

# Peace and Prayer through Icons

*Journey of a young apprentice iconographer, Part 2.*

## Icon of St. Christopher

Through the hand of a young apprentice iconographer, as his second icon

**1. What do you like most about writing or painting icons?** It's peaceful, calming and done patiently.

**2. How did you decide which icon to write or paint?** I didn't want to do Jesus or Mary yet thinking maybe I'm not ready for that.

**3. What do you like about writing or painting icons?** I like the type of work, how I feel about it, and that I can express feelings. It is not just getting ideas from my head. It comes to me, just like that, and I like to bring it to life with art.

**4. How did you get started with this icon?** I searched for an icon of St. Christopher online. There were several but then there was one that caught my eye. I used it as a general idea and then adapted it. I didn't make a copy of it, but used it as a starting point and then developed.

**5. How did your teacher explain which types of colors are normally used in icons?**

My teacher said that each color means something. Everyone wears clothes in a color that's special for them. I will learn more as I go on.

**6. How do you portray the holiness of the saints you are depicting, in addition to their physical characteristics? In some cases, a halo can depict holiness.** To portray holiness, as you said, I added a halo around the head of each of two of the figures - that is one way (smiling).



**7. Was there anything in particular about your teacher or his teachings that you liked most?** There was no single thing. It was an overall liking. He is calm. He explains everything and I can tell that he loves doing this.

**8. When did you realize that this is something you might continue doing?** It was in the middle of doing this icon, yes, right in the middle, that it just came to me; that maybe one day, I can do this and it will be something really good for me, and for other people to see it, and have a good feeling for the peacefulness. Yes, it was right in the middle of doing this icon.

**9. Why do you like writing or painting icons?** I feel peaceful and I think this is some way to express myself and my personality.

### Interview with Chris, the Young Apprentice Iconographer

**10. What do you see happening with your iconography in the future?** I still want to continue learning other forms of art. And then, we'll see.

**Question of the young apprentice: What is the topic of this lesson?** This lesson is about peacefulness and prayer through iconography. Praying is not just reciting predetermined prayers, that's one way of starting to pray. Praying can be putting your talents to use to bring yourself and others closer to God. This lesson is to demonstrate to other young people, with you as an example, that whatever their talents may be, they can develop them to become more peaceful within themselves, help bring that peacefulness to others, and become closer to God.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Color the icon  
of the  
St. Christopher

## ICON

The icon is an image drawn and painted to show Bible scenes from the life of Jesus Christ, major events in the life of the Church and saints. An icon shows us both the saint's physical appearance and spiritual qualities. The priest blesses the icon and it is an important part of prayer in our church and home. When we pray in front of an icon, we ask the saints to help and guide us. The icon is a holy message delivered through the hand of the iconographer.



## Questions for Teenagers

Please read the interview on the first page and then think about these questions.

1. Have you ever noticed the icons in your church?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Did any one particular icon impress you most?  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What aspects of this icon got your attention the most?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Did the icon give you a feeling of peace and contemplation?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 5) Do you have special talents or areas of interest that you would like to develop in school? What are they and what do you enjoy about them?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Do these talents and activities bring you a calming feeling and a feeling of accomplishment?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Why do you think it's important to have your mind at peace before trying to develop your talents and express your feelings?  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. What do you think of how the young apprentice iconographer is starting to develop his talents?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ST. CHRISTOPHER** – The name Christopher comes from the Greek word *Christophoros* meaning *Christ-bearer*. This is because St. Christopher, a man who was very strong, carried Christ as a child across a turbulent river. Even though Christ was a small child, He was heavy because He was carrying the weight of all the world's troubles. St. Christopher teaches us that, just as he carried Christ, we also have to carry or bear our own troubles calmly, with hope. This is called, to bear our cross. In the icon, we see St. Christopher carrying Christ as a child, and Christ is holding a globe. The Feast of St. Christopher is celebrated on May 9.

## PRAYER

*I lift up my eyes to the hills.  
From whence does my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
who made heaven and earth.  
(Psalm 121)*

# Peace and Prayer through Icons -

Journey of a young apprentice iconographer – Part 2.  
{Teacher's Edition}

## Lesson Objective:

For children and teenagers gain an understanding, through the experiences of the young apprentice iconographer, of the role of icons in providing a sense of peace that is conducive to prayer, and to see an example of how to develop one's God-given talents. Another objective is to gain an overview of the concept of an icon and of the life of St. Christopher.

## Introduction:



Introduce the concept of icons and the role of the iconographer in the Orthodox Church.

**Explanation.** The icon is an image drawn and painted to show Bible scenes from the life of Jesus Christ, major events in the life of the Church and saints. An icon shows us both the saint's physical appearance and spiritual qualities. The priest blesses the icon and it is an important part of prayer in our church and home. When we pray in front of an icon, we ask the saints to help and guide us. The icon is a holy message delivered through the hand of the iconographer.

## Interview:

Read the interview on the first page aloud in class. Have one student read the question and other students take turns reading the answers.

## Activity for young children:

Ask the children to color the icon of St. Christopher.

## Activity for teenagers:

Ask the teenagers to read the interview on the first page. Then read each of the questions for teenagers on the second page, pausing after each one to discuss their answers, from the perspective of their own talents and experiences.

## St. Christopher:

Describe highlights of the life of St. Christopher.

**Explanation.** The name Christopher comes from the Greek word *Christophoros* meaning Christ-bearer. This is because St. Christopher, a man who was very strong, carried Christ as a child across a turbulent river. Even though Christ was a small child, He was heavy because He was carrying the weight of all the world's troubles. St. Christopher teaches us that, just as he carried Christ, we also have to carry or bear our own troubles calmly, with hope. This is called, to bear our cross. In the icon, we see St. Christopher carrying Christ as a child, and Christ is holding a globe. The Feast of St. Christopher is celebrated on May 9.

## Prayer:

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121)

**Explanation.** This prayer should help young people find a sense of hope and direction in their lives, and in the decisions they make. It should help them understand that the Lord is always there to help us. The hills represent looking upward in hope to receive help and guidance from above, from our Lord, who created heaven and earth.