**MUSEUM OF RUSSIAN ICONS**

**12 CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

**DOWN**
1. Greek word for “image”
2. The first icon painters
4. Calendar used by Russian Orthodox
5. Patron saint of Russia
6. The saint typically depicted on a white horse
8. Covering of icon (metal, cloth)

**ACROSS**
3. The destruction of icons
7. Said to be the first icon (4 word phrase)
9. Father of icon painting
10. _______ yolk tempera

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**DISCOVERY GUIDE**

Welcome
This Discovery Guide takes you on an in-depth journey through our collection and asks you about your thoughts on the art and culture of Russian icons.

What is an Icon?
An icon is a painting of a religious person or scene. Icons are painted on wooden panels with tempera paint, which is made from egg yolks mixed with pigments, or colored powders. Icons are an important part of worship in the Russian Orthodox religion. They are used in churches and in people’s homes.

St. George and the Dragon, c. 1500

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This museum is filled with icons. While our icons show religious figures, there are several meanings for the word “icon.”

Can you think of another example of an icon? (There are two examples of icons to the left.)

Many works of art, including icons, use symbols and familiar images to tell a story.

Who seems to be the most important figures in this icon. What are they doing?

What hints or clues tell you about the story?

You have seen several icons today in the gallery.
Which is your favorite one? Why?

Many icons show pictures of people who were brave and did good deeds for others. Think of someone that you respect (a family member, a friend, a sports figure, even yourself). List some of the reasons you admire this person below, and describe some symbols you might use to represent those traits. (Example: If you draw your friend who likes to play soccer, and is a Boy Scout, he may hold a soccer ball and wear his Boy Scout pin in your picture.)

If you have time, you can sketch the person and his or her symbols below.
7. What is the date of oldest icon in the gallery? Write the year here: ____________
List some important things that happened (inventions, events) since that time.

8. Find the Solovetsky Monastery icon.

The buildings in this icon are part of a monastery, or a community where monks live, work, and pray together. The monastery provided everything the monks needed: farmland to grow their food; workshops where they could earn money as icon writers and bell makers; space to study and worship.

Do you think it would be easy to live in a place like this? YES  NO  Why or why not?

2. Calendars mark the passing of days. What is the word for special calendar icons that help keep track of the year?

These icons are calendars that depict the saints that followers of the Russians Orthodox religion celebrate throughout the year.

There are many sets of objects that could represent a year. (Example: the moon phases)

If you had to make your own calendar without using numbers, what kind of objects would you use to represent the months in a year?

What would your calendar look like? Describe or draw it below.
3. Find the Sin Worm in the Last Judgment.
   How many sins are depicted here?

   Why do you think the sins appear in the particular order shown?

4. In icons, colors have symbolic meanings. For instance, blue resembles the water of baptism and the sign of heaven. White indicates purity and God’s presence.

   What do the following colors mean to you?
   What might they mean in an icon?
   (Need some help? Ask a docent in the gallery.)

   Gold: ______________________________________
   Green: ______________________________________
   Red: ______________________________________

5. What did Saint Nil use to help him stay awake and pray all night long?

   Saint Nil shows love or devotion to prayer and Christianity. What are you devoted to in your life?

6. Some icons made of wood and egg tempera have additional materials on their surfaces to show devotion. Name three types of materials that overlay some of the icons in the gallery. (For example: They may be decorated with precious stones.)

   1. ______________________________________
   2. ______________________________________
   3. ______________________________________

   Why do you think people decorated icons so elaborately?

   ______________________________________
   ______________________________________