

Art Study Guide for Liturgical Cards

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Art Guide Developed by the Confessional Lutheran Homeschool League

We invite you to approach the artwork found on each Liturgical Life card using an Art Study method.

In Summary, with each piece of artwork, begin by just spending time looking at the artwork together as outlined below. This booklet includes some basic information about each piece of artwork for you as parents to use as introductory resources. However, we encourage you to experience each piece of artwork in the same way your student will before delving into the resources and details provided here. If you want to learn more about the Art Study method, we recommend this resource:

Initial Art Encounter

1. Observe the Art silently 3-5 min
2. Narrate the picture
 - a. Have a child tell as much as they can about the painting.
 - b. Older kids can draw from memory

Parent Information: Learn about the artwork and engage your students in discussions or extended research about the piece.

1. This booklet includes Title, Artist, country of origin, medium, significance of art work, size and current location of the art.
2. **Parent discussion starters:** Here are some ideas to get you started when discussing/exploring the artwork with your children. You will naturally develop more questions and ways to enrich your discussions as you become more confident.
 - a. What did you see, what do you like, what if anything is missing
 - b. What would you title this piece? Does the title match the picture?
 - c. How did it make you feel? Do you like it, what did the artist do to evoke your emotions
 - d. What can you tell me about the time of day or location of what is happening
 - e. Read related scripture from card, Discuss the related pericope
 - f. Display picture in a prominent location during the season for daily reflection and enjoyment
 - g. Listen to suggested hymn while studying the picture – Is the tone of the music compatible with the tone of the painting? Was the music written before, after or in the same era as the artwork?

Title: Weimar Altarpiece

Artist: Lucas Cranach the Elder and Lucas Cranach the Younger

Geography Origin: Weimar, Germany

Scripture references: John 3:14-15, Genesis 3:15

Measurements: 150" x 122"

Style, Era, Medium: Renaissance. 1555 AD. Limewood

Where can you see this piece: Evangelical Lutheran Parish Church of Sr. Peter und Paul in Weimar, Germany

Summary:

The altarpiece is *Christ-centered* with main focus on the crucified Christ with John the Baptist pointing up at Jesus and index finger from his other hand to the Agnus Dei, while Lucas Cranach the Elder and Martin Luther are standing on the right side. Christ's image is repeated on the left side, he is depicted defeating Satan and conquering death. Cranach is depicted being washed by the blood of Jesus, while there is an open Bible in Luther's hand with his index finger pointing at the Bible to signify the importance of preaching of the Word of God and the doctrine of *Sola scriptura*. In the background, the fallen nature of mankind is depicted through a scene of the Expulsion from the Garden of Eden, along with the Old Testament narrative of the revelation of the Ten Commandments, the Brazen Serpent, Moses preaching to Israelites and Annunciation to the shepherds. When the triptych is closed, the outer sides of the wings depict the Biblical scenes of Baptism of Jesus and Resurrection.

Discussion/questions or activities:

During World War II the altarpiece was stored elsewhere and therefore survived the air raids of 1945.

Can you see the translucent flag? Why do you think Christ is standing on a skeleton?

THE SEASON OF
LENT





Title: The Trinity

Artist: Ribera, Jusepe de, lo Spagnoletto

Geography Origin: Naples, Italy

Scripture references: Matthew 3: 16-17, Matthew 28:19, 2 Corinthians 3:14

Measurements: 89" x 71"

Style, Era, Medium: Tenebrism. 1635 AD. Oil on canvas.

Where can you see this piece: Museo del Prado, Madrid, Spain

Summary:

The tragedy of the scene is emphasized by the use of light and a richly colorful palette. The bluish body of Christ, marked by blood that runs down his side, contrasts with the hieratic appearance of God the Father, who shows us his dead Son, accompanied by the dove of the Holy spirit.

Discussion/questions or activities:

What do you think God the Father is thinking?

Why do you think the artist selected the colors in the bottom right of the painting and those above the Father?

How does the artist show movement in the painting?

Who else is in the picture and why?

To view in detail: <https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-trinity/91fb4e51-f5ad-47a7-adb2-9d0410c159bf>

THE SEASON OF
EASTER



Title: The Resurrection

Artist: Andrea di Bartolo

Geography Origin: Siena, Italy

Scripture references: Mark 16:1-8, John 11:21-27, Matthew 28:15, 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Measurements: 20.8"x 18.8"

Vocab: Predella: A painting or sculpture on the front of a raised shelf above an altar, which typically forms the base for an altarpiece.

Style, Era, Medium: Gothic. 1400 AD. Tempera paint gold leaf on panel.

Where can you see this piece: Not on View. Walters art Museum, Baltimore

Summary:

As Christ emerges from the tomb he is shown as the largest and tallest figure in the painting to show not only his Victory over death but his role as Savior over all mankind. The visible wounds remind us of the terrible price Jesus paid. According to scripture: "For fear, the guards trembled and became like dead men."

This painting was part of a predella illustrating the Passion of Christ. The other four scenes showed the Crucifixion in the center (Metropolitan museum of Art, New York), the Betrayal of Christ (private collection), the Way to Calvary (Thyssen-Bornemisza Collection, Madrid), and the Lamentation (National Museum, Stockholm,). The present scene was the last in a series of five predella panels.

Discussion/questions or activities:

How else can we know that this is the risen Christ? (*Light emanating from all around Christ & *Flag of Victory)

How are the soldiers depicted? What textures can you see in the picture? Can you imagine how it would feel to touch them?

Title: The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit
Artist: Peter Paul Rubens

Geography Origin: N/A

Scripture references: Acts 2:1-41

Measurements: 186.6" x 108.4"

Style, Era, Medium: Baroque. 1619 AD. Oil on Canvas.

Where can you see this piece: Bavarian State Painting Collections, Munich, Germany

THE FEAST OF
PENTECOST



Summary: This painting depicts the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Virgin Mary and the Apostles after Christ's ascension. In the scene, the Virgin Mary is seen standing on steps at the center, surrounded by the Disciples. Above them, the Holy Spirit appears in the form of fiery tongues descending upon their heads.

The Virgin Mary:

- She is positioned centrally, a symbol of the Church's foundation.

- **The Apostles:**

They surround the Virgin Mary, representing the early believers and the Church.

- **The Holy Spirit:**

Depicted as fiery tongues, symbolizing the power and presence of God in the Church.

Discussion/questions or activities:

Describe the expressions people have on their faces? Are they all the same or different?

Where did this event take place? Does the painting reflect that location?

Title: The Nativity

Artist: Sandro Botticelli

Geography Origin: Florence, Italy

Scripture references: Luke 2:1-10, Matthew 1:18-25, Isaiah 9:6, Micah 5:2

Measurements: 63.5"x54"

Vocab: Fresco: Fresco is a technique of mural painting executed upon freshly laid lime plaster. Water is used as the vehicle for the dry-powder pigment to merge with the plaster, and with the setting of the plaster, the painting becomes an integral part of the wall.

Style, Era, Medium: Renaissance. 1473-1475 AD. Fresco transferred to canvas.

Where can you see this piece: Columbia Museum of art, Columbia, South Carolina

Summary:

Christ's lowly birth is shown in the poor surroundings (a crumbling brick wall, the animals nearby) and his position on the ground. He lays on a stack of wheat perhaps to symbolize the meaning of Bethlehem "House of bread".

Botticelli painted the Nativity as a fresco in Florence Italy. The fresco was later framed and put-on display. It is currently the sole Botticelli fresco to be exhibited outside of Italy.

Discussion/questions or activities: Can you think of what other symbolism bread has?

*Christ's body in the Eucharist



THE SEASON OF
ADVENT

Title: St. John the Baptist Preaching in the Wilderness

Artist: Santi di Tito

Geography Origin: N/A

Scripture references: Matthew 3:1-12, Isaiah 40:3

Measurements: 106" x 60"

Style, Era, Medium: Style. 1588 AD. Oil on canvas mounted on aluminum pane.

Where can you see this piece: Dallas Museum of Art, Texas

Summary:

Santi di Tito's "St. John the Baptist Preaching in the Wilderness" (1588) depicts a pivotal moment in Christian history. The painting features St. John, a central figure in Christianity, preaching to a crowd in a wild, natural setting. He is shown as a commanding presence, his outstretched arm gesturing towards heaven, emphasizing the significance of his message. A dove hovers above St. John's head, representing the Holy Spirit, adding a religious and spiritual dimension to the scene. St. John's outstretched arm is a powerful gesture, pointing towards heaven and emphasizing the spiritual nature of his preaching.



Discussion/questions or activities:

Describe the expressions the people have on their faces.

THE FEAST OF THE
REFORMATION

Title: Law and Grace

Artist: Lucas Cranach the Elder

Geography Origin: Gotha, Germany

Scripture references: Ephesians 2: 8-7, 1 Corinthians 15:56-57

Measurements: 32.4" x 46.5"

Style, Era, Medium: Renaissance Period. 1529 AD. Painted on Limewood.

Where can you see this piece: National Gallery in Prague



Summary:

In Lucas Cranach the Elder's 1529 "Law and Grace," a Lutheran allegory, the left side depicts "Law" (the Old Covenant) with the fallen man, death, and demons, while the right side showcases "Gospel" (Grace) with Christ and the Lamb triumphing over death. The tree in the center, withered on the left and green on the right, visually represents the transformation from sin to grace through faith. This painting, created in consultation with Martin Luther, illustrates the Lutheran belief that salvation is achieved through faith in Christ's grace, not by adherence to the Law.

Discussion/questions or activities:

Christ is depicted in several ways. Can you show where they are?

Why do you think Christ is standing on a skeleton?

ALL SAINTS' DAY

Title: Adoration of the Trinity

Artist: Albrecht Durer

Geography Origin: Nuremberg, Germany

Scripture references: Matthew 28:19, John 10:31, John 14:10

Measurements: 53.1" x 48.4"

Style, Era, Medium: Renaissance Period. 1511 AD. Oil on Poplar Panel.

Where can you see this piece: Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna



Summary:

In his painting "Adoration of the Trinity", Durer gives us the opportunity to see Heaven as it is in the Divine service, when Heaven and Earth meet and worship together.

At the top we see angels, in the middle are the saints of heaven, on the bottom are the saints on earth.

Each person of the Godhead is seen individually yet are one, enclosed in the diamond shape at the top of the painting.

Discussion/questions or activities: Can you identify each person of the Trinity?

*Father, Son, Holy ghost

Do you know who the man is at the bottom holding a plaque?

*Albrecht Durer

Thank you to Tessa and Kristen from *All the Household* (<https://allthehousehold.com/>) for selecting and preparing the artwork for our Liturgical Life Cards.

This Art Study booklet is intended to be a resource for home educators in conjunction with the Liturgical Life Cards.

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Resources: