

*World Faiths Today Series*

*Exploring*  
*the* **Orthodox**  
**Church**



*Teachers' Handbook*

World Faiths Today Series

# Exploring the Orthodox Church

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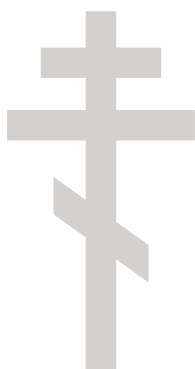
Illustrated by Phillip Vernon



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In the World Faiths Today Series, Rees and Sara learn about the major world faiths in their own country. The seven stories in the series are:

- Exploring Islam
- Exploring Judaism
- Exploring the Parish Church
- Exploring the Orthodox Church
  - Exploring Hinduism
  - Exploring Buddhism
  - Exploring Sikhism



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## Exploring the Orthodox Church

### The story

Rees and Sara have two Christian school friends called Anna and Michael who introduce them to key beliefs and practices of the Eastern Orthodox Church. Anna and Michael's grandparents had grown up in Russia. When the children visit the Orthodox church, they hear the singing, savour the incense, and gaze at the beauty. They celebrate the festival of Easter, and learn about the significance of the midnight service. They study the icon screen and examine the detail of the icons, and listen to the stories behind the icons. They investigate Christian commitment to care for the disadvantaged by studying the activity of an Eastern Orthodox charity organisation in St Petersburg. They learn Christian commitment to development education by examining why Anna and Michael's family is so keen on 'Fairtrade' and 'Tradecraft'.

### The basics

There are a number of different strands within the Eastern Orthodox tradition of Christianity, just as there are a number of different denominations within the Western tradition (like Catholics, Anglicans, Methodists, and so on). The two strands of the Orthodox tradition best known are the Russian Orthodox Church and the Greek Orthodox Church. Other strands include the American Orthodox Church and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. As these names show, the strands are named after countries. To the Western eye these different strands may look very much alike, but they are in fact separated by some very important differences.

Eastern Orthodox Christians believe in:

- one God, who is understood through the persons of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit;
- the opportunity of redemption for human beings, made possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, through which the relationship between human beings and God is re-established;
- the authority of scripture and tradition;
- the importance of the saints who are still active in heaven, and with whom it is possible to connect;
- the aim of mystical union with God.

In their religious practices, Eastern Orthodox Christians place emphasis on the sacraments (Holy Mysteries) through which human beings are drawn into a closer relationship with God. The sacraments are:

- baptism: usually infant baptism;
- chrismation: an anointing with oil which follows baptism, and admits a person fully into the Eastern Orthodox community;
- communion: viewed as the most important sacrament, which can be shared by those who have undergone baptism and chrismation;
- unction: the anointing of the sick;
- confession: involves confession of one's wrongdoings to a priest, who pronounces God's absolution, and usually takes place before the sacrament of communion;
- marriage;
- ordination: for those called to be priests.

## Chapter I Visiting the Orthodox Church

### Eastern Orthodox Church in Wales

When families have moved to Wales and England from countries where the Orthodox Tradition has been strong, it is natural that they have wanted to bring their distinctive Christian tradition with them. This has meant establishing churches and ensuring that such churches can be properly serviced by Orthodox priests. In the story, Anna and Michael's grandparents had grown up in Russia, and their parents had remained loyal to the Russian Orthodox Church. Now living in Wales, this meant that they had to travel a considerable distance to attend their Sunday service.

Some argue that the Orthodox Tradition was established in Wales in the very early days of Christianity before the Western Tradition became dominant there. This view is consistent with the argument that St David, the Patron Saint of Wales, was consecrated Bishop by the Patriarchs of Jerusalem. When the Great Schism between east and west occurred in 1054, the Christian Church in Britain, being under Rome, became clearly separated from the Orthodox Church.

Some trace an important step in the re-establishment of the Orthodox Tradition in Wales to 1973 when Barnabas was ordained priest in Paris and returned to Wales to live the monastic life and to engage in mission to the Welsh nation. Archimandrite Barnabas died in 1996 at the age of 80.

The Orthodox Church re-emerged in modern Wales at the close of the nineteenth century with the establishment of St Nicholas' Church near the docks in Cardiff by the Greek shipping families. This remains the home of the oldest and largest Orthodox community in Wales, serving possibly 2,000 parishioners, mainly of Cypriot origin, in south-east Wales.

Other significant orthodox churches in Wales include the Church of All Saints of Wales in Blaenau Ffestiniog, the Chapel of St David and St Nicholas in Llanelli, and the Orthodox community of St Zechariah and St Elizabeth who worship in the Church of St Mary in Swansea.

### Orthodox leaders in Wales

In 1979 another Welshman (and Welsh-speaker), Iqoumen Deiniol, was ordained as an Orthodox priest to undertake mission in Wales. Father Deiniol established the congregation of Orthodox Christians who worship at Blaenau Ffestiniog. Archimandrite Deiniol is priest of the Church of All Saints of Wales and abbot of the Monastery of

the Church of the Holy Protection, both in Blaenau Ffestiniog. Services are largely in Welsh, but also in Greek, English, and Slavonic. Rees and Sara visit the Church of All Saints of Wales and are made very welcome by Father Deiniol.

### Designing an Orthodox Church

Design and atmosphere are very important aspects of an Orthodox Church. The church building and the worship conducted in the church are intended to offer people a glimpse of heaven. The sweet smell of the incense and the highly distinctive sound of the music are all intended to transport the worshippers to the gateway of heaven.

The east end of the church (the end where the sun rises each morning) is separated from the rest of the church by a great screen. To the east of the screen is heaven where the walls and ceiling are richly decorated, often with golden stars. The screen (known as the iconostasis) is where the icons are displayed. Doors in the screen allow the priest to pass to and fro between heaven and earth, and allow the people to glimpse the mystery of heaven behind the icons. The priest is moving constantly between heaven and earth, drawing people closer to God through administering the sacraments.

Traditionally, the main body of the Orthodox church is kept uncluttered by furniture. The congregation stands for the service. There are seats placed around the edges of the church for the elderly and for the infirm.

### Ritual within the Orthodox church

Rees and Sara were introduced to three important aspects of the ritual of the Orthodox community when they entered the church.

First, they made the sign of the cross in the traditional way across their bodies. They held the thumb and first two fingers of their right hand bunched together, and held their other two fingers close to their palm. They brought their thumb and first two fingers to their forehead, then to their chest, then to the right shoulder, and last of all to the left shoulder. Symbolically, the sign of the cross is very significant in the Eastern Orthodox Church. It reflects the central Christian belief in God as Trinity: there is one God whose nature and activity is best understood through the persons of God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Spirit. The shape of the cross is a reminder of God's pivotal redemptive work in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, which allowed channels between God and human beings to be opened once again. Christians show

their commitment to this relationship with their whole selves by touching their forehead (mind), heart (soul), and shoulders (strength).

Secondly, they lit a candle which they found at the back of the church and carried the lighted candle slowly to the front of the church. They placed their candle before the screen alongside candles already placed there by other members of the congregation. Light is an important Christian symbol, reflecting the light Jesus Christ brought and still brings into the world.

Thirdly, they kissed one of the special icons placed by the great screen, before walking back to take their place in the body of the church. Devotion is

given to the saints in heaven who are depicted in the icons ; devotion is not given to the physical images. The physical images provide a connection between heaven and earth.

Orthodox Christians believe that God makes use of material resources as a means of drawing humans closer to God (for example, icons, water, oil, bread, and wine). It is unnecessary to explain exactly how this happens; it is a Holy Mystery. Orthodox Christianity places emphasis on truth found in experience rather than complex theological arguments designed to rationalise and explain how the Mysteries work.

## Activities

### ***Mix and match***

Cut out the nine boxes on the 'Write a story' worksheet, and then cut each box into three sections: the heading, the information, and the picture. Mix up all the sections and place them in an envelope. Divide pupils into pairs or groups and give each pair or group an envelope. Pupils need to match heading, information, and picture correctly.

Do the task on the 'Write a story' worksheet (the story can easily be adapted to another genre such as a diary entry or newspaper article, if needed).

### ***Visiting an Orthodox church***

Visit an Orthodox church and identify the places mentioned in the story. How does it differ from the places in the book and how is it the same?

### ***Using senses in worship***

Complete the 'Investigate the senses' worksheet. Some Christian denominations make more use of the senses than other Christian denominations in their worship. The Orthodox Church believes that using the senses is an important part of worship because they can help to draw people closer to God.

Explore with pupils the worship of another Christian denomination which makes less use of the senses, for example, a plainer non-Conformist (Free Church) tradition (where candles, incense, images etc. do not feature). Arrange a visit to a chapel so that pupils can compare these very different approaches to worship.

## Chapter 2 Celebrating Easter

Easter is the main festival of the Christian year – Jesus' death and resurrection lie at the heart of Christianity. Like the Eastern Orthodox Christmas, the Eastern Orthodox Easter falls at a different time from the Western Church because it follows a different calendar: the Eastern Orthodox Church uses the Julian calendar while Western churches use the Gregorian calendar.

### Preparing for Easter

As with many other Christian churches, the celebrations of Easter Sunday take place after an important period of preparation. Many Orthodox Christians fast from certain foods during the 40-day period of Lent (for example, meat, eggs, and dairy products). Fasting is important in the Orthodox Church because it helps to develop self-discipline.

In addition, there are services taking place in the week leading up to Easter Sunday, which mark important events in the biblical story leading up to the empty tomb. For example:

- Palm Sunday is the Sunday before Easter Sunday. Crosses made from palm leaves are distributed among the congregation to remember Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem when palm branches were laid in Jesus' path.
- Great Thursday recalls the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet at the Last Supper as an act of humility and service. In the

Orthodox Church, bishops will re-enact this by washing the feet of their priests.

- Great Friday marks the day when Jesus was crucified and died. In Orthodox churches, a cloth bearing an icon of Jesus is processed and placed in the middle of the church. Some of the rituals are the same as funeral rituals, for example, gathering around the deceased with candles, kissing the icon of Jesus, and bringing flowers.
- Great Saturday marks the day after Jesus was crucified. Just before midnight, the cloth bearing the icon of Jesus is taken out of the church, at which point the church symbolises the empty tomb.

### Easter Sunday

Before midnight, there is a procession led by the priest outside the church. At midnight, the priest chants the Easter hymn three times announcing the resurrection of Jesus and his victory over death. The doors are flung open and the priest and people enter the building. This symbolises the opening of the sealed tomb and the discovery that it is empty. The darkened church becomes flooded with light. This symbolises the light of the resurrection and the life it brings. Throughout the Easter period, people greet one another with the words, 'Christ is risen!' followed by the response, 'He is risen indeed!'

## Activities

### ***The feelings of Easter***

Easter celebrations in the Orthodox Church stimulate a number of different emotions, and those participating symbolically walk with and feel with the very first Christians during this period. Explore with pupils the possible feelings of the very first Christians at the crucifixion and burial of Jesus. Make a list of emotions. Then, explore with pupils the possible feelings of the very first Christians when they discover the resurrection of Jesus. Make a list of emotions.

Create a poem, using these emotions. The following structure may be useful:

From (crucifixion and burial emotion) to (resurrection emotion),  
 From (crucifixion and burial emotion) to (resurrection emotion),  
 From (crucifixion and burial emotion) to (resurrection emotion),  
 From (crucifixion and burial emotion) to (resurrection emotion).

Christ is risen!

He is risen indeed!

Complete the 'Make a twist-out card' worksheet and include the poem on the card.

### ***The meaning of Easter***

Today, Easter means different things to different people. Conduct a simple survey of key stage 2 pupils to discover what it means to pupils in your school. Ask pupils to finish ONE of the following.

For me, the most important thing about Easter is ...

OR

Easter is not important to me because ...

After completing the survey, devise categories into which the responses to the first question can be placed. These categories can be detailed (such as eating chocolate eggs, Easter egg hunts, the death/resurrection of Jesus, new life, holidays etc.) or more general (such as religious/non-religious). Do the same with the second question.

Count the number of responses in each category and display the results in a number of different formats; for example, a numerical table, a bar chart, or a pie chart.

The results from this survey could be used as part of a school assembly about the meaning of Easter for young people today. You could also ask key stage 2 pupils in neighbouring schools to complete the survey and feed back the results to you, if you want a larger number of responses. The survey can be made more complex by adding additional fields such as male/female and Christian/non-Christian.

In the story book, Rees and Sara take part in a very powerful celebration of Easter, rich in symbolism. Complete the 'Celebrating Easter' worksheet about Orthodox Easter celebrations, and explore the symbolism with pupils.

### ***Linking practice with story***

Make links between the celebration of the Orthodox Easter today and the biblical accounts of the death and resurrection of Jesus. This can be approached in different ways, for example, write individual aspects of the celebrations on small cards and do the same with relevant parts of the celebrations today. Ask pupils to match up the celebration cards with the story cards. Suggested content for the cards:

#### **story**

the loss and sadness  
 felt by Jesus' friends  
 after his death

the sealed tomb in  
 which Jesus was  
 buried

Jesus' friends going  
 to visit the tomb on  
 Easter morning

Jesus' friends discover  
 the stone rolled away  
 and enter the tomb

the joy of the  
 resurrection of  
 Jesus

#### **celebration**

the darkened church

the closed doors of the  
 church

the procession around  
 the church

the opening of the  
 church doors and  
 the procession into  
 the building

the church flooded  
 with light and  
 the greetings,  
 'Christ is risen!'  
 'He is risen indeed!'



## Chapter 3 Studying the icons

### What is an icon?

In the Orthodox Church, icons are religious pictures used as an aid to prayer. Icons are made of the saints, Jesus, the apostles, angels, and scenes from the Bible, and these can be found in the Orthodox home as well in the Orthodox church. The Orthodox Church believes that God the Father and God the Holy Spirit should never be directly portrayed in icons. However, God the Son is portrayed in the incarnated form of Jesus Christ – common representations in icons show a small Christ with Saint Mary (page 17 of the story book) and Christ as Pancrator (page 9). These two important icons are usually placed on either side of the middle doors in the icon screen (page 3).

Icons can be made of different materials, but they must always be flat or flattened. This prevents them from becoming three-dimensional statues to which the offering of reverence and devotion would be inappropriate. It is important to note that Orthodox Christians do not worship the icons; they show reverence and devotion to the figures portrayed in the icons. God alone is worshipped. The figures represented in the icons are in heaven and the physical icons offer a doorway to heaven, so when the Orthodox children in the story say that the saints in their icons are 'really here with us', it is understood in this sense. The figures and scenes depicted in the icons look unusual; they are never depicted in a realistic way. That is because they are highly symbolic and they show the characters in their heavenly forms. The haloes around their heads indicate God's presence with them.

### The icon screen

The paintings on the doors of the icon screen are shown on page 12. These paintings depict the Annunciation (when the Angel Gabriel appeared to Saint Mary to announce that she would give birth to the Son of God) and the four Gospel writers, which show the centrality of the teaching in the four Gospels. Together with the two icons of Jesus Christ on either side of the middle doors, Orthodox Christians are reminded that the way to God is through Jesus Christ, who has opened up the doors between heaven and earth.

### Saint Anna

Saint Anna was the mother of Saint Mary, the Mother of God. This tradition is found in the apocryphal Gospel of James. Anna was married to Joachim, and the couple were childless. After a visit from an angel, Anna gave birth to Mary, whom she dedicated to

the service of God in the Temple. Various aspects of this story are often depicted in icons. One popular depiction of Saint Anna is shown on page 13 of the story, where she is holding a small Mary. In other icons, the small Mary holds a small Jesus.

### Saint Cadwaladr

Saint Cadwaladr lived in the seventh century CE, and was the last Celtic King of Britain. We have few details relating to his life and death, but the general points presented in the story provide a useful summary of the main traditions. Saint Cadwaladr is venerated in the Orthodox Church because he represents the ideal of Christian kingship which serves God and God's people. In the Mediaeval source, The Triads, Cadwaladr is identified as one of the three 'blessed'.

The red dragon on Cadwaladr's standard was used by Henry Tudor, who claimed to be a descendant of Cadwaladr, and it is still an important symbol in Wales today.

Saint Cadwaladr is associated with Llangadwaladr Church (originally called Eglwys Ael), where tradition records that he was buried.

### Saint Melangell

A fuller version of the story about the seventh-century Saint Melangell and the Prince of Powys is provided in one of the worksheets.

### Saint Mary as Theotokos

The icon of St Mary on page 17 depicts her as Theotokos (the mother of God), because she carries a small Jesus. Mary is called the 'mother of God' in the sense that she gave birth to the incarnate Son of God. The incarnation lies at the heart of Orthodox Christianity, and everything else should be understood in relation to it. The symbolism of the careful positioning of icons in Orthodox churches reflects this alongside the symbolism of the rituals.

Due to her status as 'mother of God', Mary is particularly important in the Orthodox tradition, and she has a number of major feast days dedicated to her in the Orthodox year.

### The iconographer

Icons are said to be 'written' rather than 'painted'. The writing of an icon is an act of worship and devotion on the part of the iconographer, which is demonstrated by the preparation and approach taken. For example, the iconographer fasts and prays before starting and will not sign the icon. The iconographer must follow strict rules which have been passed down through the centuries. These rules determine every aspect of the icon, for

example, facial shapes, features, and expressions, gestures, colours, and accompanying objects. For this reason, the characters depicted in icons should be easily recognisable to those brought up in the Orthodox tradition.

## Activities

### ***Seeing the bigger picture***

Ask pupils to share some of their favourite photographs of people with the class (the photographs may show family, friends, themselves, or people they admire). Pupils need to be able to explain:

- who is in the photograph;
- why they like the photograph;
- how they feel when they look at the photograph;
- where the people in the photograph are now.

Why do people take photographs? Photographs of people are more than just pictures – they mean something to those who own them.

Link this to the icons in the story book, using the information provided in the teachers' notes. In this case, the people shown on the icons are special

people from Christian history. Today, Orthodox Christians believe that the people in the icons are in heaven. Praying before the icons is like looking through a window and getting a glimpse of heaven. Icons are used in Orthodox worship, to draw people closer to God.

Complete the 'Make an Icon' worksheet.

### ***Signs of something special***

Complete 'The story of Saint Melangell' worksheet. Look carefully at the reassembled story of Saint Melangell and the image of Saint Melangell in the story book (other images of Saint Melangell can be found on the internet). What signs or clues can you spot which show that Saint Melangell is very special?

## Chapter 4 Helping others

### Orthodox charity

Like other Christian traditions, the Eastern Orthodox Church lives out its faith in the world by providing help and support to those in need. This is rooted in biblical example and teaching. In the story, charity is seen as a response to the most important biblical commandments to love God and to love your neighbour.

This chapter is based closely on the work of the Pokrov Community in St Petersburg, Russia, which cites these commandments in relation to its mission. There are many other Eastern Orthodox charities involved in Christian service in various parts of the world, which can be researched on the internet.

### The Pokrov Community

The Pokrov Community became a registered charity

in 2000, and focuses its work on helping the elderly, homeless, and sick of St Petersburg. Michael and Anna's Aunt Natasha is a member of that community which comprises mostly women. The charity has a non-church status which has helped it to work collaboratively with both religious and non-religious organisations.

Members come from a variety of backgrounds, bringing with them various skills which they can contribute to the Community. Some are doctors and nurses; others are architects, builders, lawyers, designers, directors, and photographers who can work as volunteers, offering their time as well as their skills.

## Activities

### Write to Aunt Natasha

In the story book, the children receive a letter from Aunt Natasha who belongs to a special community in St Petersburg, Russia. Write a letter to Aunt Natasha, thanking her for the letter. You may wish to mention some of the following things:

- what you found interesting in her letter;
- any questions you have which you would like answered;
- examples of things you have done recently (or intend to do) to help other people (Rees and Sara decided to visit their grandmother who had been ill).

### What are our needs?

Identify a person's physical needs (for example, food, water, sleep, clothes, medical care, warmth, and money). Identify a person's other needs which are not physical (for example, friendship, love, guidance, feeling valued, feeling of belonging/purpose and meaning in life).

In the story, the community looks after the

physical needs of sick, elderly and homeless people in St Petersburg and also the community looks after their non-physical needs. What does the community do to look after the physical needs of the people they help? What does the community do to look after the non-physical needs of the people they help?

After reading Aunt Natasha's letter, Rees and Sara decide to visit their grandmother who has been ill. How can Rees and Sara help with their grandmother's physical needs? How can Rees and Sara help with their grandmother's non-physical needs?

### Research an Eastern Orthodox charity

The Eastern Orthodox charity organisation in the story is based on the work of the Pokrov community in St Petersburg, Russia. Search for the 'Pokrov community' using the internet, and find out more about its work and how projects are developing.

## Chapter 5 Fairtrade and Traidcraft

Christmas is often associated with the giving and receiving of presents and cards, Christmas trees, decorations, and carols. This chapter reminds readers that, from a Christian perspective, Christmas celebrates the lowly birth of Jesus whose mission was to the poor and socially disadvantaged. Readers also learn how Anna and Michael's family follows the example and teaching of Jesus in their celebration of Christmas through the theme of fairtrade.

### Fairtrade

The Fairtrade logo is now a familiar label which appears on many different types of food products such as fruit, vegetables, coffee, and wine as well as non-food products such as cotton and cut flowers. Buying a product carrying the Fairtrade logo is an assurance that the consumer is purchasing a product which conforms to specific basic trading standards which are regularly monitored. Fairtrade labelling first appeared in the Netherlands in 1988.

### Traidcraft

Traidcraft is both a fairtrading company and a development charity which was founded in 1979.

Traidcraft's Foundation Principles underpin its work and these are based on Christian principles; in particular, the Christian principles of 'love', 'justice', and 'service' as exemplified by the life and teachings of Jesus. Like the Pokrov Community in the previous chapter, Traidcraft's work is motivated by the biblical commandment to love your neighbour. Like the Pokrov Community, this is translated as practical service to others and concerns spiritual and moral issues as well as material issues. Christians believe

that all human beings are made in the image of God (creation story in Genesis) and it is fair that everyone is provided with opportunities to live to their full potential.

Traidcraft's work in fairtrade focuses on establishing long-term partnerships with smaller producers and helping those producers create stable and sustainable businesses. Traidcraft understands sustainability in environmental terms as well as in human terms, and helps its partners to pursue 'responsible stewardship' in relation to the environment.

### Christian service

One of the main aims of this chapter is to portray Christian service through learning about fairtrade. The principle and practice of fairtrade is supported by members of many different faith groups and also those who belong to no faith group. Although the general reasons given for supporting initiatives like fairtrade may be broadly similar for those involved, more specific beliefs and values often underpin these. In this case, the focus is on an Eastern Orthodox family and Traidcraft, both of whom are influenced by distinctively Christian beliefs which provide meaning for their actions in the world. Relevant specific Christian beliefs cited include:

- the biblical commandment to love your neighbour;
- following the example set by Jesus' life and teachings and his work with the poor and socially disadvantaged members of society;
- all human beings are made in the image of God.

## Activities

### *Caring for others*

Using the internet, learn about the work of Traidcraft in more detail. The following questions will help to focus the activity:

- Does Traidcraft have a mission statement which explains what it tries to do?
- Name the projects in which Traidcraft is involved.
- In which areas of the world does Traidcraft work?
- How can people support Traidcraft?

Some pupils could be challenged further :

- Is there anything on the website which points to Traidcraft's Christian background?

### *Giving at Christmas*

Explore what presents pupils want at Christmas,

why they want them, and how they feel when they receive them. Do they know anything about where they are made and who makes them?

Giving presents is a popular tradition at Christmas. The three wise men offered gifts to Jesus in the Christmas story. These presents were not ordinary presents but rather gifts to show that the three wise men had understood who Jesus was. Also, there is the gift-giving St Nicholas who used his wealth to help the poor.





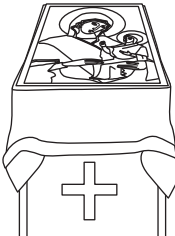




In the story book, Anna and Michael's family believes that Christmas is a time to help the poor and the disadvantaged, following the example of Jesus. This is why they try to encourage people to buy fairtrade products at Christmas from their corner shop.

## Keywords

<b>abbess</b>	a female in charge of an abbey of nuns	<b>priest</b>	an ordained minister, responsible for administering the sacraments
<b>Archimandrite</b>	in this case, an honorary title of a monastic priest	<b>icon</b>	in the Orthodox Church, a picture of religious significance (showing Jesus, the saints, and biblical scenes) used in devotional prayer
<b>fairtrade</b>	trading which meets specific basic trading standards	<b>sacrament</b>	a Christian ritual believed to have been instituted by Jesus which uses outward physical elements such as water, bread, and wine as a sign of inner spiritual grace
<b>fast</b>	abstinence from all or some types of food/drink for religious purposes for a specific period	<b>saint</b>	a person of exceptional holiness, living with God in heaven, and a focus for religious devotion
<b>Gregorian calendar</b>	the most popular calendar used in the world today, named after Pope Gregory XIII and a reform of the Julian Calendar	<b>Saint Anna</b>	the mother of Saint Mary
<b>halo</b>	a circle of light around the head of Jesus and saints, depicting holiness (God's presence)	<b>Saint Cadwaladr</b>	the last Celtic King of Britain and Patron Saint of the Wales Orthodox mission
<b>hermitage</b>	a monastery	<b>Saint Mary</b>	the mother of God (i.e. God in the incarnated form of Jesus)
<b>iconographer</b>	an artist who specialises in making icons of Jesus and the saints in the Orthodox Church	<b>Saint Melangell</b>	a seventh-century abbess who was given land by the Prince of Powys to build a hermitage in the well-known story about Saint Melangell and the hare
<b>iconostasis</b>	screen separating the main part of the church (earth) from the altar (heaven)		
<b>Julian calendar</b>	introduced by Julius Caesar and still used in some parts of the world today as well as in the Orthodox Church		

# Write a story

Imagine you have visited an Orthodox Church with a friend who attends there. Write a story about it, giving details of all the places you visited and the things you saw there. The pictures and descriptions below will help you.

<p><b>icon screen</b></p> <p>The screen separates the area in which the altar is placed from the congregation. The doors and curtains are opened and closed at different times.</p> 	<p><b>icons</b></p> <p>Pictures of saints are on display to help people to pray. Haloes of light around the heads of the saints remind people of God's presence with the saints.</p> 	<p><b>choir</b></p> <p>Music is an important part of worship. The choir sings the words of the liturgy with the priest.</p> 
<p><b>candle stands</b></p> <p>As people enter they light a candle and place it in a special rack or a basin of sand. This candle is a symbol of their prayers.</p> 	<p><b>icon stand</b></p> <p>Some icons are at a low level for people to kiss as they enter the church.</p> 	<p><b>seats</b></p> <p>There are a few seats in the building but most of the people stand. It is thought important to stand when worshipping God.</p> 
<p><b>Bible</b></p> <p>To show how important the Bible is, it is carried around the people in a procession before it is read as part of the service.</p> 	<p><b>incense</b></p> <p>During the service the priest swings the thurible so that the smoke and smell of the incense is carried to every part of the building.</p> 	<p><b>robes</b></p> <p>The priest is dressed in rich robes as a symbol of the importance of the time of worship. These robes are only used during worship times.</p> 

# Investigate the senses

When Rees and Sara visited the Orthodox Church they needed to use all of their senses to fully appreciate what was happening. Read chapters 1 and 2 of the story again to find all the ways in which their senses were used.

**sight**



**hearing**



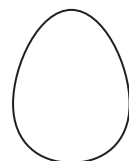
**smell**



**touch**



**taste**





# Make a twist-out card

Easter is the time of year when Christians remember that Jesus was put to death on the cross and rose to new life on Easter Sunday. Some Christians give cards at Easter with pictures of eggs as a symbol of new life.

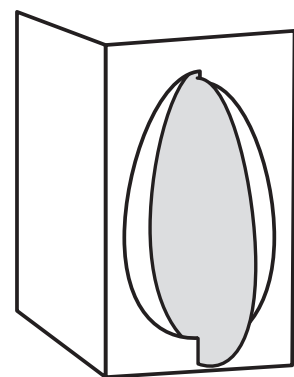
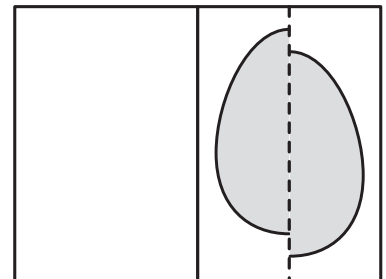
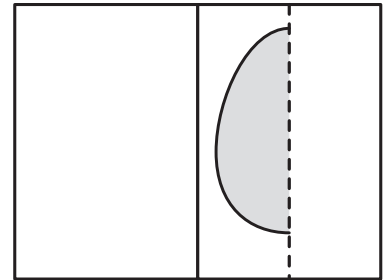
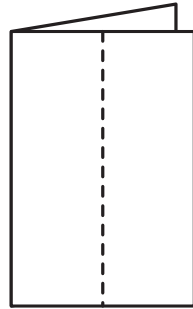
## You will need

sheet of A4 card  
cutting knife and mat

ruler  
pencils

## What to do

1. Fold the card in half. On the front, draw a faint pencil line down the centre.
2. Open out the card. On the front, draw half of an egg shape on one side of this line, beginning 1cm from the top and ending 2cm from the bottom. Cut the curved line with the blade.
3. Draw the other half of the egg shape on the other side of the line, beginning 2cm from the top and ending 1cm from the bottom. Cut this curved line.
4. Pull one side of the egg towards you and push the other side away, making creases where marked.
5. Decorate the egg shape by colouring it red or by drawing patterns.





# Easter eggs

In the Orthodox church, real hard-boiled eggs coloured red are served on Easter Day. The red colour is said to remind us of the blood of Christ. The eggs are usually prepared on the Thursday before Easter.

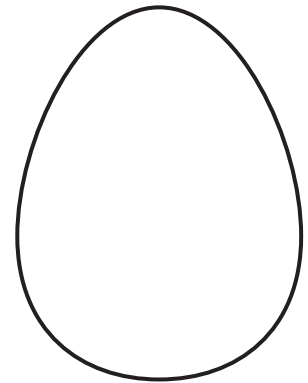
## You will need

uncooked eggs  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cup vinegar  
vegetable oil

water  
red food dye or colouring  
cotton balls and cloth

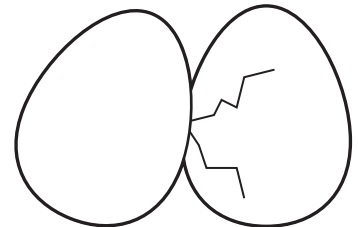
## What to do

1. Half fill a large pot with water. Add the red dye and vinegar to the water.
2. Put on plastic or rubber gloves before touching the uncooked eggs (for health and safety reasons). Carefully put the eggs into the water.
3. Bring the water to the boil and then lower the heat. Simmer for 15 minutes.
4. Ask an adult to remove the eggs from the boiling water.
5. Polish the cooked eggs with a cotton ball soaked in oil, then wipe each egg with a clean dry cloth.
6. Serve the eggs cold.



## A game to play

Lightly tap your egg against a friend's until one egg cracks. The person with the uncracked egg is the winner. Keep playing against other people to see how many eggs you can crack.



You can dye eggs in other colours too. Instead of using red dye, try some other natural ingredients for the colour of your choice.

**pale red:** fresh beets or cranberries, frozen raspberries

**light yellow:** orange or lemon peel, carrot tops, celery seed

**yellow:** ground turmeric

**orange:** yellow onion skins

**pale green:** spinach leaves

**green-gold:** Yellow Delicious apple peels

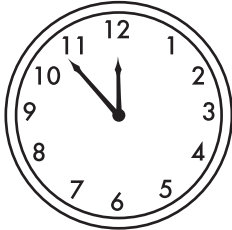
**beige to brown:** strong brewed coffee

**blue:** canned blueberries or red cabbage leaves

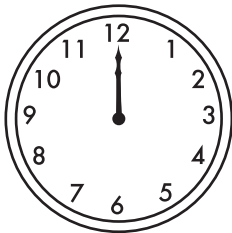
# Celebrating Easter

Read chapter 2 of *Exploring the Orthodox Church* to find out how Easter is celebrated. For each time given below, write or draw where the people are and what they do.

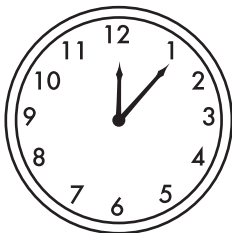
**Saturday night, just before midnight**



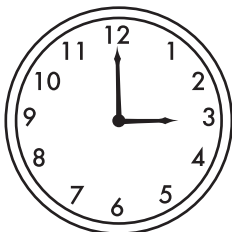
**midnight**



**Sunday morning, just after midnight**



**3:00 Sunday morning**



# Make an icon

An icon represents one of the saints of the church. It is a picture of a person who lived close to God. Icons are not decorations; they are used to bring people closer to God. The haloes of light painted around their heads are symbols of God's presence with the saints.

When an icon is made for the Orthodox Church, the iconographer (icon maker) first prays. The icon may be painted with a mixture of natural mineral colours, egg yolk and olive oil, so that it is made from animal, vegetable and mineral products (representing all parts of the world).

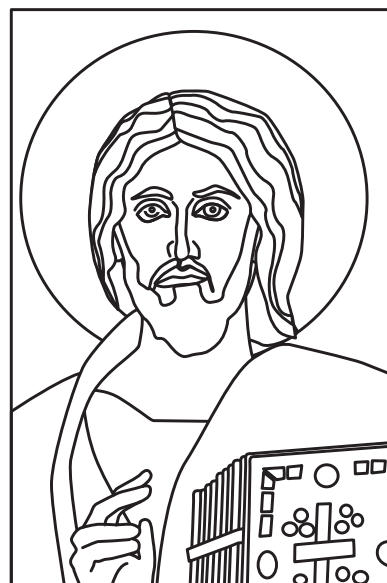
## You will need

wood or thick card  
brushes  
poster paints

white paint  
scrap paper and pencil  
PVA glue

## What to do

1. Prepare the wood or card by painting it with white emulsion or poster paint. (By doing this first, the colours in your painting will be clear.) Leave until dry.
2. Choose a person or saint to draw for your icon. Select someone who teaches people about God. Make sketches of how you want your icon to look.
3. Paint the picture. If appropriate, paint a gold halo around the head.
4. When the paint is completely dry, varnish it with a coat of PVA glue to add shine and to protect it.



# The story of Saint Melangell

This story has been printed in the wrong order. Cut out the boxes, read the story parts and arrange them in the correct order.

The hare disappeared into the undergrowth and as the riders started to follow, strange things happened. The dogs turned back in fear. The chief huntsman could not remove the horn from his lips, yet could not make any sound on it.

Prince Brochwell was impressed. He returned to his home without killing any animals that day. He gave to Melangell the valley as a place of prayer and refuge forever.

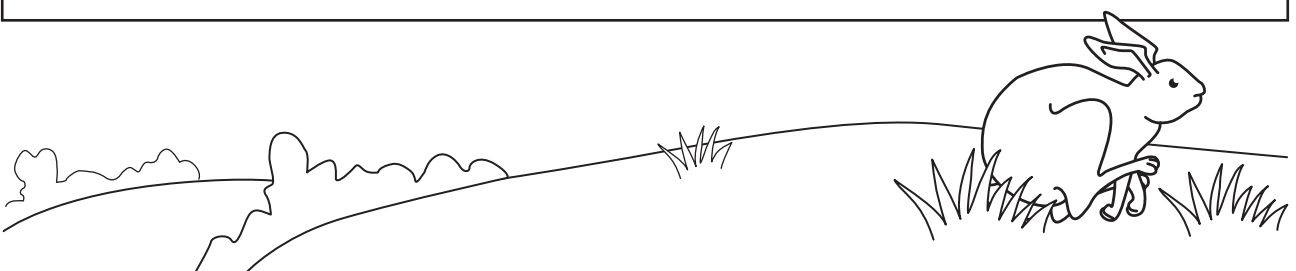
The huntsmen set off towards the small, wooded valley filled with wild game. They pushed their way through the thick, green undergrowth. Within minutes the dogs started barking as they caught the scent of a hare. The chief huntsman sounded the horn. The riders laughed at the thought of the sport to come.

To his surprise he found a clearing, with a young woman standing in the centre praying. The hare was crouched down at her feet for safety. Prince Brochwell felt a sense of great peace.

It was a fine day for hunting in the Pennant Valley in central Wales. Prince Brochwell, prince of Powys, called together his friends and huntsmen. 'Come hunt!' he called. 'Bring the dogs. Let us see what we can find.'

Prince Brochwell was a brave and proud man. He refused to show fear in front of his friends. He leaped from his horse, drew his sword and cut his way through the brambles and shrubs. What would he find?

Who was this woman? The prince questioned her and discovered she was the daughter of an Irish chieftain. When her father had arranged a marriage for her with an old warrior chieftain she had fled to Wales and instead had chosen a life of prayer, living in a cave in the Pennant Valley. As she prayed and grew closer to God, the animals had grown to trust her.



# Find out about the community

Read and think about chapter 4 of *Exploring the Orthodox Church* to answer these questions about the community to which Anna and Michael's aunt belongs.

1. In which Russian city is the community based?

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2. What commandment in the Bible is important to this charity organisation?

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3. Name two problems the hospital faces.

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4. How do the sisters care for the patients' physical health?

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5. How do the sisters care for the patients' spiritual health?

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6. How do they use some of the money that is donated to them?

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7. Name three ways the community helps elderly homeless people.

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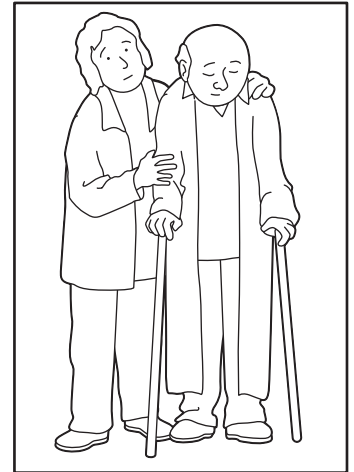
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8. How would you describe the people who work in the community?

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# Helping others

Think of different ways that our government or different charity organisations help the following people in need.

## old people



## sick people



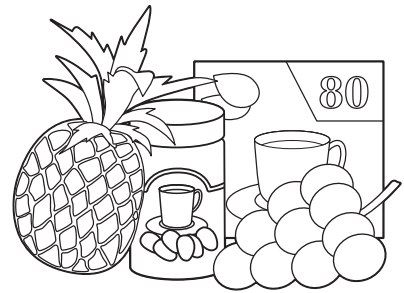
## homeless people



# Fairtrade food

Find out about the fairtrade food available at your local supermarket or shops.  
List all the products you can buy.

## Fairtrade products



Look at the food available. Look through recipe books. What could you prepare with just fairtrade products?

## Fairtrade recipe ideas

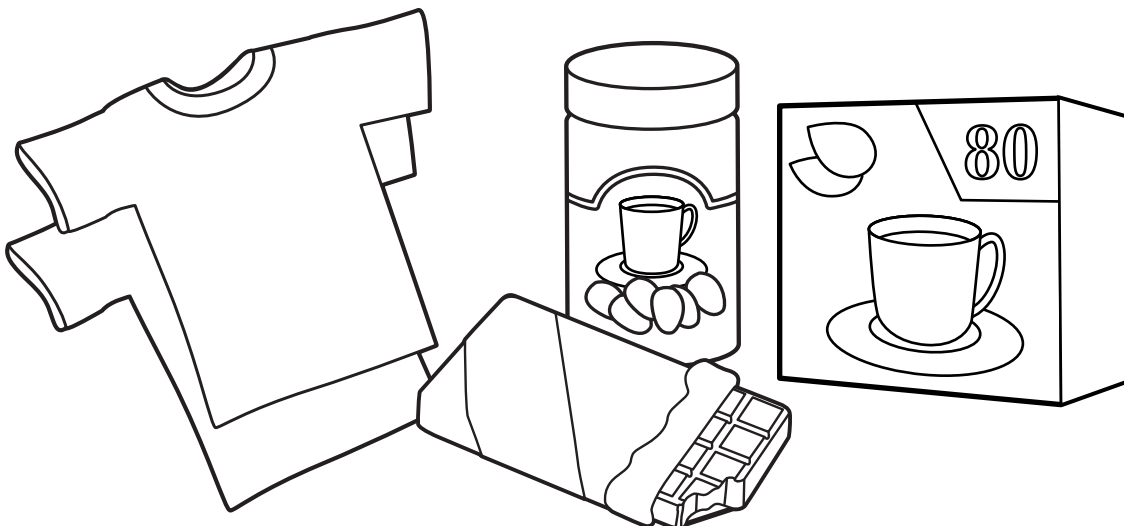
fruit salad  
chocolate dipped fruit



# Compose an acrostic

Compose an acrostic based on the words below. You could select the names of fairtrade products or you could use the names of countries that sell fairtrade products or words that have anything to do with fairtrade. The given letters may appear anywhere within the word.

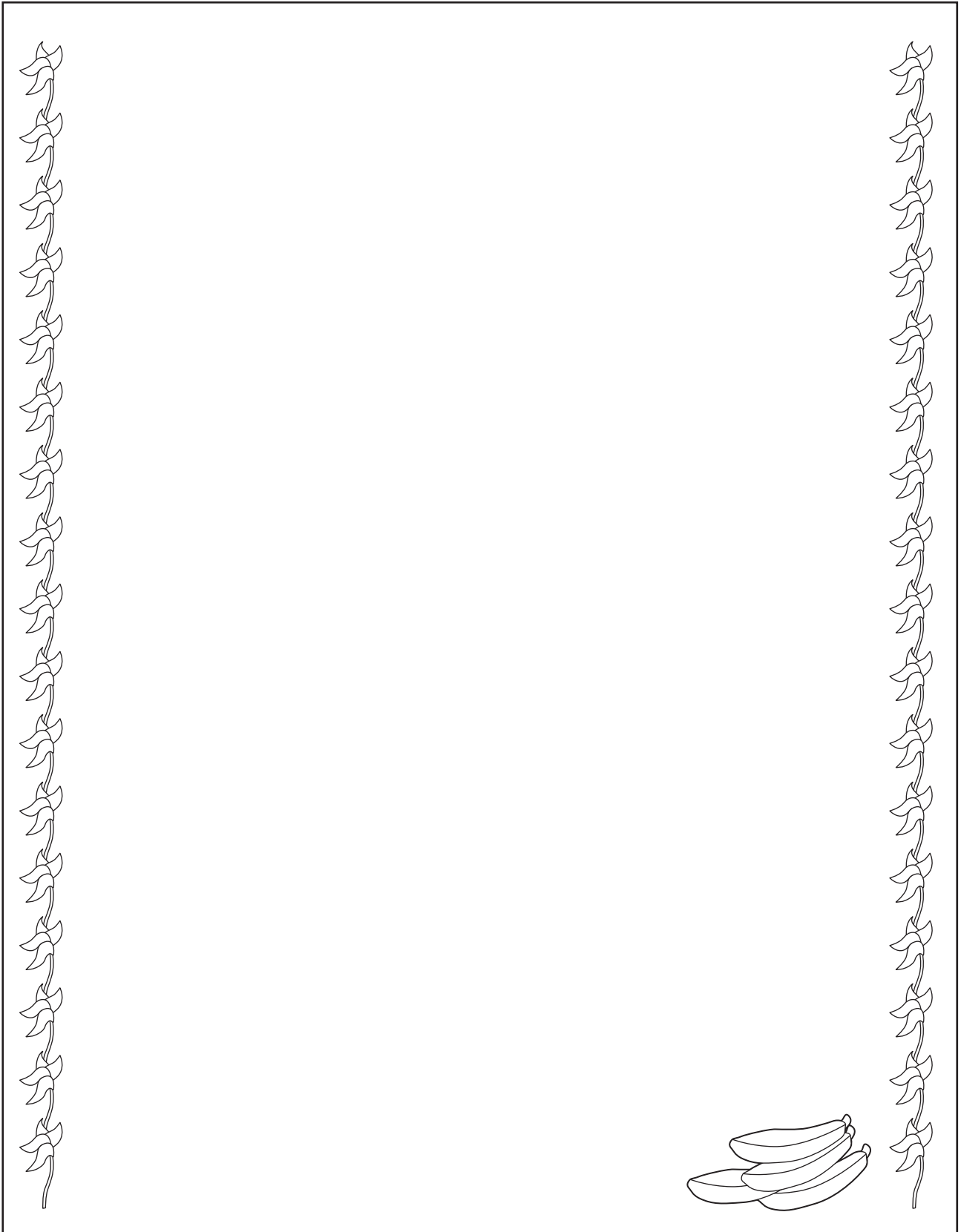
_____	F	_____
_____	A	_____
_____	I	_____
_____	R	_____
_____	T	_____
_____	R	_____
_____	A	_____
_____	D	_____
_____	E	_____





# Write a letter

Imagine you are a person who grows bananas and sells them through the fairtrade system. Write a letter to the people of Wales, telling them about your life and saying why you would like them to buy fairtrade bananas.



# My dictionary

You will meet many new words in *Exploring the Orthodox Church*. Keep a record of them, along with their meanings.

**icon** a picture of a saint, used to draw people closer to God

**congregation** a group of people meeting together in church for worship

**incense** a sweet-smelling smoke produced by burning a gum or spice


# Make a class book of icons

## 1. Find out about icons

Research in the library or on the internet to find out about Orthodox icons.

## 2. Select your saints

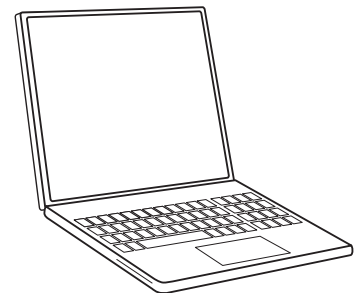
Find out about people who are considered saints in the Orthodox Church. Search on the internet using keywords such as “orthodox church saints”. Decide which saints you want in the book. Decide who will write about each saint.

**saints**

## 3. Write a page

Include pictures of icons and information about the life of the saint. You could write the life of the saint as a story or as a series of bullet points.

Make your page look attractive by using WordArt, borders, different fonts and different colours. When you are happy with the appearance, print the page.



### A handy hint

There are many ways to copy pictures from the internet to your document. One way is to have a text window open on the computer as well as the internet browser. Highlight the picture and then click and drag it straight to the text window.

## 4. Make a book

Bind everyone's pages together as a class book.

# World Faiths Today

## *teachers' handbook*

The teachers' handbook is part of the *World Faiths Today Series*, which includes seven story books for 8- to 11-year-old learners. In the series, both learners and teachers are invited to join two children called Rees and Sara who are learning more about their friends from religious traditions:

- Anglican Church
- Buddhism
- Eastern Orthodox Church
- Hinduism
- Islam
- Judaism
- Sikhism

The teachers' handbook provides:

- In-depth background information about the seven religious traditions
- Classroom activities
- Photocopiable worksheets
- Keywords



**Bear Lands Publishing**

