

Icon Writing Retreat/Workshop
Materials Prepared by Glynis Mary McManamon, RGS

Schedule

Sunday, September 13, 2020

7:15 p.m. Orientation to retreat.

Monday, September 14

9:15 a.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
Transfer of icon pattern to panel/canvas.
Setting the background and borders.

1:30 p.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
“Opening” the icon - mixing and laying in of first colors

4:45 p.m. Text in your questions during livestream; brief closing prayer

Tuesday, September 15

9:15 a.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
First Light

1:30 p.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
Second Light

4:45 p.m. Text in your questions during livestream; brief closing prayer.

Wednesday, September 16

9:15 a.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
Third Light

1:30 p.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process: continue Third Light

4:45 p.m. Text in your questions during livestream; brief closing prayer

Thursday, September 17

9:15 a.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
Glazing

1:30 p.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
Outlines

4:45 p.m. Text in your questions during livestream; brief closing prayer

Friday, September 18, 2020

9:15 a.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
Details: eyes, halo, staff

1:30 p.m. Iconographer Prayer
A few moments of silence
Explanation of the process, demonstration of process:
Details: name

4:45 p.m. Text in your questions during livestream; brief closing prayer

Saturday, September 19, 2020

2:00 p.m. Conclusion

Supply List

Usually I am working with JoSonja acrylic gouache on Innerglow panels, both of which must be ordered online. If you want to purchase these items (which would total around \$100) contact me and I will send you the purchasing information.

For this retreat, however, I am recommending some items you can get at Hobby Lobby or Michaels, and your outlay should be around \$30 or lower. Some items may also be found at the Dollar Store.

A set of acrylic paints - the set of 24 has all the colors you will need (such as Artist Loft or Masters Touch or Reeves). If you use a digital coupon, these should come to a little over \$20. If you have a collection of paints, including craft paints, these are the colors you must have:

Black	Light Red
White	Medium Red
Burnt Sienna	Deep Red
Burnt Umber	Pthalo Green
Yellow Ochre/Yellow Oxide	Olive Green
Medium Yellow	Pthalo Blue
Vermilion	Prussian Blue or other Dark Blue
Ochre Red/Earth Red/Terra Cotta	

Ideally, an artist panel (8" x 10" - must be primed); however, an 8: x 10" stretched or pressed canvas can work and these are often available at the Dollar Tree or Walmart. I will deliberately work on a canvas so my results will be in line with yours.

Carbon paper or transfer paper - or make your own by taking a pencil sideways and completely covering the back of your pattern.

Brushes: student grade acrylic brushes - "Script" brushes sizes 4 and 6, or the smallest brushes you can find. I use 20/0 Royal Soft Grip Script Brushes. I will work with larger brushes as much as possible during the class.

3 jars/cups for water - 2 for rinsing brushes, 1 for mixing paint

Eyedropper - not necessary but helpful

Palette or other surface for mixing paint - cup palettes at Dollar Tree are \$1. A porcelain or glass plate, or even a paper plate, can work

Pencil and eraser

Ruler; compass (or a saucer or other round shape to trace.

Rags or paper towels.

Masking tape (or scotch tape, used very carefully)

Q Tips can be very useful

Contemplation of the Icon to be Written



Archangel Michael : His name means “Who is as God”. Michael ranks as the greatest of all angels whether in Jewish, Christian, or Islamic writings. He is Chief of the Order of Virtues, Chief of Archangels, Prince of the Presence, the Angel of Repentance, Righteousness, Mercy, and Sanctification: Also, Ruler of the 4th Heaven and Conqueror of Satan. It is Michael who will descend from heaven with “the Key to the Abyss and a great chain in his hand” to “bind the Satanic Dragon for 1000 years” (Revelation 20:1). It is foretold in Daniel that when the world is once again in real trouble, Michael will reappear. Among the Dead Sea Scrolls there is one titled “The War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness”. Here, Michael is called the “Prince of Light”. Michael, holding in his hand the Scales of Justice, represents the Angel of the Final Reckoning and the one who weighs souls. The Archangel Michael our pattern is based on was originally by St. Andrei Rublev, a Russian Orthodox monk in the fifteenth century.

Prayer Before Beginning an Icon (daily)

O Divine Lord of all that exists, You have illumined the Apostle and Evangelist Luke with Your Holy Spirit, thereby enabling him to represent Your most Holy Mother, the one who held You in her arms and said: The Grace of Him Who has been born of me is spread throughout the world!

Enlighten and direct my soul, my heart and my spirit. Guide the hands of Your unworthy servant so that I may worthily and perfectly portray Your Icon, that of Your Mother, and all the Saints, for the glory, joy and adornment of Your Holy Church.

Forgive my sins and the sins of those who will venerate these icons and who, kneeling devoutly before them, give homage to those they represent.

Protect them from all evil and instruct them with good counsel. This I ask through the intercession of Your most Holy Mother, the Apostle Luke, and all the Saints. Amen.

Prayer After Completing an Icon

You, Yourself, O Lord, are the fulfillment and completion of all good things. Fill my soul with joy and gladness, for You alone are the Lover of humankind.

Let Your grace sanctify and dwell within this icon that it may edify and inspire those who gaze upon it and venerate it; that in glorifying the one depicted, they may be repentant of their sins and strengthened against every attack of the adversary.

Through the prayers of the Theotokos, the holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke, and all the Saints, O Savior, save us! Amen.

Jesus Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God, have mercy on me a poor sinner.

Before you begin:

Notes about Acrylic Paint

- When acrylic paint dries it hardens into plastic and you cannot add water to it to reuse it.
- Acrylic paint is a water based paint, so it can be diluted with water and it doesn't have fumes.
- Acrylic paint can be used to layer, which is what we will be doing. We will be working light to dark, and acrylic paint - unlike watercolor - will allow you to add light colors on top of dark colors.
- If you get acrylic paint on your clothing, rubbing alcohol will remove most of it, but you must do so before it dries. Some colors are staining and may not come out - blue is the worst.
- Soap and water cleanup works for skin and brushes.

Brushes:

- Wash your brushes frequently using soap and water.
- I will break a rule about brush use: I will be mixing paint with my brush. Therefore I have to make sure I get the paint out of the ferrule (the metal part that holds the brush hairs) or it will ruin the brush.
- Don't leave brushes standing in water.
- Use the tip of your brush for the most part.

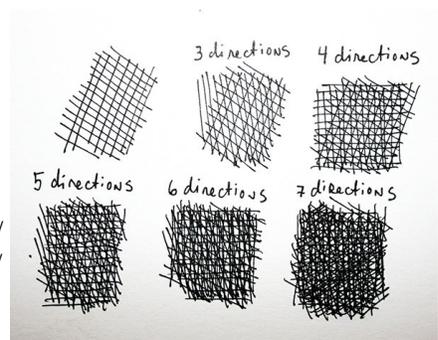
Mixing Paint:

- You can dilute acrylic paint with water, or with a fluid matte acrylic medium. I use water.
- For our purposes: if paint is diluted too much, it beads up and will not spread. If it isn't diluted enough it will make ridges and textures that you don't want in an icon.
- You need very small amounts of paint at a time. You can dilute paint a drop at a time, using an eyedropper or letting water drops fall from the brush.
- Mix the paint with the tip of your brush. Be sure and clean your brushes often.
- Keep one container of water for mixing. Don't wash brushes in it!
- Keep two containers of water for cleaning the brush. One is to get the paint off. The second is to get the remnants of paint water off. You will need to change these every so often.
- Most of the time you would like paint at the consistency where you dip your brush, it doesn't come out of the brush, but it does hang heavy trying to drop from the brush.

Laying In Paint:

- Some styles of painting involve showing the paint strokes. Not so in the icon. You want a flat application of color.
- One method of laying in paint is called "petit lac" (little lake). In this method you dilute the paint with water or a matte medium. You have the right proportion when a drop of paint moves to the tip of the brush when you are holding the brush upright, but does not fall out.
- Another method of laying in paint is called "cross hatching."
This is a drawing technique that builds up by making lines horizontal, then vertical, then diagonal, etc.

Diagram of "Cross Hatching" from <https://www.liberaldictionary.com/cross-hatching/>



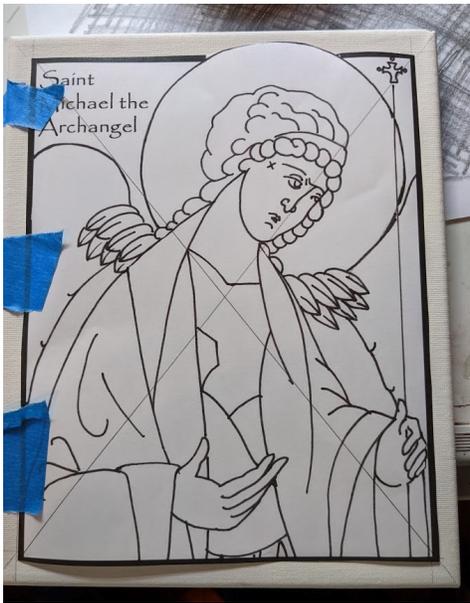
Saint
Michael the
Archangel



Transferring Pattern



1. Using a ruler and pencil, put a 1/2" border around your panel/canvas.



2. Center the pattern on your panel. If you trim the border off the icon, it should be easy to center it within the border on your panel/canvas.

3. Tape the pattern to your surface with masking tape (if you have to use scotch tape, be very very gentle). Hinge it like a door.

4. Using transfer or carbon paper and a sharp pencil or non-smearing pen trace over the pattern onto the panel. If you don't have carbon paper, cover the back of your pattern with pencil before you tape it in place.



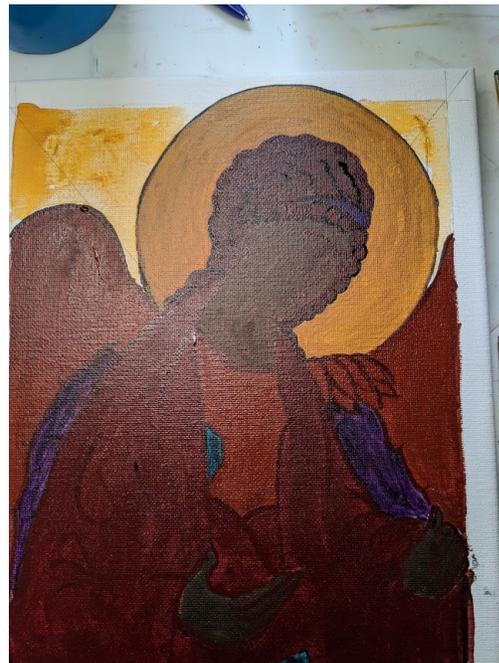
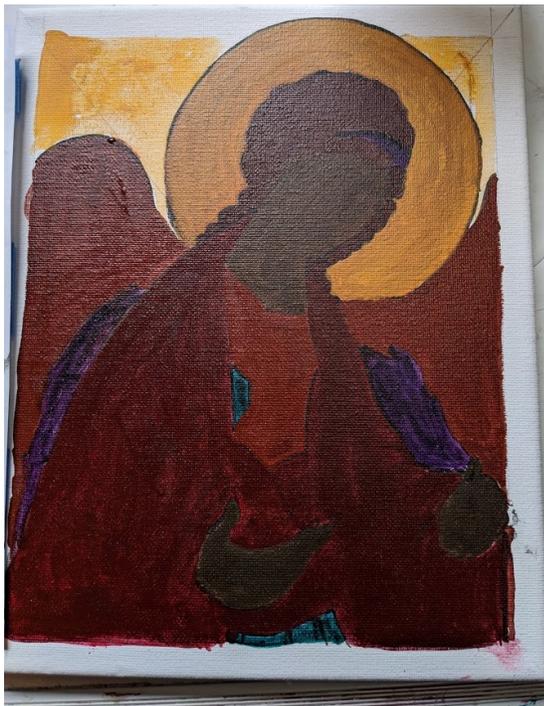
5. When you have finished transferring the image fold the pattern back but do not remove it.

6. Using diluted carbon black paint, and a script brush or liner, go over the lines. Try to use loose, sweeping strokes. If you feel unsure of yourself working loosely, experiment on a spare piece of paper.

Opening the icon

1. Opening the icon is done by filling large areas of the image with flat planes of a relatively dark color. At this point you may lose some of the necessary dark lines. Keep your transfer at hand.
2. Keep your pattern taped to the canvas/panel because you will probably lose your detail lines.

AREA/PAINT BRAND	JO SONJA	MASTER'S TOUCH	ARTIST LOFT
Face, Neck, Hands	1:1:1- Black: Vermilion: Yellow Oxide	1:1:1 - Permanent Black: Vermilion: Yellow Ochre	1:1:1 - Ivory Black: Vermilion: Yellow Ochre
Hair	Burnt Umber	Burnt Umber	1:1 - Burnt Umber: Black
Robe, Belt	Indian Red Oxide	1:1 - Crimson: Burnt Umber	1:1 - Deep Red: Burnt Umber
Tunic	Storm Blue	2:1 - Pthalo Green: Ultramarine	2:1 - Pthalo Green: Ultramarine
Wings, Breastplate	Burnt Sienna	1:1 - Burnt Sienna: Vermilion	Burnt Sienna
Inner Wing, Headband	1:1 - Prussian Blue: Naphthol Crimson	1:1 - Ultramarine: Crimson	1:1 Ultramarine: Deep Red
Halo	(various options)	1:1 - Yellow Ochre: Burnt Sienna	2:1 - Yellow Ochre: Burnt Sienna
Background	(various options)	Yellow Ochre	Yellow Ochre

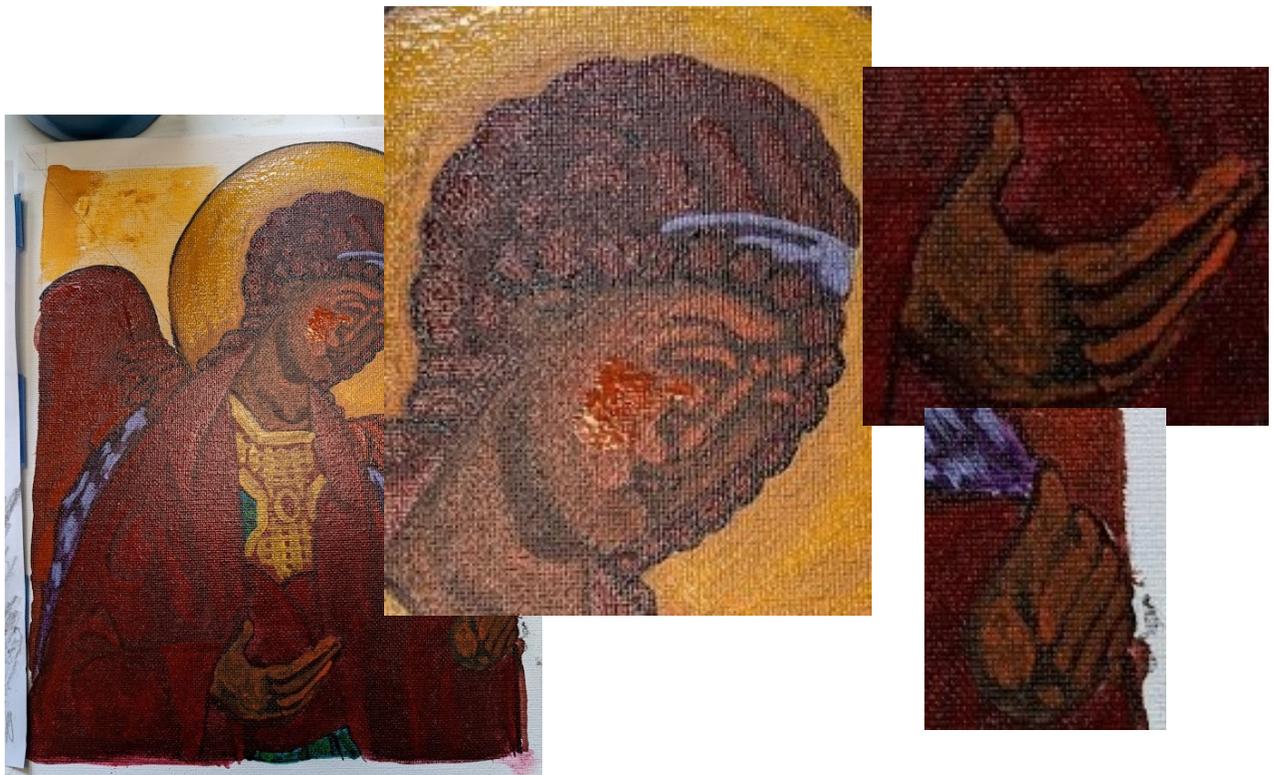


Some of your dark lines will still be visible. If they have disappeared, use your pattern to transfer them again, and darken them with black.

First Light

- First light creates volume. For all three lights you fill in an area equivalent to 2/3 of that area: more or less.
- Make your paint thin enough to be just slightly transparent.
- The lines you reinstated offer some clues for where to place your lights. Clothing should be done almost geometrically, rather than soft natural folds and pleats.
- On the wings, your patterns will suggest feathers.
- The breastplate will have a basket weave pattern. If you want, include an oval setting for a jewel in the center of the breastplate.

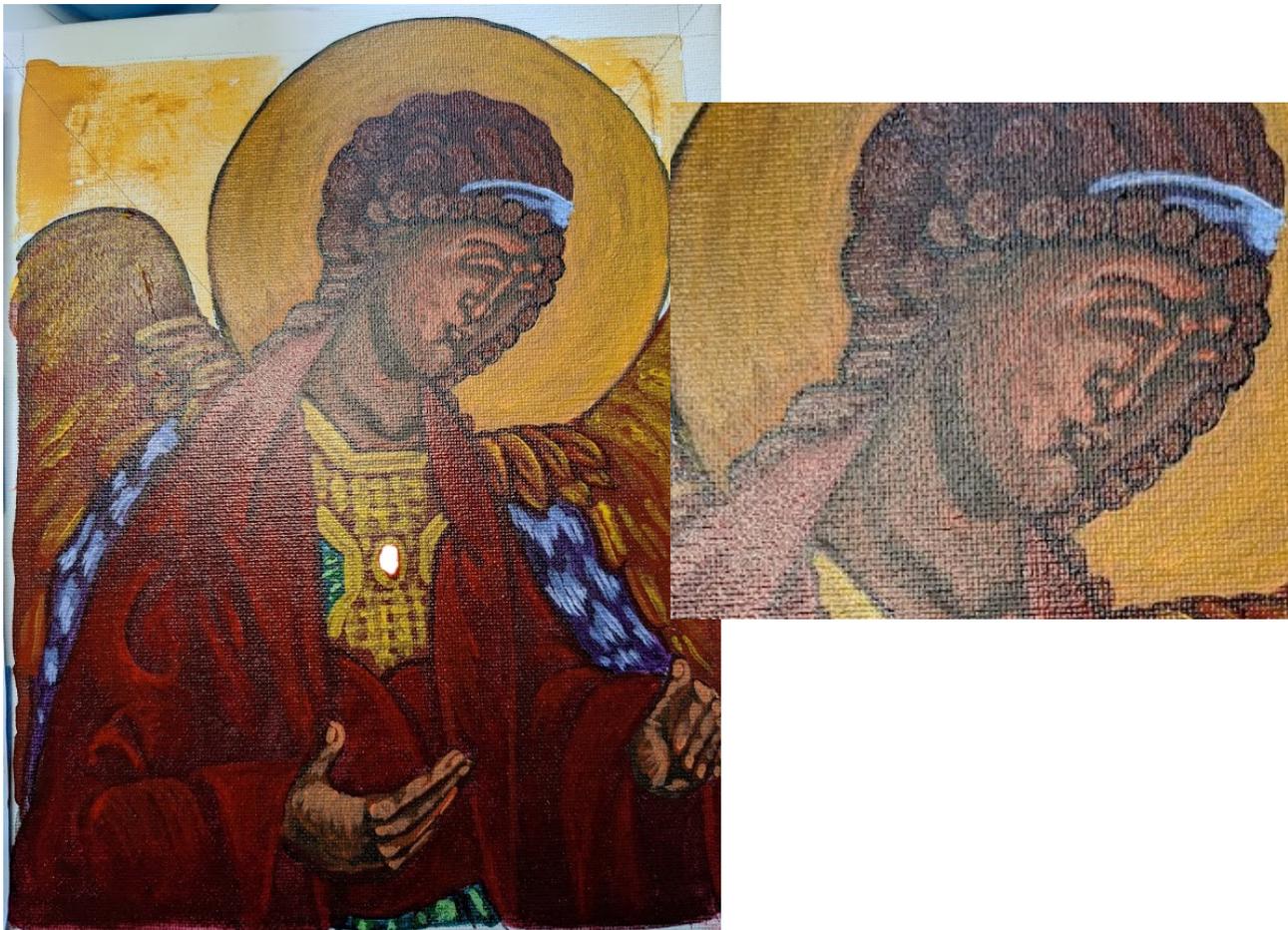
AREA/PAINT BRAND	JO SONJA	MASTER'S TOUCH	ARTIST LOFT
Face, Neck, Hands	2:1 - Vermilion: Yellow Oxide	2:1 - Vermilion: Yellow Ochre	1:1 - Vermilion: Yellow Ochre
Hair	Burnt Sienna	Burnt Sienna	Burnt Sienna
Robe, Belt	Napthol Red Crimson	Crimson	Crimson
Tunic	2:1 - Storm Blue:Turners Yellow	2:1 - Pthalo Green: Yellow Medium	2:1 - Pthalo Green: Yellow Medium
Wings	Gold Oxide	1:1 - Burnt Sienna: Vermilion	2:1 - Vermilion: Burnt Sienna
Breastplate	Gold Oxide	Yellow Ochre	Yellow Ochre
Inner Wing, Headband	1:1:1 - Prussian Blue: Napthol Crimson: Titanium White	1:1:1 - Ultramarine: Crimson: Titanium White	1:1:1 - Ultramarine: Deep Red: Titanium White
Halo	---	You can build up layers in a circular motion adding Yellow Ochre	Yellow Ochre



Second Light

The second light covers approximately 2/3 of the first light area.

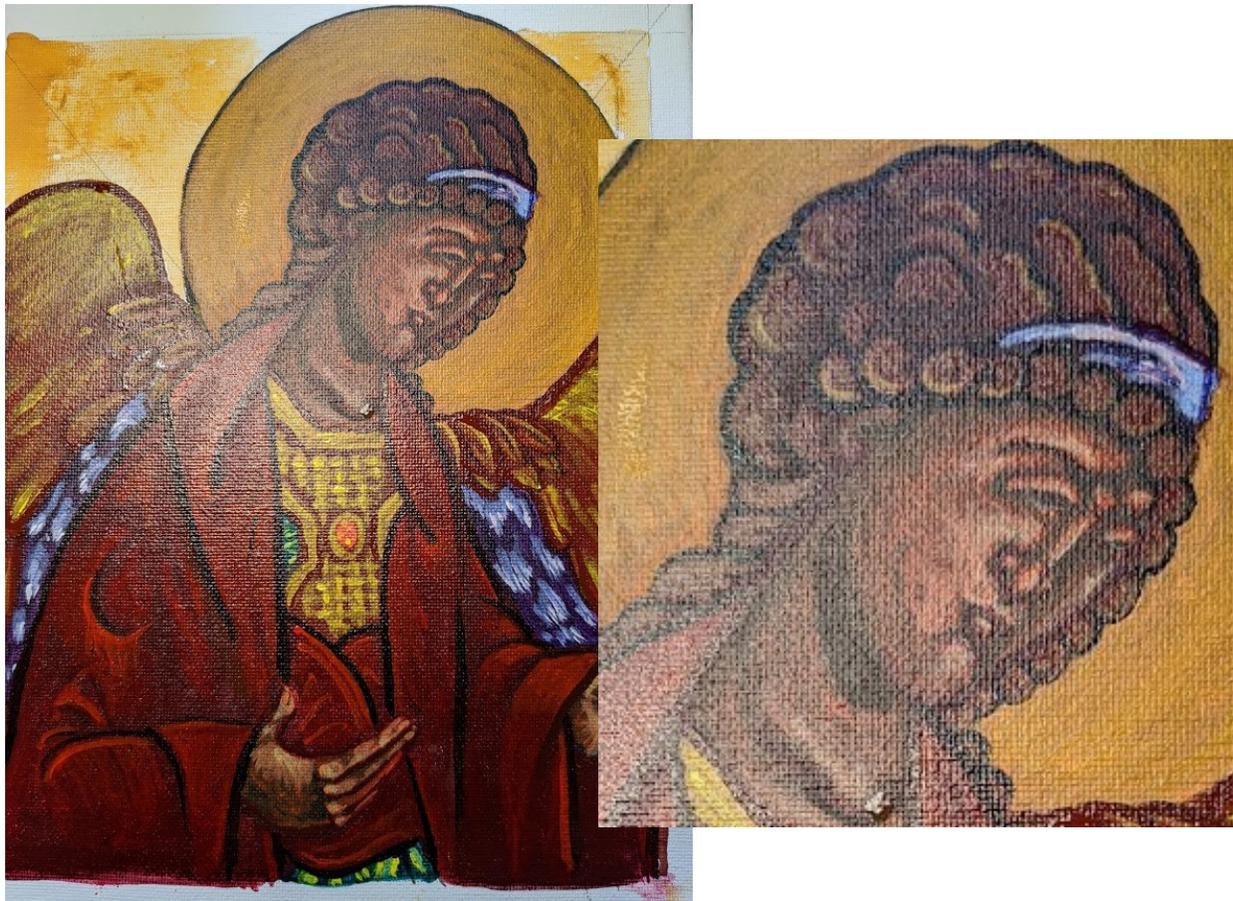
AREA/PAINT BRAND	JO SONJA	MASTER'S TOUCH	ARTIST LOFT
Face, Neck, Hands	2:1 - Yellow Oxide: Titanium White	2:1 - Yellow Ochre: Titanium White	3:2:1 - Yellow Ochre: Titanium White: Vermilion
Hair	1:1 - Burnt Sienna: Yellow Oxide	1:1 - Burnt Sienna: Yellow Ochre	1:1 - Burnt Sienna: Yellow Ochre
Robe, Belt	Naphthol Red Light	Scarlet	Brilliant Red
Tunic	1:2 - Storm Blue: Turners Yellow	2:1 - Yellow Medium: Pthalo Green	2:1 - Lemon Yellow: Pthalo Green
Wings	Yellow Oxide	Yellow Deep	1:1 - Orange: Lemon Yellow
Breastplate	Yellow Oxide	Yellow Deep (Jewel can be painted Titanium White)	1:1 - Yellow Ochre: Lemon Yellow
Inner Wing, Headband	1:1:2 - Prussian Blue: Naphthol Crimson: Titanium White	1:1:2 - Ultramarine: Crimson: Titanium White	1:1:2 - Ultramarine: Crimson: Titanium White
Halo	---	You can build up layers in a circular motion adding Yellow Deep	You can build up layers in a circular motion adding Yellow Deep



Third light

- The third light creates striking highlights and more depth to the icon.
- Third light should cover about 2/3 of the second light.

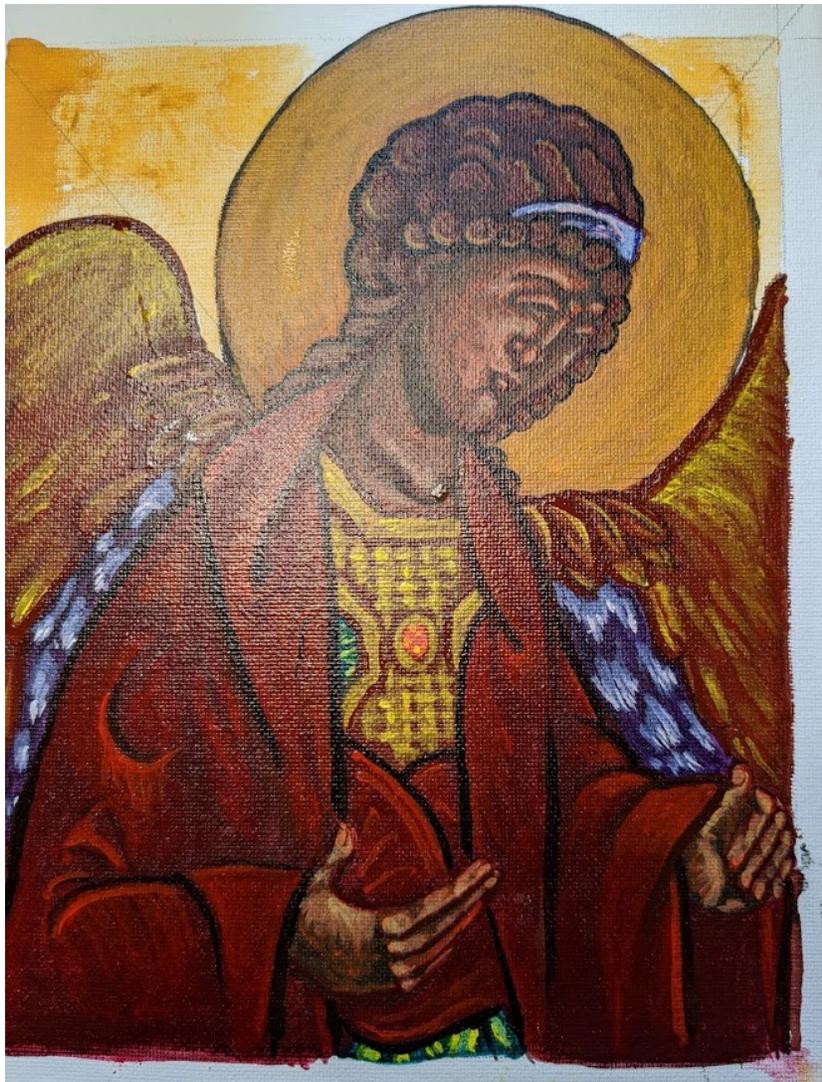
AREA/PAINT BRAND	JO SONJA	MASTER'S TOUCH	ARTIST LOFT
Face, Neck, Hands	1:1 - Yellow Oxide: Titanium White	1:1 - Yellow Ochre: Titanium White	1:1 - Yellow Ochre: Titanium White
Hair	Yellow Oxide	Yellow Ochre	Yellow Ochre
Robe, Belt	Vermilion	Vermilion	Vermilion
Tunic	1:1:1 - Storm Blue: Turners Yellow: Titanium White	1:1 - Phtalo Green: Titanium White	1:1 - Phtalo Green: Titanium White
Wings	Indian Yellow	Lemon Yellow	Lemon Yellow
Breastplate	Indian Yellow	Yellow Medium (Jewel can be painted thinly with Vermilion)	Naples Yellow (Jewel can be painted thinly with Vermilion)
Inner Wing, Headband	1:1:3 - Prussian Blue: Naphthol Crimson: Titanium White	1:1:3 - Ultramarine: Crimson: Titanium White	1:1:3 - Ultramarine: Crimson: Titanium White



Restoring the outer lines and some key folds

Reinstating the lines cleans up the image.

AREA/PAINT BRAND	JO SONJA	MASTER'S TOUCH	ARTIST LOFT
Face, Neck, Hands	Indian Red Oxide	1:1 - Crimson: Burnt Umber	1:1 - Deep Red: Burnt Umber
Hair	Carbon Black	Permanent Black	Ivory Black
Robe, Belt	Burnt Umber	Burnt Umber	Burnt Umber
Tunic	Carbon Black	Ultramarine	Ultramarine
Wings	Burnt Sienna	Burnt Sienna	Burnt Sienna
Breastplate	Red Earth	Burnt Sienna (paint a few facets of the jewel Crimson)	1:1 - Burnt Sienna, Brilliant Red (paint a few facets of the jewel Crimson)
Inner Wing, Headband	Carbon Black	Permanent Black	Ivory Black





Details

AREA/PAINT BRAND	JO SONJA	MASTER'S TOUCH	ARTIST LOFT
Eyebrows, Lashes	Burnt Umber	Burnt Umber	1:1 - Burnt Umber: Ivory Black
Cornea, Iris, Cornea	Burnt Sienna, Carbon Black, Titanium White	Burnt Sienna, Permanent Black, Titanium White	Burnt Sienna, Permanent Black
Enlivening Lines	1:1 - Titanium White: Indian Yellow	1:1 - Titanium White: Yellow Deep	1:1 - Titanium White: Yellow Deep
Finger nails - distal edge, lunula - i.e., white part	Titanium White	Titanium White	Titanium White
Staff	Vermilion	Vermilion	Pthalo Green (Vermilion does not cover in this brand as well as in others)
Line around halo, Lettering	1:1 - Indian Red Oxide:Naphthol Crimson	Crimson	Crimson

Background

This background was created by building up layers.

AREA/PAINT BRAND	JO SONJA	MASTER'S TOUCH	ARTIST LOFT
First Layer	Yellow Oxide	Yellow Ochre	Yellow Ochre
Second Layer - daubed with Q-Tip	Burnt Sienna	Burnt Sienna	Burnt Sienna
Third Layer - daubed with Q-Tip	Indian Yellow	Yellow Deep	Yellow Deep
Fourth Layer - daubed with Q-Tip	Turners Yellow	Lemon Yellow	Lemon Yellow
Fifth Layer - Thin Wash	2:1 - Yellow Oxide: Titanium White	2:1 - Yellow Ochre: Titanium White	2:1 - Yellow Ochre: Titanium White



Other ways to create a background:

- Lay down some water and drop paint into it, swirl it a little, let it dry.
- Paint a solid background of a color that does not compete with the colors in St. Michael.
- Lay down a color that has good coverage, then while still wet, daub carefully with a dry paper towel (this works a bit better if done before you start the icon).