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BYZIMOM

I SPY IN MY LITTLE "I"CON

DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: SOME FAQs



This month's coloring page is the icon of [The Descent of the Holy Spirit](#). This is what we celebrate on Pentecost. Our Lord Jesus rose from the dead on Pascha. Forty days later, the apostles saw Him ascend into Heaven. Fifty days after Pascha, the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles while they were all gathered together with the Theotokos in the upper room. The word "pentecost" comes from the Greek word for 50th. We can read this story in the Bible in the [Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 2](#). Check it out!

WHY IS THERE A SUN AT THE TOP OF THE ICONS? AREN'T THEY ALL INSIDE?

Yes, they are inside, but that is not the sun. It is called a "mandorla," which is a circle of light representing the glory and majesty of God. The Holy Spirit is shown as rays, coming down upon the apostles. We also see the Holy Spirit represented as flames, or tongues of fire, resting on the apostles' heads. In our coloring page, we see a swirl decoration, reminding us of the rushing wind. Once in a while, we may see an icon with the Holy Spirit shown as a dove, but the Holy Spirit did not appear as a dove on Pentecost as He did at Our Lord's Baptism. This time, He appeared as a rushing wind and tongues of fire.

IN SOME ICONS, WE DO NOT SEE OUR LADY THEOTOKOS. INSTEAD WE SEE AN EMPTY SEAT. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT? We see Our Lady in some icons but not in all icons of Pentecost. The Theotokos was present at Pentecost and she is our model in how to love God. In other icons like the one below, we see only an empty space with an empty seat. That empty seat is a place for Our Lord as head of the Church. Since Our Lord has already ascended into heaven, we don't see Him. Instead we see an empty seat. He is the [invisible](#) head of the Church. We see the Church is gathered around him.

I COUNTED 12 APOSTLES, IS ONE OF THEM JUDAS? One of them is [not](#) Judas. After Judas betrayed Our Lord, the apostles prayed and chose another man to replace Judas. This new apostle was named Matthias. You can read this story in [The Acts of the Apostles, Chapter 1](#). In some icons we can see St. Paul, St. Mark or St. Luke. They were not really there on the day of Pentecost. Remember that icons are not always trying to represent exactly what happened at a certain day or time as in a photograph. Instead, this icon is teaching us about the early church community.

WHY ARE THEY ALL SITTING IN A HALF-CIRCLE? Since they sit together in a half-circle, as you look at the icon it feels like you could be part of the icon. It shows us an icon of the Church. You could actually feel that you could walk right into the icon. After all, you are really and truly part of the God's Holy Church.

WHAT'S WITH THE STRANGE GUY AT THE BOTTOM OF THE ICON? That is Cosmos. He is not a real person, but he represents all the people of the world in darkness and sin. We see him with a crown on his head like a king, showing his authority over the world. We see him in a dark circle which shows us that the world is in darkness without the light of Christ. He is holding a cloth with scrolls in the cloth. These scrolls represent the teachings of the Apostles which bring light to the world.

-Written By Julie Luckey



Pentecost Icon w/ Cosmos
Unkown found on WIKI

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