

5/26/20

Christ is Risen!

Hello all, as we approach another festive color change in the Great Orthodox Church. I wanted to share a very simple, general, and not necessarily all encompassing explanation of liturgical colors in the Orthodox Church. More often than not, Orthodox Churches use six liturgical colors: white, gold, blue, purple, red, and green. (Black, among other colors, was/were added later.)

The Orthodox Typikon/rubrics often simply state when "dark" or "bright" colors are to be used. Other liturgical color specifications have developed according to tradition. These colors do not only apply to vestments, but throughout the holy altar and the entire church depending on how many resources each church has. Again these are general outlines and explanations according to the "dark" or "bright" Typikon/rubrics base standard. Colors and explanations may be different throughout the world.

The color schemes go as follows:

White is generally used for Pascha, Christmas, Theophany and The Transfiguration as white can represent purity and God's uncreated light.

Gold is commonly used as the standard color throughout the year while it can humbly represent virtue.

Blue is used during feasts of the Theotokos and during the Dormition Fast this color can be emblematic of the heavens as we call the Theotokos "More Spacious than the Heavens."

Purple "dark" colors are used during Great Lent as this can be a time of mourning and repentance.

Red is used for feasts of Martyrs, the Nativity fast, in some places feasts of the Holy Cross. Red can represent the blood of the martyrs, divinity and royalty.

Green is commonly used on Pentecost, during the post-Pentecost period, Palm Sunday, and in some places feasts of the Holy Cross. Green can represent plants, new life, refreshment and renewal.

Again, this is a brief and general summation of a rich and full tradition. Please feel free to research and compare notes.

Thank you and God Bless,

Fr. Dean

