



Praying for Peace

Intended outcome

An experience to show children that prayer is a positive response to adversity, and a vehicle of peace for the war in Ukraine.

Lesson Overview

- 1 -Reflect on the purpose of religious icons as a form of prayer.
- 2 -Explore the story of the Ukrainian icon.
- 3 -Create and decorate, (or use the symbolism provided,) as a way to pray for peace in the country.

Lesson Plan

- 1 Iconographers begin with prayer and meditate on scripture or music as they work, so that they can connect themselves with God and pray for their intentions. They use symbols to tell the story: such as a sword if someone was martyred or a big forehead to represent wisdom. When finished, icons are blessed and become a blessing to those that honour them.
- 2 Share the story of the Ukrainian icon. Encourage the children to look at the icon and ask them questions to create a dialogue around it. Suggested dialogue:
"Jesus is painted as a small child looking up to his mother Mary. What does a mother do for their small children? [I.e. Help, protect, etc.] In the bible, Jesus said: "Behold your mother", so what does this say to us about our relationship with Mary? [She is there to help and protect us too].
- Other questions: What do the colours represent? Is the fact that we can see Jesus' feet related to the footprint in the story?
- 3 Give the children their icon to colour and explain that they can use this as a time to meditate and pray for peace in Ukraine. Fill them with the confidence that God hears our prayer and He cares for each of His Children. Discuss the symbols you will use: the olive branch symbolises peace; a dove symbolises the Holy Spirit; a candle symbolises prayer and the presence of God; and XP is a symbol of Jesus. Why are these symbols relevant to the prayers they have?
Begin with the prayer below and put on reflective music as they decorate their icon. Have their icons placed in a beautiful space or encourage them to do this at home so they can continue to pray for these intentions.

Prayer to begin: Lord Jesus you gave us your mother to help and protect us, so we ask for her help today as we spend this time with You in prayer, for all those who have been affected by the war. We remember the miracles that you have done with this icon and today we ask for ...(List your intentions).
Thank you for your faithfulness and love to us all. Amen

