
ORTHODOX RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: SACRED PLACES

Grade Level 10-11 / 16-17y



[ORTHODOX RELIGIOUS EDUCATION: SACRED PLACES] ©2022 by Jenny Korneck and Aybiçe Tosun Svt (Ed.): Sharing Worldviews is licensed under CC BY-SA 4.0. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> Exceptions: see notes or picture credits; design elements, logos and icons not under free license



www.sharing-worldviews.com



Orthodox Religious Education: Sacred Places

Author(s):

	<p>Orthodox Religious Education</p>	<p>Vasiliki Mitropoulou, is Professor and Director of the Laboratory of Pedagogy at the Faculty of Theology at Aristotle University in Thessalonik, and Teachers of Sacré Coeur HAK, Vienna, Austria.</p> <p>Learning materials by: AMINA BOUMAAIZ, ANTONY JOSE PAYYAPILLY, AYBIÇE TOSUN, CORDULA DOERFER, JÖRG IMRAN SCHRÖTER, KÜBRA YILDIZ, PETER SCHERZ, VASILIKI MITROPOULOU</p>
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Key Words

Church, synagogue, mosque, mausoleum, individual “holy” places

Competences/Learning Outcomes

- Students can define what is 'sacred' for them and others.
- They have experiences of a specific sacred space and know how to behave appropriately there.
- They are familiar with the specific characteristics of a sacred space and can describe them.

Grade level

10-11 /16-17y



www.sharing-worldviews.com



Co-funded by
the European Union

Descriptions



Orthodox Religious Education:

Sacred Places

Relation to life: Orthodox churches are built everywhere: in big cities, in small villages in the mountains, in the countryside, on the beach. Thus, they are an indispensable part of the students' lives, as they can see them every day and hear the bell that calls Christians to liturgy twice a day: in the morning and in the afternoon, and at sacraments such as weddings and funerals. School students attend a service about every two months and before major holidays (e.g. Christmas). In the interior of the Orthodox Church there are frescoes, mosaics and icons depicting scenes from the Old and New Testament with dogmatic symbolic meaning, as well as saints and holy fathers of the Orthodox Church. When students visit the church regularly, they become familiar with it as a sacred place. Furthermore, the sacraments, help them connect the church, as a sacred place, with important celebrations in their lives.

Textual reference: The term "ekklesia" comes from ancient Greek; it meant: "the assembly of all citizens". In Christianity, the term "ekklesia" has two meanings: I. related to the ancient Greek term and to the Christians: (a) the three categories of Christians: 1. "the company of all Christians of all times" (e.g. the Church is the body of Christ, the Church is holy, catholic and apostolic) 2. "all Christians who are alive" and 3. "all Christians who have died". (b) the "organized groups of Christians who follow the same doctrine or belong to the same religious leadership" (e.g. Orthodox Church). (c) "all religious ministers who belong to the same religious leadership" (e.g. the administration of the Church). II. refers to the church building as a holy place where Christians gather to pray and worship God. The term «ekklesia» appears for the first time in Acts 2:47; 5:11; 8:3.

Theological reference: The Orthodox Christian Church symbolizes the world: (i) roof/dome = the sky (ii) ground = the earth. It has three entrances and inside is divided into three parts (symbol of the Holy Trinity): (a) Pronaos - Narthex (in the western part) symbolizes the cosmos/world, the earth (b) Main Church symbolizes the "visible" heaven (c) Holy Bema (in the eastern part) symbolises the heavenly, the invisible spiritual world/cosmos. The candles and chandeliers symbolize the stars. The four columns that support the dome symbolize the four gospels, which transmit the message of God the Father from heaven (dome) down to earth (floor). Therefore, the four evangelists are painted at the points where the columns support the dome. The interior



is fully decorated with frescoes and mosaics depicting scenes from the Old and New Testaments and holy persons. Iconostasis both separates and connects the main part of the church (symbol of the visible world and the Christians) and the Holy Bema (symbol of heaven and the spiritual world). In the conch of Holy Bema, is depicted Virgin Mary holding baby Jesus symbolizing the connection between heaven and earth.

Ritual reference: The western part of the church, where is the entrance, is narthex or pronaos, where the catechumens (those who had not been baptized yet) used to stay. In it there are icons and the manuals with the candles. The Christians light two candles: one in honour of Christ, the Virgin Mary and the saints, and one for the salvation of their relatives (alive and dead) for their sins to be forgiven. The soft part of the candle symbolises the gentleness of the soul, full of repentance and obedience to God. Just like the light of a candle illuminates and dispels darkness, so the light of Jesus illuminates the lives of the Christians. The Christians stay in the main and largest part of the church: in the middle on the right there is the seat of the bishop and opposite on the left there is ambo, with a sculpture of a dove on top, symbolising the Holy Spirit. On this dove, the priest places the Gospel to read from it and preaches the Word of God. On the right and left sides there are the desks for the cantors. In the eastern part, always towards East (where the sun rises and illuminates the Christians' lives, like the light of Jesus), is the Holy Bema. In the centre of the Holy Bema is the Holy Trapeza, the centre of Christian worship, which symbolizes Christ, with the Gospel on top of it. There is prepared the Eucharist. According to the 69th Rule of the Ecumenical Council, women are not allowed to enter the Holy Bema, except from those, blessed by a special prayer by the priest.



First Phase: Development of the Topic in Own Subject Lessons

Orthodox Religious Education: Sacred Places	
Teaching Steps	First double lesson
Overarching goals	Students can define what is sacred for them.
Entry [20min]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Silent impulse: Show pictures of personal and general holy places and churches. (M1). • The presentation of the upcoming project as well as the explanation of the process and the subsequent working methods can be recalled here, but should already have been discussed in advance. • Teacher/student discussion: "Which church in the neighbourhood can we visit as part of the project?" • During the project there will be several phases of work in groups. These can already be divided up now so that they work together for the whole time of the project.
Elaboration I [15min]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual work: Create a mind map of what is 'holy' for you. (<u>Guiding question</u>: When you hear the word 'holy', what do you feel, what does it look like to you, what colour etc. does it have and why?) (M2a/b) • Short teacher/student discussion: How did you cope with the task? (Regardless of the result, how difficult/unfamiliar/clear is the question about the 'sacred'?)
Fuse I [10min]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should exchange ideas with each other, e.g. with the Fishbowl method, Socratic Seminar, Analytic Members, Update Your Classmate etc. (M3). <p><i>The "fishbowl" is a teaching strategy that helps students practice being contributors and listeners in a discussion. Students ask questions, present opinions, and share information when they sit in the "fishbowl" circle, while students on the outside of the circle listen carefully to the ideas presented and pay attention to the process. Then the roles reverse. This strategy is especially useful when the teacher wants to make sure all students participate in the discussion, when the teacher wants to help students reflect on what a "good discussion" looks like, and when the teacher needs a structure for discussing controversial or difficult topics. In fishbowl, the teacher has the role to control, such as when a student speaks more than one minute, the teacher will limit the time or stop that student and invite the next student to speak (Yabarmase, 2013).</i></p> <p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sB143EA1ZGU</p>



<p>Elaboration II <i>[20min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner work/group work: "What does sacred mean to us? (Create poster/digital poster). Possible impulse questions for the poster creation of the groups: • "Why is this place sacred to me personally?" • "Why is this place collectively 'sacred' to us?"
<p>Fuse II <i>[20min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the results of the groups. • Introduce the definition of personal and 'sacred' places on the PPP/poster -> point out that the text and pictures are part of the video conference that the students will present to the other participants.
<p>Transfer / Deepening <i>[5min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is time, because the class is small or because a preliminary discussion of the project has already taken place, a film can be shown to deepen the discussion, in which people were asked what "holy" means to them.
<p>Deepening</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have now discussed what 'holy' means, now it is about what is holy to me, what is holy to you. • Hand out the worksheet (M2a/b) and let them fill it in while they are doing it.
<p>Closing</p>	<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a text about what is important and sacred to you personally. Explain why it is sacred to you. It can be an object, a person or a memory. • Write a text of ½ to 1 page and add a picture! • Your text and picture are part of the video conference with other students. You will present your texts and pictures to each other. Therefore, write an English translation right away. Use: DEEPL.

	<p>Second double lesson</p>
<p>Overarching goals /</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students determine the relationship of their own religion to the term 'sacred'. • Students determine the difference between 'sacred' and 'important'. • Students explore a sacred place. • Preparing for on-site learning with the creation of a video clip. • Note: Prepare parent letters for permission to participate in Encounter Learning day and church visit.
<p>Entry <i>[5min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher: Welcome and introduction • Students: Summary of the last double lesson • Teacher: Explain lesson structure • Teacher and students clarify open questions.
<p>Elaboration I <i>[20min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students present their pictures and texts (from the previous lesson's homework) about "my personal sacred place" in English in preparation for the Encounter Learning Day.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers and students give feedback, pay attention to the English language of the students and give suggestions for improvement.
Fuse I [10min]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each student creates a corresponding index card for the presentation in English.
Elaboration II [20min]	<p>Powerpoint presentation with</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Images of personal and general sanctuaries Definition of 'sacred' and 'profane' Sacred place: Names, images, construction, interior and exterior architecture, role, variations... Details, "What makes it holy?"
Fuse II [30min]	<p>The search for a suitable place to visit could be undertaken and coordinated with the students, but perhaps the local conditions and organisational circumstances mean that there is no alternative, so that the destination simply has to be specified.</p> <p>Organisation of the excursion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision where to go Discussion of the rules of conduct (M4) more detailed explanation and instruction on the short film (duration of the film) Discussion of who cuts and assembles the film clip. Discuss whether each group will create a single film or the whole class. <p>-> Completion by the last double lesson</p>
Consolidation / Conclusion [5min]	<p>Homework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write information from the research on the 2nd index card.
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare for the film clip on site <p>Distribution of letters to parents for permission to participate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on Encounter Learning Day at the church visit

Third double lesson	
Overarching goals	<p>Students explore the 'sacred' place and create their own short films. <i>(Depending on the distance and local conditions, a double lesson will not provide enough time for the visit. Perhaps, in consultation with the school management and the colleagues, additional lessons can be arranged).</i></p>
Entry [5-10min]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome and introduction to today with "learning on the spot" (explaining the daily schedule) Walking/driving to the "holy" place There may be "official" people on site whom you would like to welcome or who would like to introduce themselves. This needs to be found out and discussed in advance and also clarified with the students.



<p>Elaboration I <i>[50min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery and experience of the sacred place • Teacher chooses a suitable didactic approach and carries it out with the students (e.g. search for one's own place, blind leading (sensing with the senses), search for symbols, guessing, measuring the room, etc.). • Each group creates a small film clip about the main areas/views.... (show several elements of the sacred place) • Each group is given an envelope with individual terms related to specific features of the 'sacred' place; these have to be presented by the group in the short film.
<p>Elaboration II <i>[15min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently explore and discover the place • Task: 3-5 photos to (3 minutes time) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. show the place 2. students should show themselves in a pose at the place 3. students in a certain posture 4. important symbol/object
<p>Consolidation / Conclusion <i>[5min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss homework for the next lesson: • Bring photos, videos and flashcards for the next lesson • Farewell or joint walk back to school

<p style="text-align: center;">Fourth double lesson</p>	
<p>Overarching goals</p>	<p>Students evaluate their experiences in the sacred place. Students evaluate their prepared film clips.</p>
<p>Entry <i>[30min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short feedback round after the excursion • clarify open questions • Presentation of the results of the excursion • In plenary: Watching films
<p>Elaboration I <i>[30min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students discuss their results in their groups. • Plenary discussion "What happens on Encounter Learning Day?" • "What else needs to be done for that?"
<p>Fuse I <i>[15min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work: Revision and preparation of the corresponding index cards.
<p>Elaboration II <i>[10min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The groups present their different experiences of the 'sacred' in plenary.
<p>Fuse II</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw results on the blackboard or whiteboard.
<p>Consolidation / Conclusion <i>[5min]</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • detailed organisational explanation for the upcoming Encounter Learning Day



Second and Third Phase: Presentation and Exchange in Mixed Small Groups at Stations

- Find these phases in the “**Guidance for Teachers**” on:
www.sharing-worldviews.com

Fourth Phase: Reflection in Own Subject

- Find these phases in the “**Guidance for Teachers**” on:
www.sharing-worldviews.com



Material



[M1] Orthodox Sacred Places

1



The Church of Panagia Kapnikarea

2



The Church of Saint Demetrius

3



Hosios Loukas

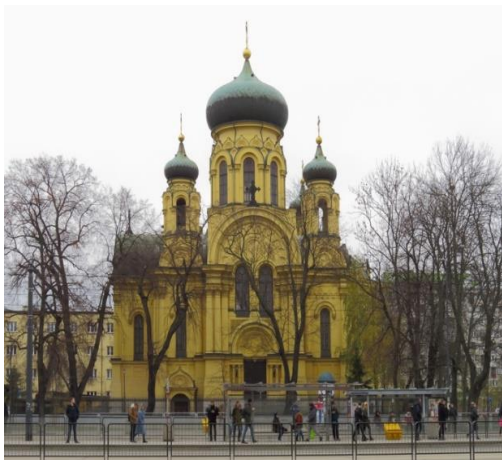
4



Timisoara: Biserica ortodoxă Sf Ilie
by Daniel ENGELVIN



5



Metropolitan Orthodox Cathedral of St. Mary Magdalene in Warsaw
by Аймаина хикари

6



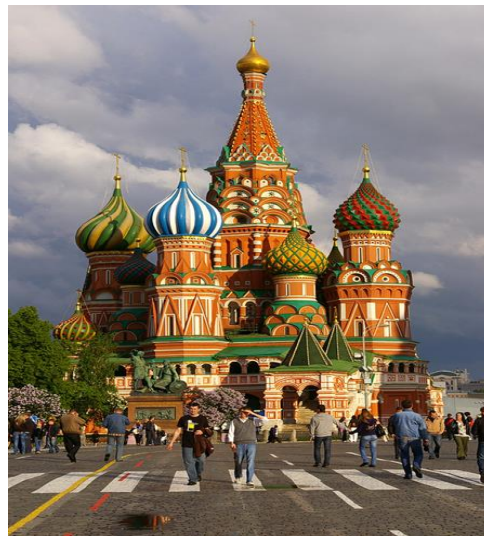
Greek Orthodox Church

7



Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation/Former Associate Congregational Church by Baltimore Heritage

8



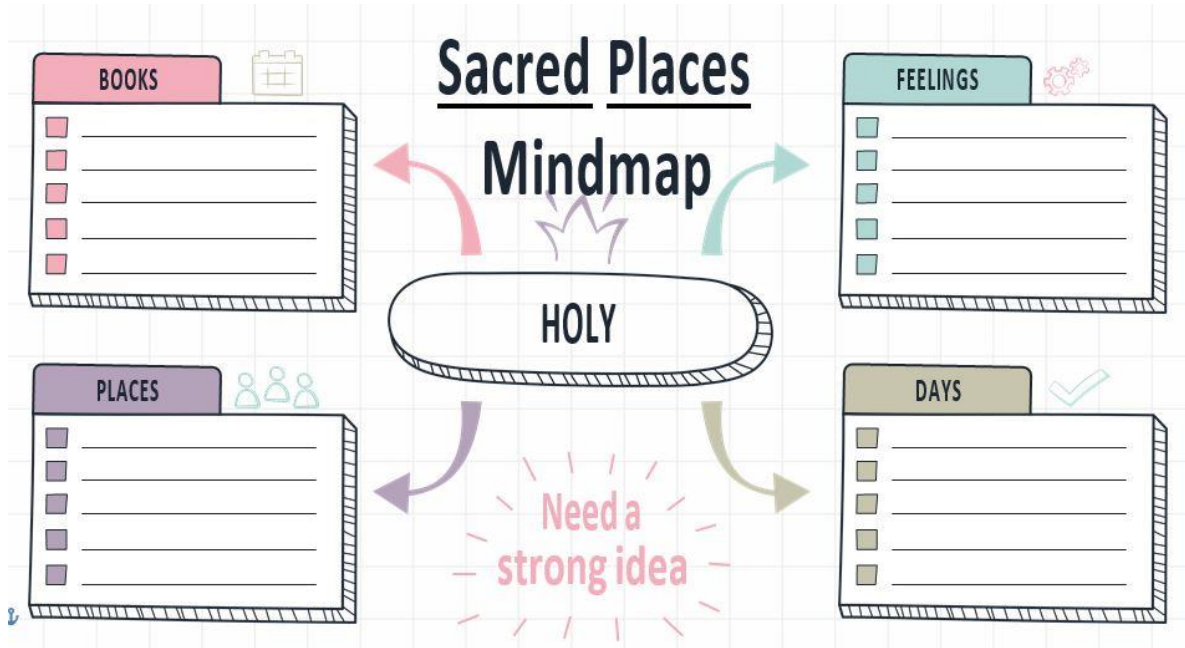
Pokrovsky Cathedral (Cathedral of Saint Basil the Blessed)" by Vladislav Litvinov





[M2] Worksheet

M 2a Mindmap Worksheet



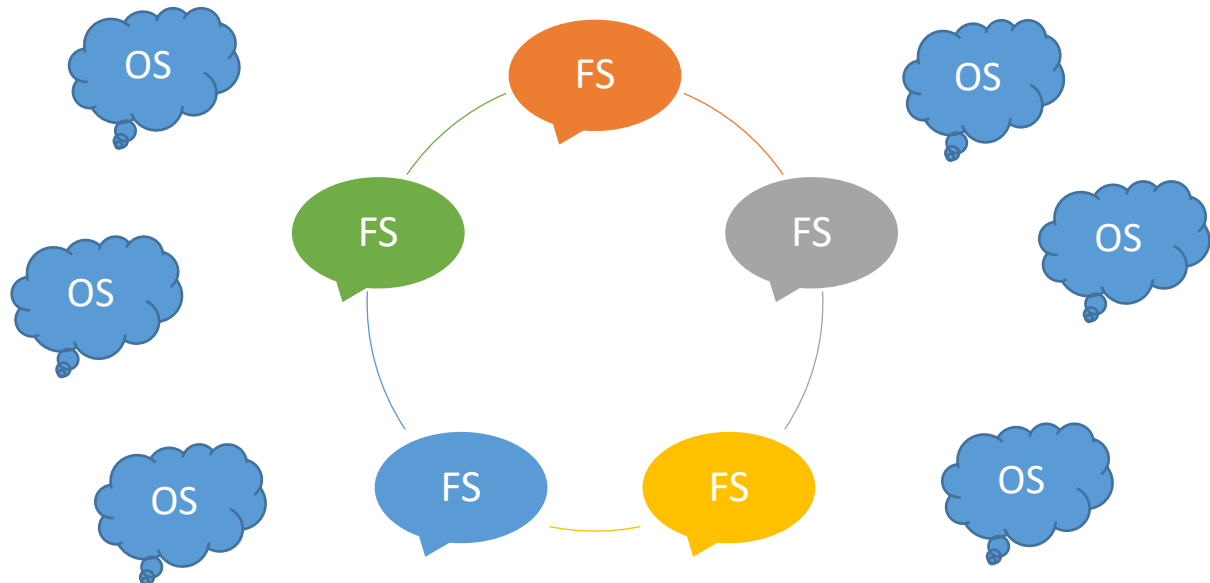
M 2b Additional Mindmap Worksheet

<i>SACRED PLACES</i>	<i>JEWISH</i>	<i>CATHOLIC</i>	<i>PROTESTANT</i>	<i>ORTHODOX</i>	<i>ISLAMIC</i>	<i>ETHICS/ PHILOSOPHY</i>
<i>Cities</i>						
<i>Structures</i>						
<i>Burial Sites</i>						
<i>Places in Nature</i>						





[M3] Fish Bowl Teaching Method



FS: Fish Bowl Students
OS: Observer Students

STEPS:

1. Choose a central topic or text. Develop an open-ended question to start the discussion. If using a text, students may read the text before hand or the strategy may be used to introduce the text (i.e., create a question that makes the central them relevant to the students).
2. Ask for or select 4-5 volunteers to be in the “fishbowl.” Only the students in the fishbowl are allowed to talk. After a class demonstration with one “fishbowl”, there can be several “fishbowls” organized in the classroom to ensure that all students are engaged.
3. Instruct the outer circle to remain quiet, observe and take notes on the content and process of the inner circle’s discussion.
4. The first few times, play the role of the facilitator yourself. Once the process is familiar, select a student facilitator. The facilitator does not participate in the discussion, but poses questions along the way to prompt deeper discussion and to ask sure everyone inside the fishbowl has a chance to talk.
5. At first or with younger students, identify the focus of the discussion and provide text dependent questions for students to answer during the fishbowl discussion.



6. Allow the conversation to progress where students take it. Rotate students in and out of the fishbowl throughout the course of the discussion. Set up a procedure ahead of time so students know to expect this rotation. Allow the fishbowl discussion to continue for at least 15- 20 minutes, depending of the students' age.

7. After all students have rotated through the fishbowl, divide the class into small groups and invite students to debrief. Students can use their observations from the outer circle to highlight strengths of the discussion and make suggestions for ways to engage each other more meaningfully. The following discussion starters may facilitate the conversations:

- What did you observe during the discussion of the text?
- What is one thing you heard that is similar to your point of view?
- What is one thing with which you disagree?
- How did you feel while on the outside of the fishbowl?
- How did you feel while on the inside of the fishbowl?

8. Wrap up the process with a full class discussion about the discussion Pose a final question and give everyone an opportunity to talk to a partner. After this discussion, you may have the students do a quick write answering the guiding question.

9. Add these specific questions to scaffold the experience for Emergent Bilinguals:

- Observer question: What helped you understand the information that was being shared (context or non-verbal cues, use if L1, etc)?
- Fishbowl questions: How do you feel knowing that peers were listening to what you were saying? What do you wish you could have said more clearly or what point do you wish you could have made in you first language?



[M4] Rules for Visiting a Holy Place

1. This is a special place. If other visitors are praying or placing a candle, behave in such a way that you do not disturb them.

2. Take care of the objects in the room. They are very important to the people who come here.

3. Avoid running and talking loudly. If you want to look around, walk slowly from one place to another. If you have a question, go quietly to your teacher or write your question down.



Bibliography

Yabarmese, Dominicus (2013): The Fishbowl Strategy: An Effective Way to Improve Students' Speaking Ability, Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching, 9 (2).

Picture Credits

1. The Church of Panagia Kapnikarea is a [Greek Orthodox](#) church built in the 11th century and one of the oldest churches in [Athens](#).

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.

https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%91%CF%81%CF%87%CE%B5%CE%AF%CE%BF:Kapnik_area.jpg

2. The Church of Saint Demetrius is the main sanctuary dedicated to [Saint Demetrius](#), the patron saint of [Thessaloniki](#), dating from 7th century AD. It is on the list of [World Heritage Sites](#) by [UNESCO](#) since 1988.

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Agios_Dimitrios1.jpg

3. Hosios Loukas is a historic walled [monastery](#) situated near the town of [Distomo](#), in [Boeotia](#), [Greece](#). Founded in the mid-10th century, is one of the most important monuments of Middle [Byzantine architecture](#) and [art](#), and has been listed on [UNESCO's World Heritage Sites](#) since 1990.

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.

4. "[Timisoara: Biserica ortodoxă Sf Ilie](#)" by [Daniel ENGELVIN \(ONE Million thanks\)](#) is marked with [Public Domain Mark 1.0](#).

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.

<https://wordpress.org/openverse/image/c7d92775-c487-4f85-ae20-fb6f4a0181e2>

5. "Metropolitan Orthodox Cathedral of St. Mary Magdalene in Warsaw", [File:Cerkiew św. Marii Magdaleny Warszawa 01.jpg](#) by [Аймаина хикари](#) is marked with [CC0 1.0](#).

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.

<https://wordpress.org/openverse/image/c5fe9f1e-c4e3-4c88-8e96-2b14f40639f7>

6. Greek Orthodox Church of Holy Trinity in Vienna. It was built in 1782 to 1787 and extended from 1858 to 1861 in a byzantine form.

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.



[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:WienGriechenkirche zur Heiligen Dreifaltigkeit.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:WienGriechenkirche_zur_Heiligen_Dreifaltigkeit.JPG)

7. "[Greek Orthodox Cathedral of the Annunciation/Former Associate Congregational Church \(1888\), 24 W. Preston Street, Baltimore, MD 21201](#)" by [Baltimore Heritage](#) is marked with [CC0 1.0](#).

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.

<https://wordpress.org/openverse/image/355b3030-6f59-45e3-aab6-2db5b1c91729>

8. "[Pokrovsky Cathedral \(Cathedral of Saint Basil the Blessed\)](#)" by [Vladislav Litvinov](#) is marked with [CC0 1.0](#).

This work has been marked as dedicated to the public domain.

<https://wordpress.org/openverse/image/e877e216-dbbe-4428-a25e-bbac864e8e62>

