

## I SPY IN MY LITTLE "I"CON

## CREATION ICON

This icon depicts the fifth day of the creation story, when God created the swimming and winged-flying creatures.

**WHY IS JESUS SITTING ON THAT BLUE BALL?**

The blue ball is called a **mandorla** and it is used in iconography to illustrate that the figure inside it, or on it, isn't really visible to the other beings depicted in the icon. Here, the mandorla tells us that although Christ is actively creating all those beings from His heavenly vantage point, He isn't really a part of the landscape there.

There is a verse in scripture that tells us, "Thus says the Lord: Heaven is my throne, and earth a stool for my feet." (*Isaiah 66:1, also Acts 7:49*) In the icon, it certainly looks just that way! It appears that Jesus is enthroned upon the circles, representing heaven, with his feet resting upon the earth!

**HOW DO WE KNOW THAT THE FIGURE ON THE MANDORLA IS JESUS?** Notice the halo around his head? On it is the cross, the symbol of Christ. No other being is depicted with this type of a halo in iconography. We also notice that the iconographer has labeled the figure with the letters **IC XC**, which stand for the name of Jesus Christ in the Greek language. Squiggly lines over the letters tell us that these letters are an abbreviation.

**DID YOU NOTICE ALL OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF WATER ANIMALS?**

How many can you name? Do you see the crab? There are five different kinds of fish there too, and a sea monster! He must be the one referred to in the creation psalm as "**the monsters you made to play with!**"

**DID YOU NOTICE ALL OF THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF BIRDS?**

Some are flying, some are walking on the land, and one is even perched in the tree! Do you see the peacock? You will see him depicted a lot in iconography and other forms of religious art. He symbolizes humility because although his tail is stunningly beautiful, most of the time, he holds it behind himself. When it is displayed, however, it represents the omnipotence of God. Omnipotence is the quality of seeing or knowing all things. Because his tail looks as though it's made of hundreds of eyes, it symbolizes God's ability to see all. Do you see the goose? Geese have the tendency to keep watch for trouble and cry out loudly to warn the others of impending danger. For this reason they represent vigilance and remind us to keep watch for danger to our souls. Do you see the dove in the tree? We all know what he symbolizes! The Holy Spirit! Scripture tells us that the Spirit took the form of a dove to come down upon the apostles at Pentecost, and also when He descended upon Jesus at His baptism. Notice that he is higher than all the other birds in the icon and is watching over the creation of all of the other animals.



Creation Icon by Michael Kapelock  
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Notice all the plants and the tree in the icon. These were created on the third day, so it is no surprise that they were already there to greet the fish and the birds, providing food and shelter for God's creatures.

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