Russia



*"In Thee Rejoices"*  
*From Local Tier*



Это один из первых классических русских иконостасов, в которых воплотилась главная идея, — связь небесного и земного миров через молитву святых.



This is one of the first classic Russian iconostases, which expressed as its main idea the connection between the heavenly and earthly worlds through the prayer of the saints.

Reconstruction of Prophet and Deisis Tiers (c. 1500?) ,Monastery of St Cyril of White Lake, Russia



## 4-tier Iconostasis



Cathedral of St John the Baptist, Mayfield, PA

Text on the ceiling arch:

Прїидїте, поклонїмся  
црѣвн нашемѸ вг҃Ѹ.

“O come, let us worship God,  
our King”





# 4-tier Iconostasis



St Nicholas Orthodox Church  
Stratford, CT





**4-tier Iconostasis**  
Cathedral of  
St John the Baptist,  
Washington DC





## 4-tier Iconostasis



Fr. Dcn. P. Bushunow

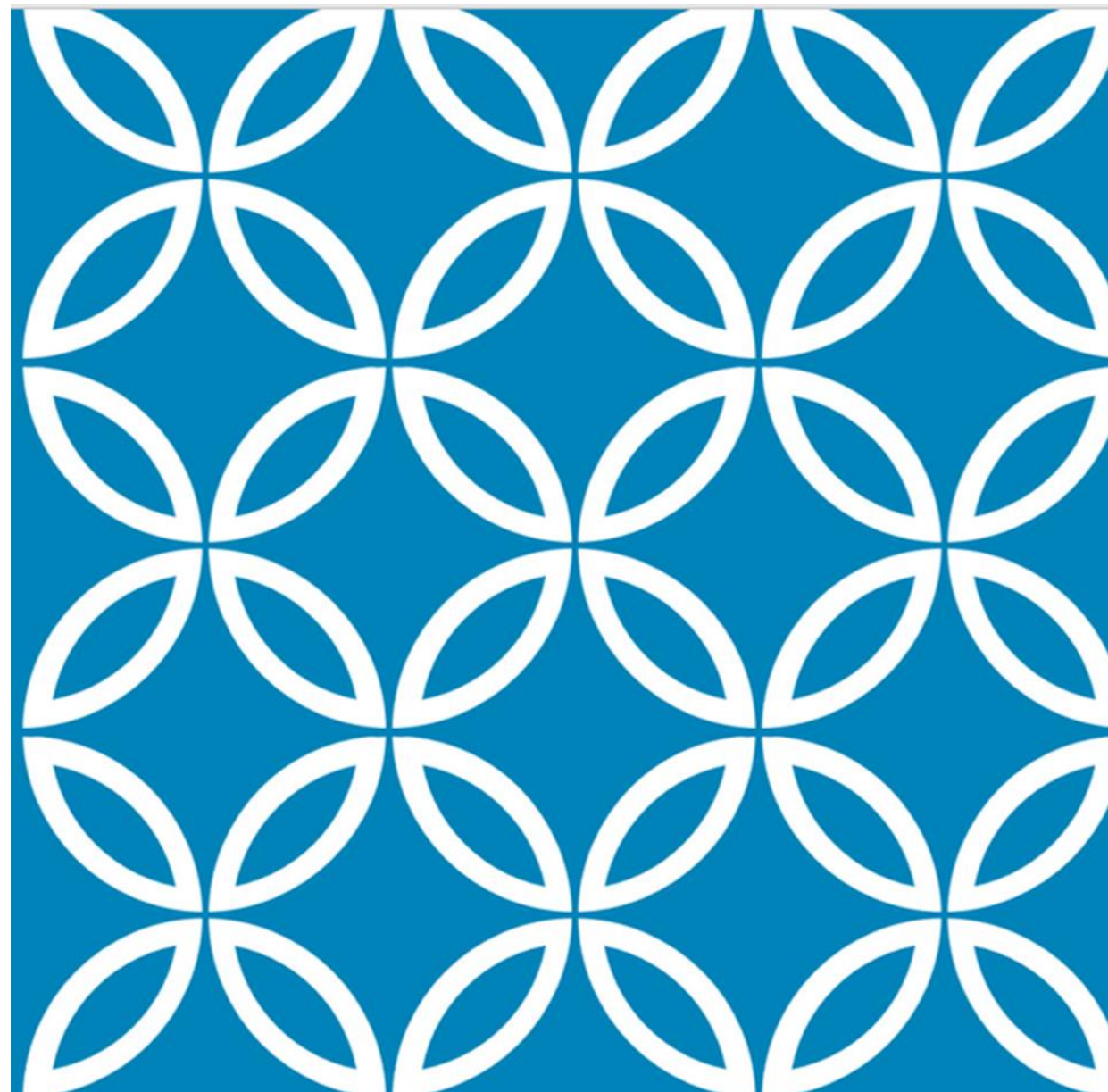


Topmost tiers appear to lean in to accommodate sharply sloped ceiling

St Cyril & Methodius Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church  
Camp Nazareth, PA



## 5-tier Examples





## 5-tier Iconostasis



St Vladimir Memorial Church  
Jackson, NJ

Most of Iconostasis is  
by the hand of  
+ Bishop Daniel of Erie  
Some by Dcn. Jacob Ferens

1938 /  
1988



# 5-tier Iconostasis





## 5-tier Iconostasis



Иконостас церкви преподобного Сергия Радонежского в Высоко-Петровском монастыре в Москве  
Founded 1315, most structures date from XVII—XVIII c.



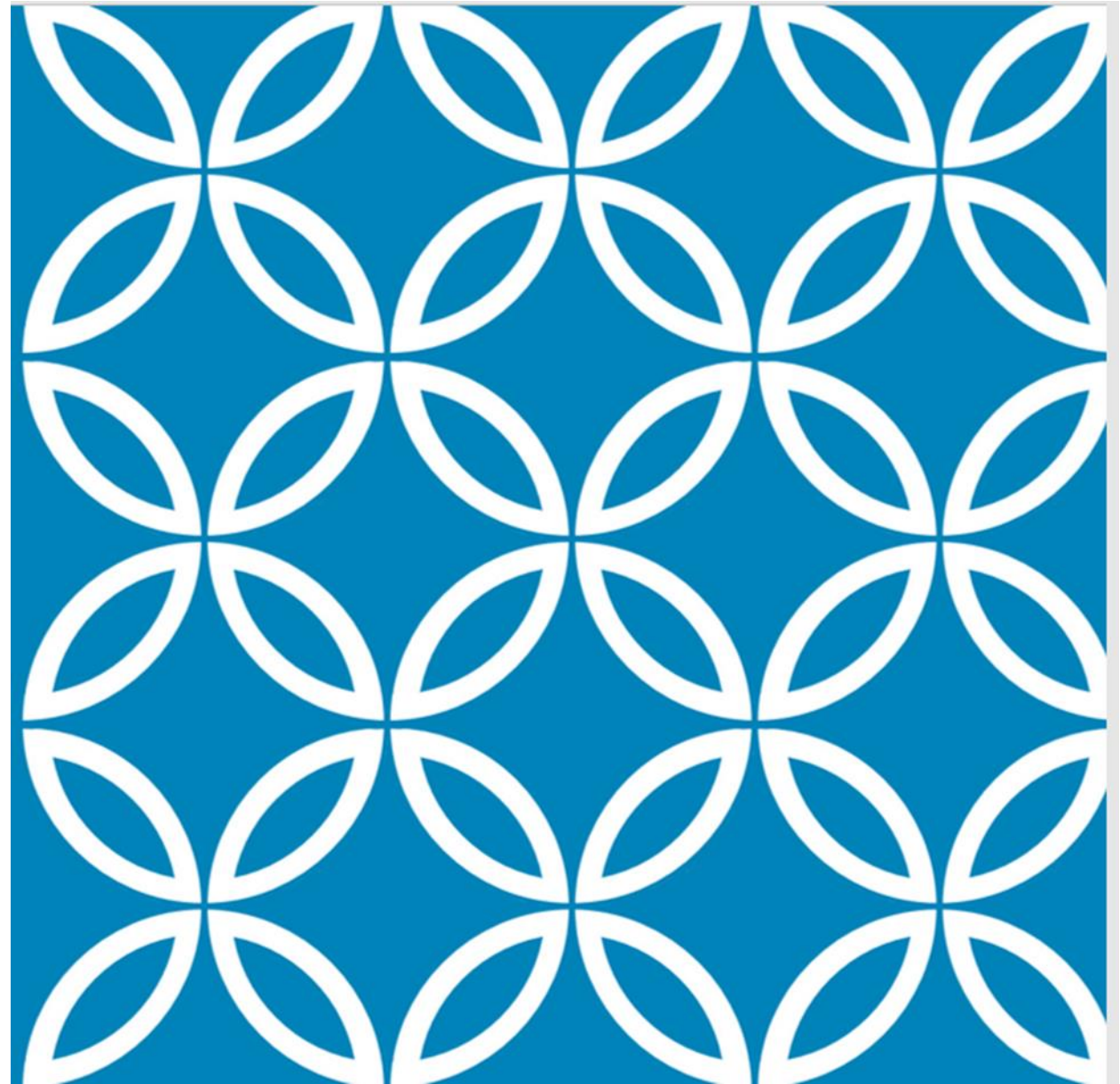
## 5-Tier Iconostasis



“Iconostasis” picture on [azbyka.ru](http://azbyka.ru)



# Unusual Designs





## 2-tier unusual design



St. John the Baptist Church [OCA]  
Campbell, Ohio



- Latticework
- Saints in the “Deisis” tier
- 4 Cherubim / Seraphim in top tier
- Tablets of the Law (L) and Chalice (R)?

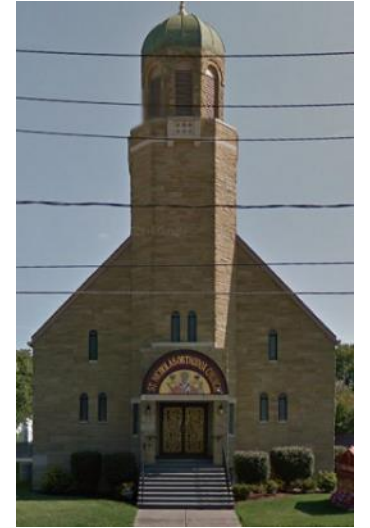
1960



# Unusual Designs - 3 tier?



St Nicholas Orthodox Church (Carpatho-Russian)  
Erie, PA



1938?



3-tier unusual design



3 tier



St. George's Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Church  
Taylor, PA

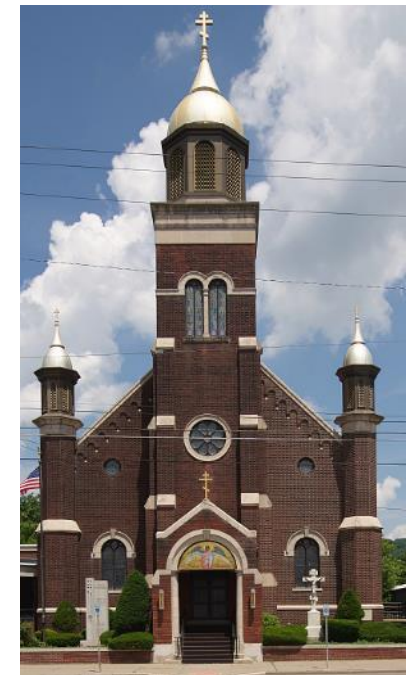
Altar & Iconography  
Consecrated 2016





4-tier

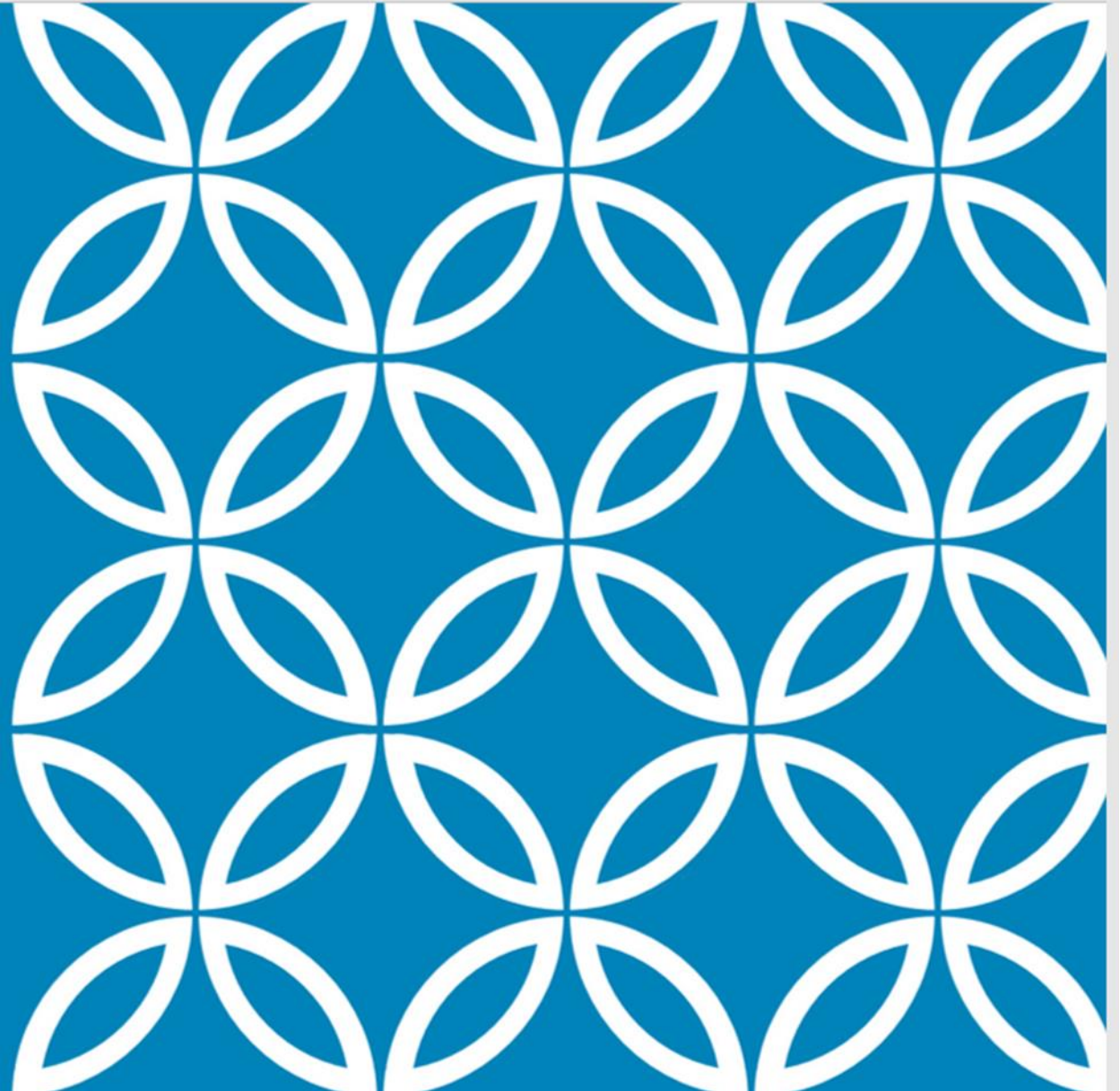
“Tree of Life” style  
St Michael's American  
Carpatho-Russian  
Orthodox Church  
Binghamton, NY



1904?



Portable Iconostasis Examples





# Portable Iconostases



Portable Iconostasis c. 17<sup>th</sup> c, Hillwood Museum  
H. 15 in., W. 58 1/2 in.



# Portable Iconostases



Portable Iconostasis c. 17<sup>th</sup> c, Hillwood Museum  
H. 15 in., W. 58 1/2 in.

**Prophets w/ Theotokos of the Sign**

**Festal**

**Deisis w/ Christ in Majesty**

<http://www.hillwoodmuseum.org/collection/item/54.73>



# Portable Iconostases: Where are they used?

- **Large**: ~1-2 meters tall, 4-5 meters wide
  - Printed textiles (for use on submarines and airplanes where size and weight are critical)
  - Canvas mounted on wood frames (e.g. campaign iconostasis c. 1812)
- **Small** (less than 24 in. tall and less than 5 ft wide when fully unfolded)
  - Typically Russian, 17<sup>th</sup> c. and onward
    - For personal devotion and travel
    - Often used by Old Believers who were not allowed to maintain churches after 1666
  - Other possible uses (contemporary):
    - To define a worship space where there is no permanent iconostasis (e.g. funeral home, small mission church)



# Large Portable Iconostasis (Painted Textile) Example



*Text on architrave:*

Съ нами бѣзъ, разумѣйте ꙗзыцы, и  
покарайтеся: ꙗко съ нами бѣзъ.

God is with us: understand, O ye  
nations, and submit yourselves;  
for God is with us.

- One of 4 commissioned by Alexander I
- Copies of 1812 iconostasis for campaign church
- 1812 iconostasis 1<sup>st</sup> used in Vilno, subsequently in campaigns of 1813-1814

Iconostasis of Alexander I's campaign church, Russia, St Petersburg, Vasily Shebuyev, 1800—1825, Painting on canvas, affixed to wooden frames; 310 x 496 x 20 cm

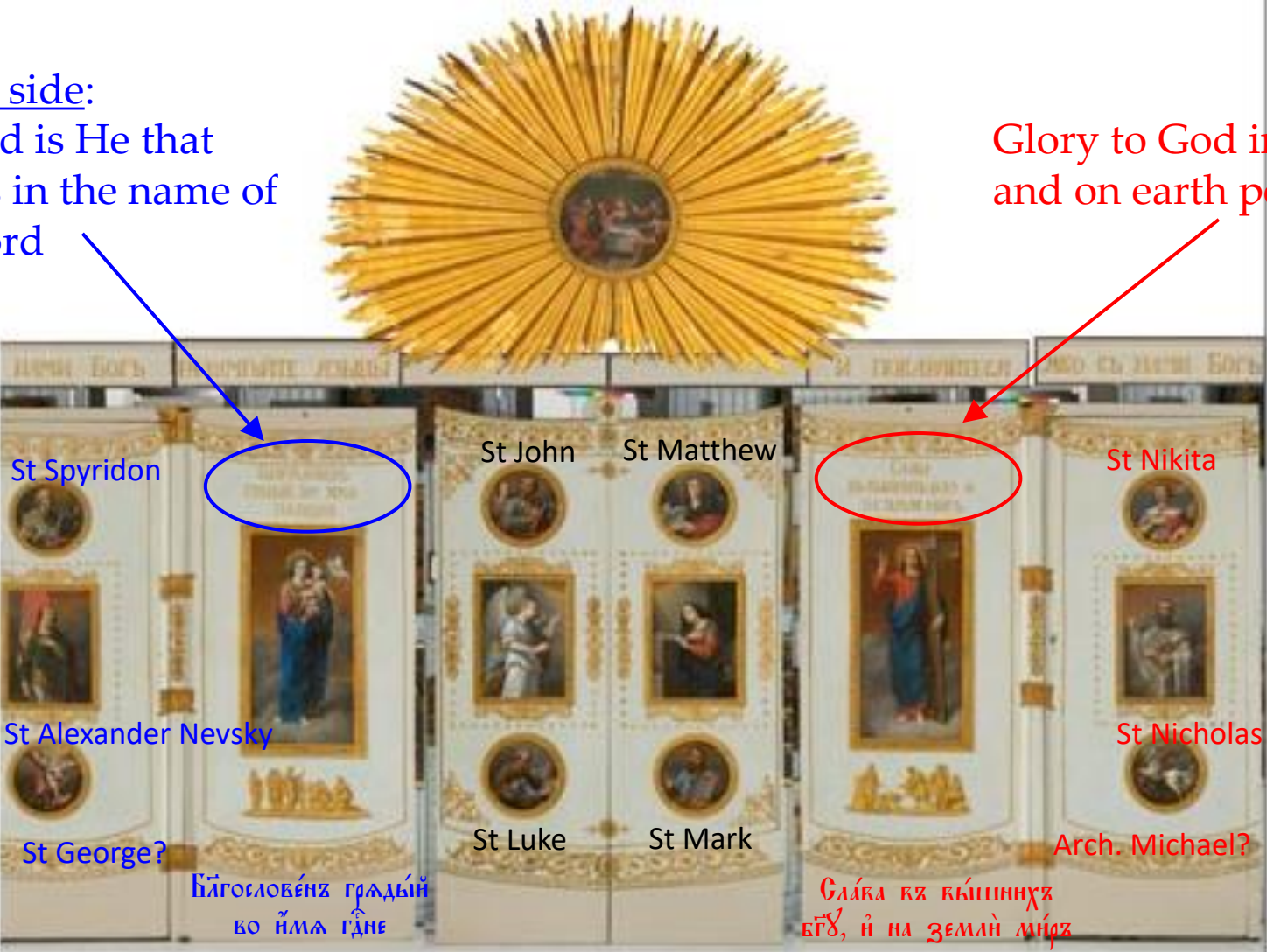
© State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

- *Each segment 80-100 cm wide and about 2 m tall*
- *Sunburst with Mystical Supper icon about 1.2 m wide x 1 m tall*



North side:  
Blessed is He that  
comes in the name of  
the Lord

South side:  
Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace.



Iconostasis of Alexander I's campaign church, Russia, St Petersburg, Vasily Shebuyev, 1800—1825, Painting on canvas, affixed to wooden frames; 310 x 496 x 20 cm  
© State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg





Chapel interior at the Alexander Palace





Parish Feast, October 2020  
Outdoor Liturgy  
Portable iconostasis (mounted textile?)

Convent of the Lesna Mother of God Icon  
Normandy, France

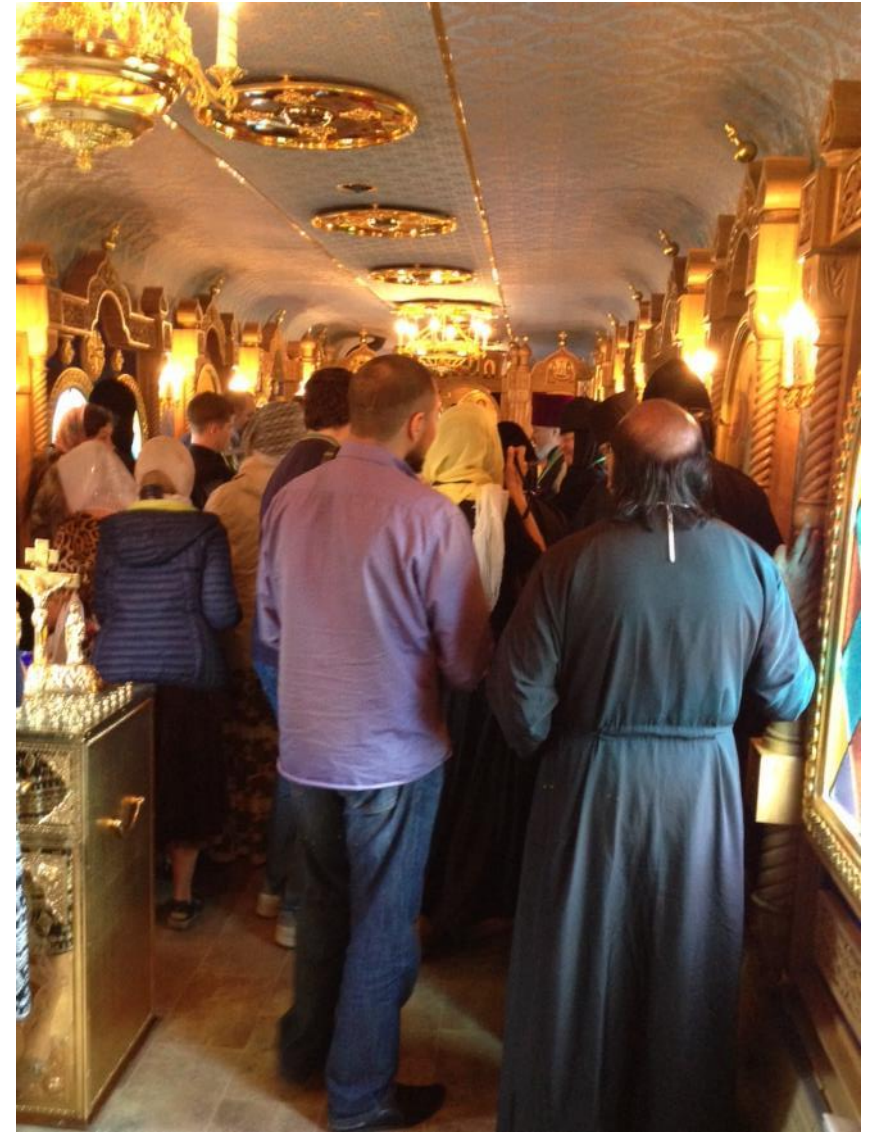


# Large Portable Iconostasis (Printed Textile) Example

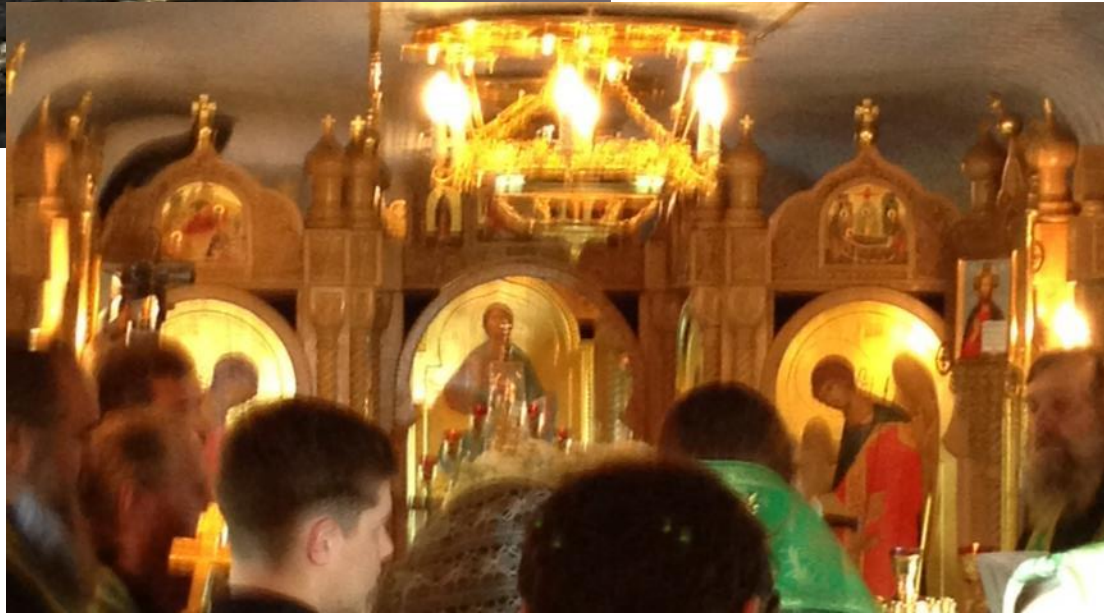




# Other mobile churches/chapels



A Russian church-train car (not the 2015 pilgrimage train)



Pilgrimage in Russia marking the 25th anniversary of the canonization of St John of Kronstadt, 2015

*Interior photos by N. Kizenko on St John of Kronstadt pilgrimage train*

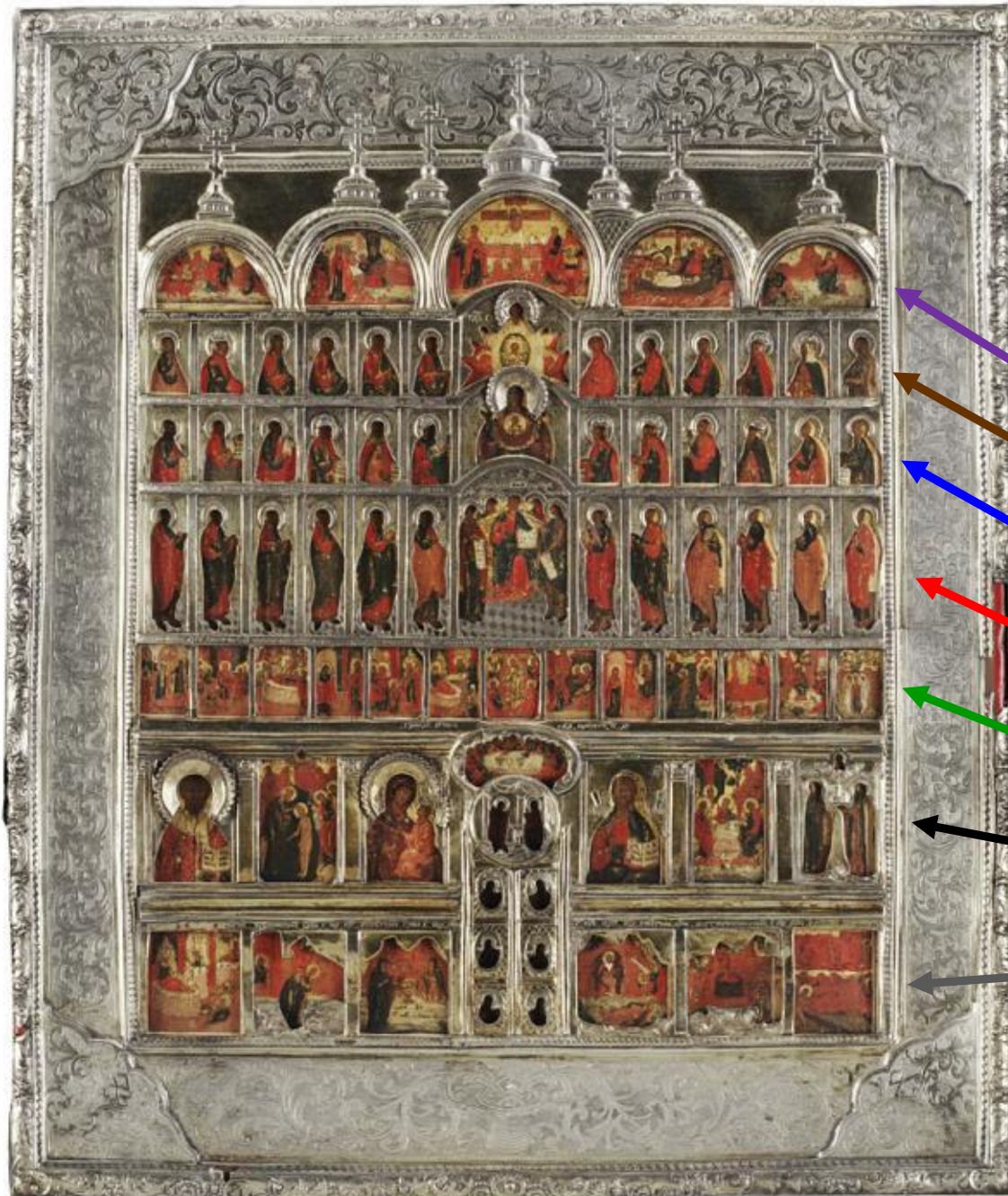


# Small Portable Iconostasis - Examples



Russia, 18<sup>th</sup> c.





**Single-panel** portable iconostasis,  
c. 1850  
**7 tiers**

Collection of Museum of Russian Icons  
(R2004.15a)

**The Lord's Passion**

**Patriarchs**

**Prophets**

**Deisis**

**Festal**

**Local**

**Life of ??**

~18 x ~15 in (45.5 x 38.5 cm)

<https://gallery.collectorsystems.com/public/MuseumofRussianIcons>

[https://gallery.collectorsystems.com/public/MuseumofRussianIcons/3119/R2004.15a?InventoryNumber\\_search=R2004.15a](https://gallery.collectorsystems.com/public/MuseumofRussianIcons/3119/R2004.15a?InventoryNumber_search=R2004.15a)





“Great Deisis with Prophets” – Russian 16<sup>th</sup> c. Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

In Frame

H: 13 1/4 × W: 32 × D: 1 1/4 in. (33.7 × 81.3 × 3.2 cm);

Small Side Panels W: 2 5/8 in. (6.7 cm);

Central Panel W: 5 5/16 in. (13.5 cm)



# Small Portable Iconostasis – Examples at Museum of Russian Icons (Clinton, MA)





# Small Portable Iconostasis – Examples at Museum of Russian Icons (Clinton, MA)



Patriarchs?
Prophets w/ Theotokos of the Sign
Intercessions?
Festal
Local/ Deisis w/ Royal Doors



# Portable Iconostasis with Intercessions (Collection of Museum of Russian Icons, Clinton MA)





# Portable Iconostasis with Intercessions (Collection of Museum of Russian Icons, Clinton MA)



<b>Prophets &amp; Patriarchs</b>
<b>Intercessions II</b>
<b>Intercessions I</b>
<b>Festal Tier</b>
<b>Deisis/Local Tier</b>

R2008.18

52.1 x 154.9 cm



# What are the intercessions depicted?



D1a for the healing of (hernia) Great Martyr Artemius 20 Oct	D1b for the deliverance of children from birthmarks Great Martyr Nikita 15 Sept	D2a for the same (stolen objects) Martyr John the Warrior 30 July	D2b for the retrieval of stolen objects and the return of runaway slaves Great Martyr Theodore Tyro 17 Feb	D3a to preserve cattle from being eaten by wild animals St George 23 April	D3b for the same (eyes) Archdeacon Laurence 10 August	D4a for the same (eyes) St Longinus the Centurion 16 Oct	D4b for healing of diseases of the eyes Martyr Menas the Egyptian 11 Nov	D5a for deliverance from drunkenness St Boniface 19 Dec	D5b for the same (drunkenness) Venerable Moses the Ethiopian, also called Moor 28 Aug	D6a for the same (infertility) Venerable Hypatius of Ruthena 31 March	D6b for release from infertility and childlessness Venerable Romanus the Wonderworker 27 Nov	D7a for the same (trembling) Venerable Basil the New 26 Mar	D7b for healing from trembling sickness New Martyr Maron 14 Feb
C1 for preservation from evil spells: Sts Cyprian and Justina 2 Oct		C2a for the same (sudden death) Great Martyr Barbara 4 Dec	C2b for the same (sudden death) Venerable Onuphrius the Great 12 June	C3a for the same (sudden death) Hieromartyr Haralampus 10 Feb	C3b for preservation from sudden death without repentance Hieromartyr Sadoc 19 Oct	C4a for healing of diseases of the teeth Hieromartyr Antipas 11 April	C4b to preserve the health of infants St Simeon 3 Feb	C5a from drought and for rainfall Holy Prophet Elijah 20 July	C5b for the study of icon painting St John the Theologian 26 Sep	C6 for healing of blinded eyes Kazan icon of the Theotokos 8 July		C7 To preserve the health of infants Tikhvin icon of the Theotokos	



D10a,b for the enlightenment of the mind in learning to read and write Unmercenaries Cosmas and Damian 1 Nov	D11 for deliverance from "falling down" of horses Sts Florus and Laurus 18 Aug	D12 if a husband should despise his wife for no cause Sts Gurius and Samon 15 Nov		D13a for the same (husband/wife) St Habib 15 Nov	D13b for the healing of infants from smallpox St Konon of Isauria 5 Mar	D14a for deliverance of women from difficult childbirth Great Martyr Catherine 24 Nov	D14b for healing from trembling sickness Martyr Photini the Samaritan 20 Mar	D15a St Stephen 15 Dec	D15b Holy Martyr Varus 19 Oct	D16a Ven. Longinus 9 April	D16b Venerable Syncletice 5 Dec? ( St Syncletice is commemorated 5 Jan)
C10 for preservation from fire and lightning "Burning Bush" icon of Theotokos 4 Sept	C11 for the deliverance of women from difficult childbirth Feodorov icon of Theotokos 16 Aug	C12a for deliverance from "falling down" of cattle St Blaise 11 Feb	C12b for the same (cattle) Hierarch Modestus 18 Dec	C13a for preservation from fire and lightning St Nikita of Novgorod 31 Jan	C13b for deliverance from eternal torment of those who die without repentance Great Martyr Paisius 19 June	C14a to drive away evil spirits from people and cattle Hierarch Marothus 16 Feb	C14b for the same (evil spirits from people) Venerable Niphon 23 Dec	C15a for deliverance from adulterous passion Ven. Martinian 13 Feb	C15b For the same (adultery) Ven. John the Much-suffering 18 Jul	C16a for the same (adultery) Venerable Moses the Hungarian 26 Jul	C16b for the same (adultery) Holy Martyr Thomais 14 Apr



# Icon with Intercessions

*Collection of Holy Trinity Monastery; Exhibited at Herkimer Community College, 2016*



## **St Onuphrios**

For deliverance from sudden death without repentance

## **St Paisios the Great**

For deliverance from torments of those who die without having repented

## **Hierarch Niphon of Cyprus**

For the driving away of evil spirits from people and cattle

## **St Zosima and Savvaty of Solovki**

For the well-being of bees



# Summing up: Things to Notice

- Is the style of the iconostasis in harmony with the style of the church?
- Is the iconostasis “open” or solid?
- Does it have columns?
- Is there an architrave?
- How many tiers does it have?
- If there is a Festal tier, how are the Festal icons arranged?
- If there is a Deisis tier, what Saints are depicted? Is there symmetry?
- How are the Evangelist icons arranged on the Royal Doors?
- Who is depicted on the Deacons’ Doors?
- If there are pendentives, how are the Evangelists depicted (locations)?
  - What symbols (if shown) are associated with the Evangelists?
- If there is text on the Iconostasis or the ceiling, what does it say?



# Design Considerations for Iconostasis:

## *Defining the Sacred Space*

- How ornate should it be? Should it match the overall style of the church?
- Should the iconostasis be more “open” or more solid?
- Is there a balance between straight and curved areas?
- How dark or how light should the background and accents be?
- Should it have columns?
- Should there be an architrave?
- How many tiers should it have?
- If there is a Festal tier, how should the Festal icons be arranged?
- If there is a Deisis tier, what Saints should be depicted? Strive for symmetry?
- How should the Evangelist icons be arranged on the Royal Doors?
- Who should be depicted on the Deacons’ Doors?
- If there are pendentives, how should the Evangelists be depicted (locations)?
  - What symbols (if shown) are associated with the Evangelists?
- If there is text on the Iconostasis or the ceiling, what should it say?



# Acknowledgements and Thanks

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- ❖ Mrs. T. Kizenko
- ❖ Rdr. Alexander Priebe
- ❖ Kent Russell, Museum of Russian Icons

## ❖ Photo Credits:

- Fr. Dcn. Peter Bushunow
- Mia Daniels Fotopoulos
- Subdcn. Serafim Kizenko
- Eugene Kizenko
- Peter Kizenko
- Anna Portoraro
- Vladimir Skok
- Eugenia Temidis
- many others, known and unknown, who shared pictures of iconostases on the Internet



# Questions?



*Thank you for your attention!*



Now the Heavenly Powers

invisibly worship with us



Нынѣ силы небныя

εξ ἡμῶν ἰκάνημι σὺςχατῆ:



Saint Alexander Nevsky Church, Richmond, ME



# Bibliography (print)

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- *Techniques of Icon and Wall Painting*, Aidan Hart
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- *Architecture as Icon* (exhibition catalogue) - Slobodan Ćurčić
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- *Russian Church Singing, Volume II*, Johann von Gardner
- *The Icon and the Axe*, James Billington

## Other topics: (Rood Screens)

- *The Stripping of the Altars*, Eamon Duffy

Other books of possible interest, listed in *Techniques of Icon and Wall Painting*

but not available locally:

- *Architectural History of the Christian Church*, A.H. Hill
- *Early Churches of Constantinople*, T. Matthews



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## **Basic information about iconostasis and arrangement of tiers**

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- <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/иконостас>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iconostasis>
- <https://www.stots.edu/article.php?id=58> (excerpt from “These Truths We Hold”)
- <https://russianicons.wordpress.com/2015/09/06/a-deisis-set-of-icons/>
- <https://russianicons.wordpress.com/2014/06/05/saints-chins-and-pussy-riot-icons-of-the-iconostasis/>
- <http://ru-news.ru/ustrojstvo-pravoslavnogo-hrama-ii-ikonostas/>
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- [An Icon of the Kingdom of God: The Integrated Expression of all the Liturgical Arts – Part 3: The Role of Panel Icons, Frescoes, and the Iconostasis](#), Andrew Gould in Orthodox Arts Journal, July 18, 2012 [excellent general overview, including “more open” 20<sup>th</sup> century approach
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[http://repozytorium.uwb.edu.pl/jspui/bitstream/11320/6211/1/RTK\\_16\\_3\\_2017\\_T\\_Misijuk\\_The\\_multilayer\\_composition\\_of\\_an\\_iconost](http://repozytorium.uwb.edu.pl/jspui/bitstream/11320/6211/1/RTK_16_3_2017_T_Misijuk_The_multilayer_composition_of_an_iconost)
- [examples of Christ in Majesty] <http://www.cirota.ru/forum/view.php?subj=79912&fullview=1&order=>
- <http://images.library.wisc.edu/Arts/EFacs/Arts/ChazPubs/IconsLVM/reference/arts.iconslvm.i0009.pdf>



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- <http://bolshoevozesenie.ru/13922-domashnij-i-poxodnyj-ikonostasy/>
- <https://www.drevleprikamie.ru/news/show/000168.html>
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- <http://old.alabin.ru/alabina/exposure/collect/icons/310/>
- <http://rublev-museum.livejournal.com/354570.html> [detailed discussion of Alexander I campaign iconostasis]
- <http://sobory.ru/article/?object=07056>
- [St John of Kronstadt pilgrimage 2015]  
[https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54d0df1ee4b036ef1e44b144/t/583f5e34e4fcb5262087a1e6/1480547893766/Wh eel7\\_article02.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/54d0df1ee4b036ef1e44b144/t/583f5e34e4fcb5262087a1e6/1480547893766/Wh eel7_article02.pdf)
- <http://tsarselo.ru/yenciklopedija-carskogo-sela/adresa/furazhnyi-4-cerkov-sv-prep-sergija-igumena-radonezhskogo-vseja-rusi-chudotvorca.html#.V2n9hPkwiUk>

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Backup Slides Follow

Before every Orthodox altar there is an iconostasis or icon stand. In some churches it is a virtual wall, blocking view of the altar, with doors through which clergy and altar boys appear and disappear. At the other, minimal, end is an arrangement like ours: Jesus on the right, Virgin on the left (though we call her "Theotokos", God-bearer, in refutation of an ancient heresy that claimed Mary bore only Jesus' humanity).

...

It is forty minutes since they started, and the room is complete. Gary looks around and says, "Okay. Now it's a temple." Once he makes this pronouncement, no one is to go past the two large icons without a liturgical reason.

*(description of setting up a temporary mission church)*

Facing East "How to Make a Church", Frederica Mathewes-Green



The iconostasis is an ancient part of the structure of an Orthodox church and divides the Sanctuary where the Eucharist is celebrated from the nave where the congregation stands.

- The Sanctuary symbolizes the spiritual man and the Divine world, while the nave represents the physical man and the human world, so the iconostasis represents the boundary between the two, showing the division between them and showing how they can be reconciled.
- The columns of the iconostasis represent the firmament dividing the spiritual from the sensory,
- The horizontal beams represent the union between the heavenly and the earthly through the love of God. (Ouspensky and Lossky 1982.)

## **The Iconography of the Russian Iconostasis**

Lisa Kies (Ska Sofya la Rus)

<http://sofyalarus.info/russia/iconostasis.html>

<b>Forefathers</b>	75. Forefather Judah	76. Forefather Isaac	77. Forefather Abraham	78. Forefather Noah	79. Forefather Adam	Paternitas (the Trinity enthroned)	81. Foremother Eve	82. Forefather Enoch	83. Forefather Melchisedek	84. Forefather Jacob	85. Forefather Job
<b>Prophets</b>	64. Prophen Nahum (Nahum 1:7)	65. Prophet Gideon (Judges 6:37)	66. Prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 44:2)	67. Prophet Moses (Exodus 3:2)	68. King David the Prophet (Psalm 44:10)	Virgin and Child enthroned	70. King Solomon the Prophet (Proverbs 9:1)	71. Prophet Daniel (Daniel 2:34)	72. Prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 7:14)	73. Prophet Elijah (I Kings 19:10)	74. Prophet Habbakuk (Habbakuk 3:3)
<b>Festal</b> "Life of Christ" Arrangement	Annunciation	Nativity of the Lord	Meeting	Theophany	Entry into Jerusalem	The Crucifixion & The Resurrection	Transfiguration	Ascension	Pentecost	Dormition of the Theotokos	Universal Exaltation of the Cross
<b>Deisis</b>	Holy Great Martyr Demetrius	St Basil the Great	Holy Apostle Peter	Archangel Michael	The Theotokos	Christ in Majesty	St John the Baptist	Archangel Gabriel	Holy Apostle Paul	St John Chrysostom	Holy Great Martyr George

Diagram of Iconostasis in St Vladimir Memorial Church, Jackson, NJ



# Examples of text on or above iconostasis

St. John's Russian Orthodox Cathedral, *Mayfield, PA*

- Прїидїте, поклонїмса црѣви нашемѸ бгѸ. • O come, let us worship God, our King.

Novo-Diveevo Convent, *Spring Valley, NY*

- Пресѣла бже спсѣ насз. • O most holy Theotokos, save us.

St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, *Howell, NJ*

- Хвалїте ѣма гдне, хвалїте, рабѣ гда. Стоящїи во храмѣ гднн, во дворѣхз домѸ бга нашегз. • Praise ye the name of the Lord; praise Him, all ye servants of the Lord. Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God.

St. Vladimir Ukrainian Orthodox Church, *Pittsburgh, PA*

- Боже великнїй, єдиннїй, нам УкраїнѸ храни • O great and only God, preserve Ukraine for us

St. John the Baptist Russian Orthodox Cathedral, *Washington, DC*

- Нбїнѣ сїлы небнїа сз нѣмнї невиднїмо слѸжатз. (*altar interior*) • Behold now, the powers of Heaven invisibly with us do serve.

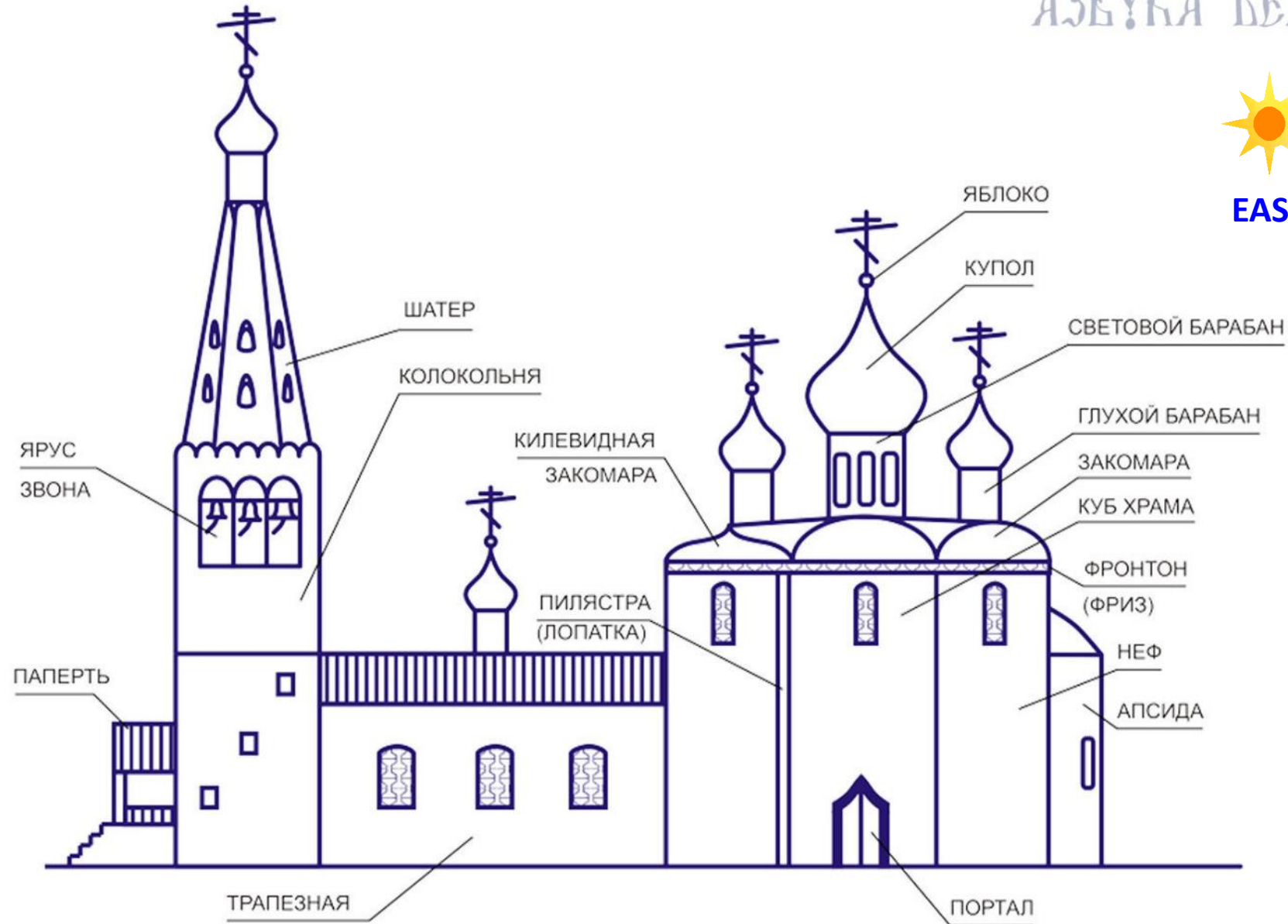
Sts Peter & Paul Orthodox Church, *Syracuse NY*

- Слава вз вѣшннїхз бгѸ, ѣ на землѣ мїрз. • Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace.

# АЗБУКА ВЕРЫ



EAST







EAST

ДЭБЮНА БЕРКЫ

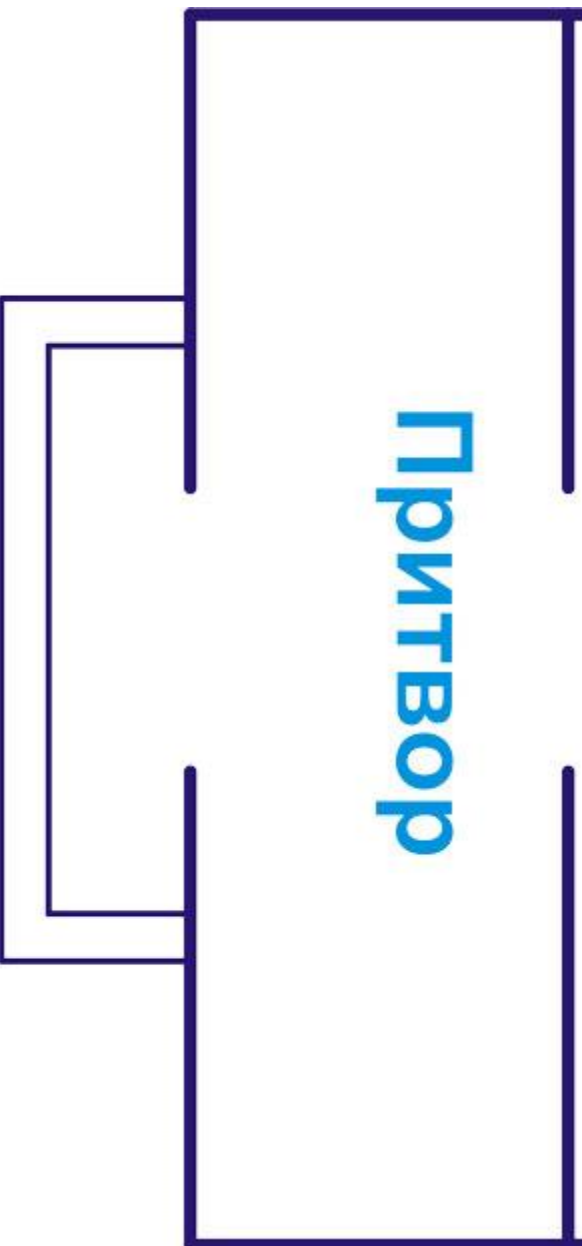
Алтарь

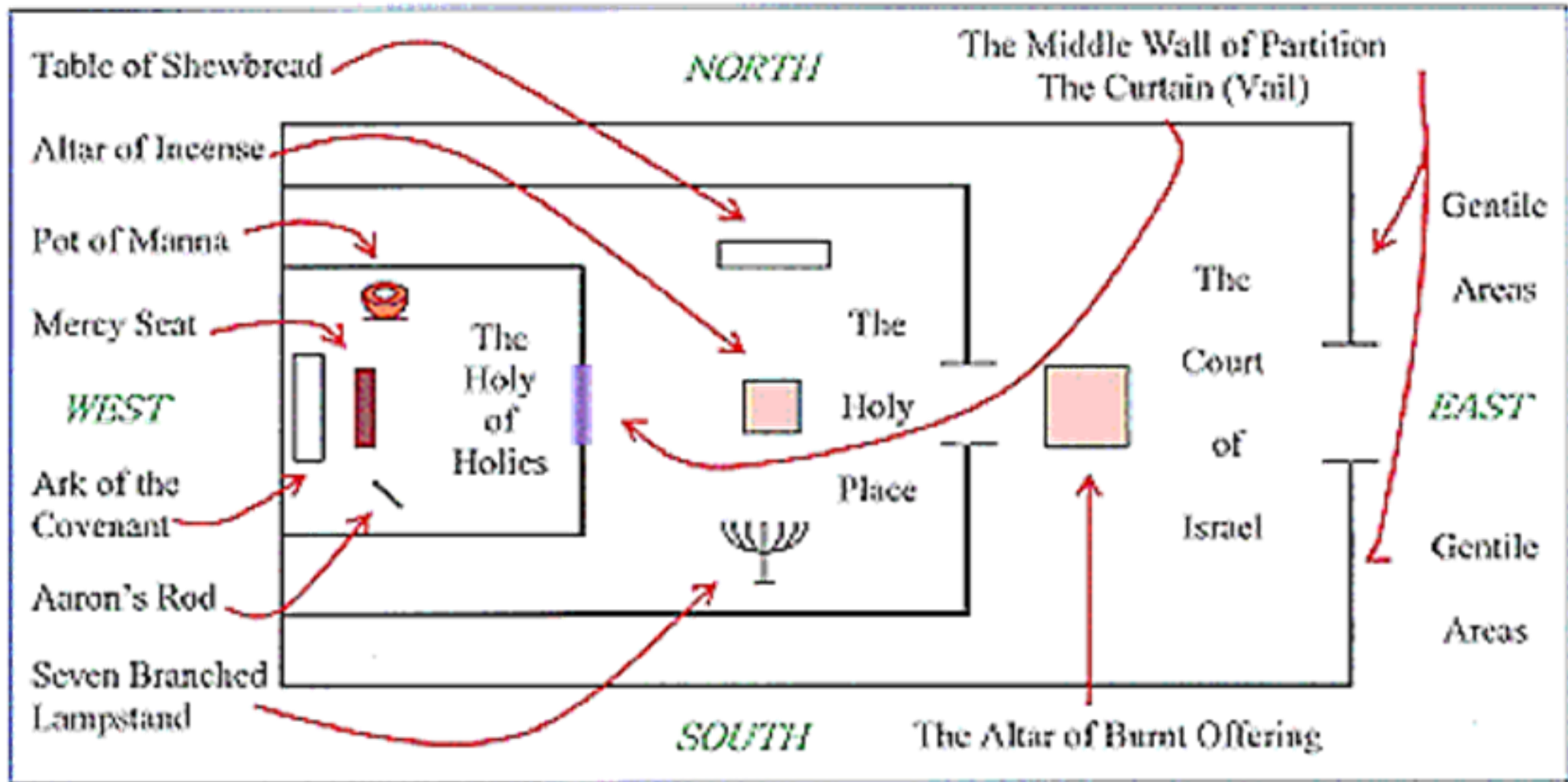


Средняя часть  
("Церковь")



Притвор







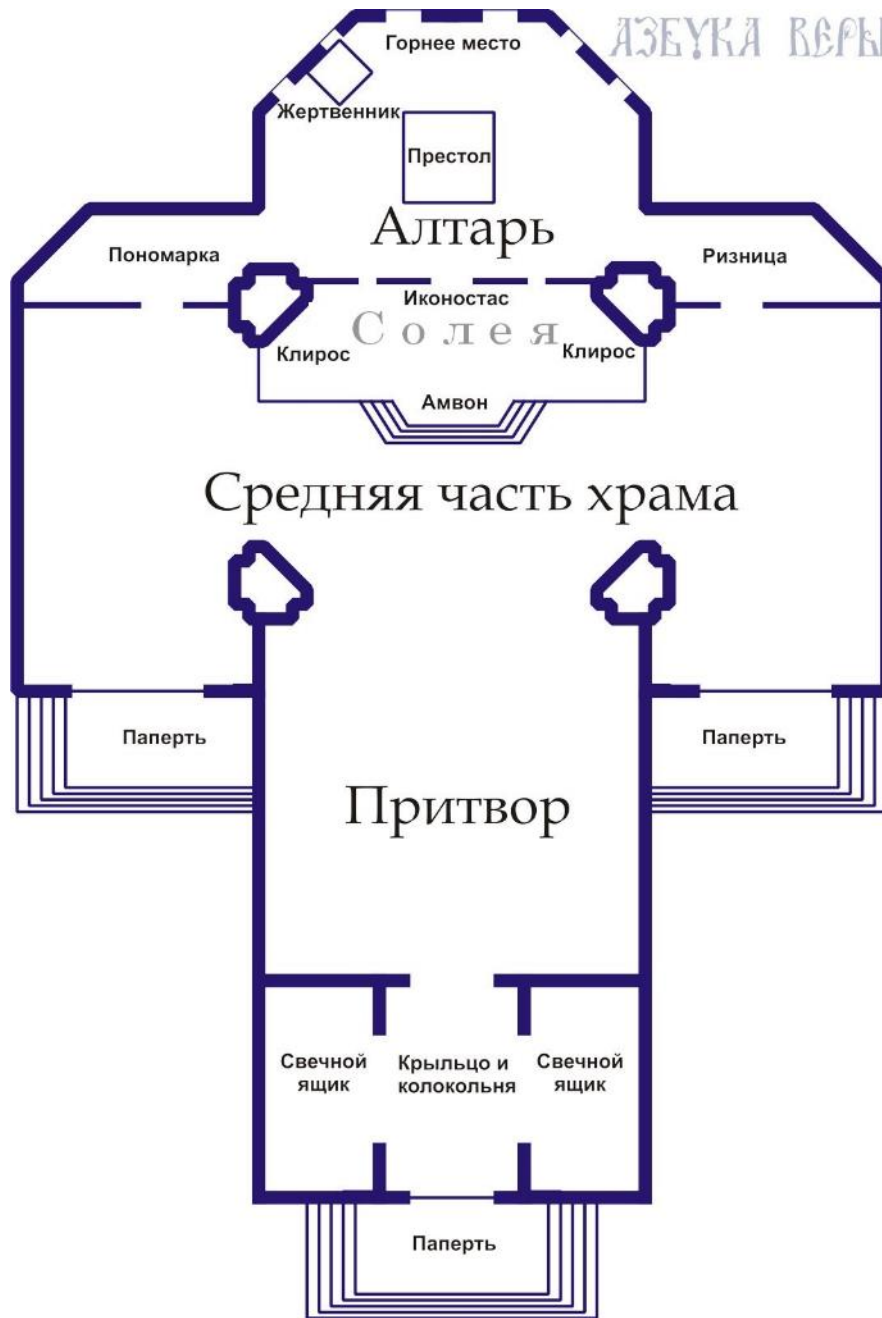
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