



Grand Prince Basil III.  
Mural, 1652-1666

**CHRONICLE**

1333. Ivan I lays foundation for a small church dedicated to St. Michael and entrusts his successors to bury him there.  
1505-1508. On the place of the old church a new cathedral is built by Alevis Novi, a specially invited Italian architect.  
1508. Remains of Russian princes are transported in the cathedral.  
1564-1565. By order of Ivan the Terrible, the cathedral is painted with frescoes.  
2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the western part, two small one-domed chapels are added: the chapel of the Intercession and the chapel of Saint John the Baptist.  
1630. Old gravestones are replaced with new ones.  
1652-1666. Cathedral is newly painted under the direction of Simon Ushakov.  
1679-1682. A new iconostasis is made.  
1730. Peter II is the last monarch to be buried in the cathedral.  
1772. Following a project by Vasilii Bazhenov, the building is reinforced by white stone buttresses.  
1820-1824. Restoration of the cathedral after the French invasion.  
1830-1840. On the south-western part, a stone pavilion is added.  
1918. The liturgies cease in the cathedral.  
1991. The liturgies are resumed.  
2008. The chapel of St. Varus receives the relics of the Venerable Euphrosyne, by her secular name Princess Eudocia, wife of Dmitry Donskoy.



Murals were created during the reign of Tsar Alexis. Frescoes on the southern and northern walls narrate the feats of St. Michael. One can see the **Symbol of Faith** on the western wall and the stylized portraits of the princes buried in the cathedral above their tombs.

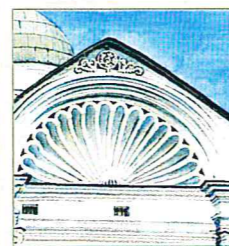
The **Paternity** painted in the central dome of the cathedral illustrates the concept of the Divine Trinity, picturing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.



The interior of the cathedral was arranged by Alevis Novi. Massive columns and pilasters are mounted on the high bases. Four square columns divide the space into three naves. A cornice is situated in the upper part of the walls, on the level of skewbacks of the arch walls. The altar part is enclosed by a high iconostasis placed on a solea, a three-step eminence. There are three entries to the cathedral, two of which have carved white stone portals.



Windows-medallions



Gables-niches

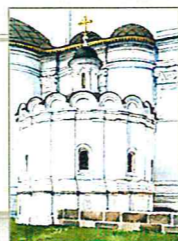
The design is an organic merger of Russian and Italian architecture. A Greek-cross cathedral with an Italian Renaissance facade is crowned with five Russian domes. A horizontal cornice divides the walls in two levels. The bottom level is decorated with a **false arcade** and the top level with **wide slats**. The white-stone shell-shaped **gables** are supported with **pilasters**. The central gable of the western facade is decorated with round **windows-medallions**. Northern and western entrances are framed with carved white stone portals with a plant ornament.

1. Western portal
2. Loggia of the western annex
3. South-western column
4. Shrine of the Tsarevich Dmitry
5. South-eastern column
6. Gravestones of princes and Tsars
7. Southern entrance

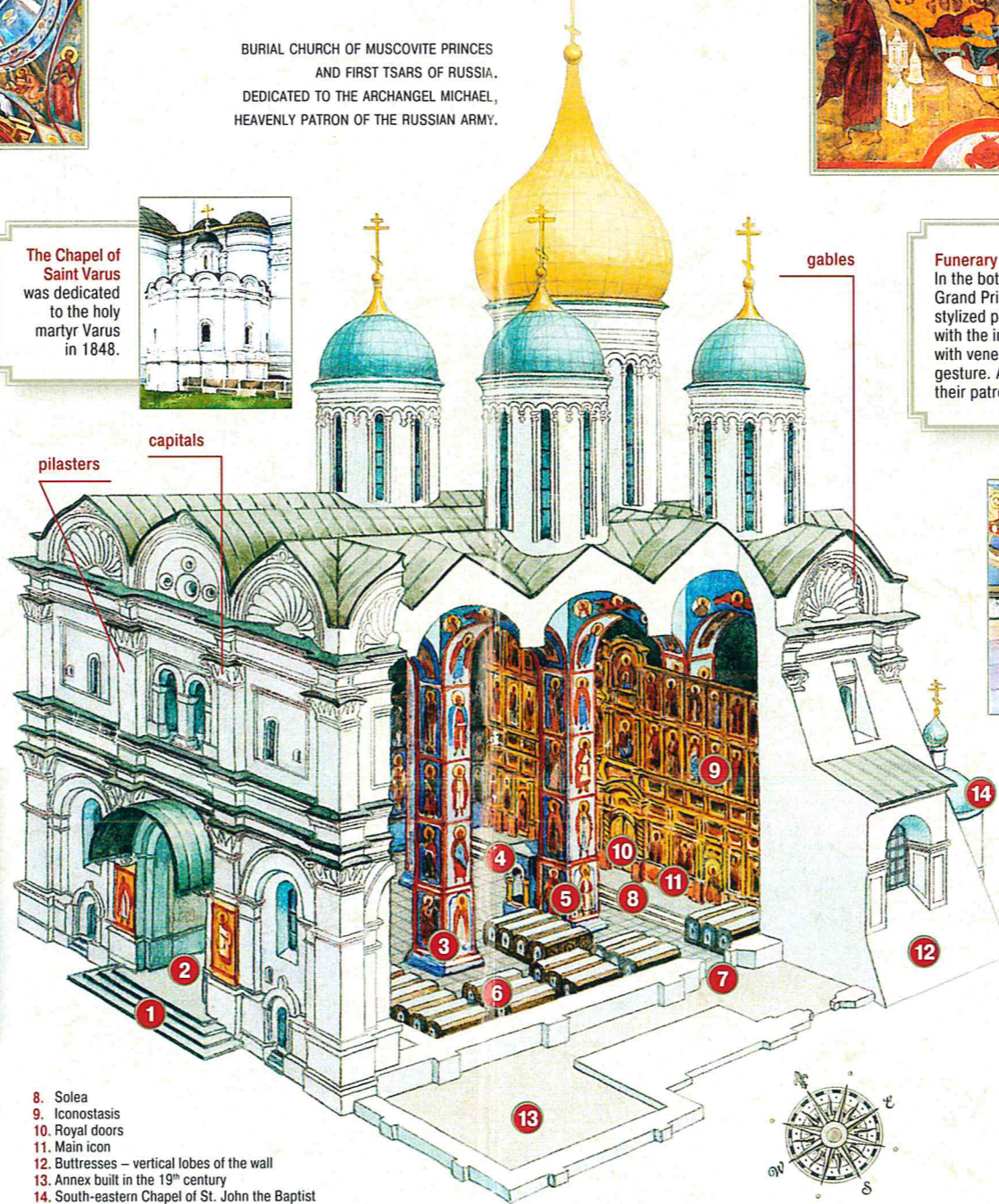


**Holy Virgin "The Grace-Giving Heaven"**, 1678-1679. It is a copy of an icon that was brought to Moscow by the Lithuanian Princess Sophia, wife of Basil I. The icon follows the western European image of the Virgin.

The **Chapel of Saint Varus** was dedicated to the holy martyr Varus in 1848.



**capitals**  
**pilasters**



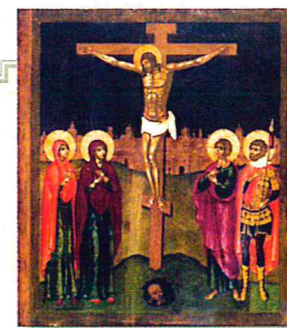
8. Solea
9. Iconostasis
10. Royal doors
11. Main icon
12. Buttresses - vertical lobes of the wall
13. Annex built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century
14. South-eastern Chapel of St. John the Baptist



**Meeting of the Lord** is an icon of the Festival tier of the iconostasis, painted in 1680-1681. It represents the meeting of the pious elder Simeon and the prophetess Anne with the Son of God.



**St. Theodore Stratelates**, an icon of the Veneration tier of the iconostasis (1680). The holy patron of the Tsar Fyodor III is depicted in full uniform of a general. In his left hand, he holds a spear and a shield, and in his right hand an eight-pointed cross - the symbol of the martyrdom.



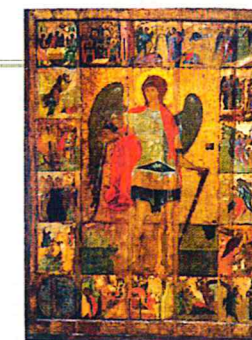
**Crucifixion**, an icon of the Festival tier. Painted in 1681 by Mikhail Milyutin, it's the only icon in the iconostasis where on which the name of the artist was found by restorers.

# ARCHANGEL CATHEDRAL OF THE MOSCOW KREMLIN

BURIAL CHURCH OF MUSCOVITE PRINCES AND FIRST TSARS OF RUSSIA. DEDICATED TO THE ARCHANGEL MICHAEL, HEAVENLY PATRON OF THE RUSSIAN ARMY.

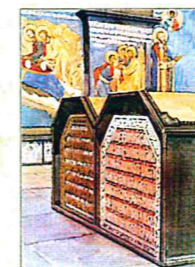


**Gideon defeats the Madianite army.** The fresco is situated in the third row on the southern wall.



Archangel Michael with the Deeds of Angels. Main icon, end of 14<sup>th</sup> century

**Funerary portraits** are a unique feature of the cathedral. In the bottom part of the walls, above the graves of the Grand Princes and apange princes of Moscow, their stylized portraits are painted. The historical gallery starts with the image of the Grand Prince Ivan I Kalita. They look with veneration to the altar; their hands are raised in a pious gesture. Above their heads there are halos. In the medallions, their patron saints are depicted.



White stone graves



Funerary portrait of Dmitry Donskoy

The **royal necropolis of the cathedral** is the greatest one in Russia. The burials took part here between 1340 and 1730. Sarcophagi were put in the earth under the floor and funeral monuments with white stone plates were put above them. The necropolis counts more than fifty graves. The oldest of them are situated near the southern wall, including Grand Princes Ivan I, Dmitry Donskoy, Ivan III. The apange princes were buried near the western wall, those out of favour near the northern one. Ivan the Terrible and two his sons lay in the special Tsar vault in the altar part. The graves of the Romanov dynasty members are located near the columns.

The **iconostasis of the cathedral** consists of four tiers. It's crowned by the Crucifixion with the Virgin and St. John the Divine interceding. Four-meter wooden figures were painted by Mikhail Milyutin and Fyodor Zubov, the Tsar's artists. Almost all icons were created in 1679-1682. In the center of the topmost Prophets tier there is an image of the Holy Virgin, sitting solemnly on the throne and holding the Infant in her lap. All prophets hold scrolls with the words of prophecies. In the center of the Deisis tier there is a five-figure composition of the **Christ in Majesty** (in the centre) with the Holy Virgin, St. Michael, St. John the Baptist and St. Gabriel interceding. The composition is flanked by four apostle icons on the left and four on the right. The Festival tier includes icons dedicated to Christian festivities. The most hallowed icons of the cathedral are in Veneration tier: **Virgin "The Grace-Giving Heaven"**, **Christ the High Priest**, and the main icon, the oldest one, **Archangel Michael with the Deeds of Angels**. It is said to be made on orders from Princess Eudocia, the widow of Dmitry Donskoy, who had a vision of St. Michael. The icon, painted around 1399, made part of the iconostasis of the old Archangel Church. St. Michael, a heavenly warrior, is depicted in the centrepiece, wearing armour and a red cloak. He is surrounded by eighteen border scenes depicting the deeds of angels.



Annunciation of Ustyug. Icon, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of 16<sup>th</sup> century

**Annunciation of Ustyug** is a copy of a hallowed Novgorod icon of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, made four centuries later. The mysterious creation of the Infant's flesh in the Holy Virgin's womb is visual, which is a peculiarity of this icon. On the bosom of the God's Mother it is possible to see the figure of the Divine Child not yet born.

# NECROPOLIS OF THE ARCHANGEL CATHEDRAL

The history of the necropolis of the Moscow dynasty of Rurikides and first Romanov tsars started in 1340 when Ivan I Danilovich Kalita who had ordered the building of the first stone church at this site, was buried inside his creation.

**1** Silver shrine for the holy relics of the most Orthodox Tsarevich Dmitry. The Tsarevich, youngest son of Ivan the Terrible, perished by accident in the town of Uglich – or was killed – in 1591. In 1606, he was canonized as a martyr. A shrine with his relics was kept in the Archangel cathedral and stolen by French soldiers in 1812. Next year, a new shrine was made by the artisan Dmitry Likhmanov. A carved white stone canopy was installed above the shrine.



The icon of Venerable Euphrosyne in the Chapel of St. Varus.



The carved white stone plate of the grave of the Prince Dmitry, grandson of Ivan III.



**2** Wooden shrine for the holy relics of the Prince Mikhail of Chernigov. The Prince, who had been summoned to the Court of the Khan of the Golden Horde and murdered there in 1246, was later canonized by the Russian church as a martyr. In 1570-s, his relics were transported from Chernigov to Moscow on orders from Ivan the Terrible and with the blessing of the Metropolitan Antony. The copper reliquary with the relics was placed in a wooden shrine made in 1688. The Prince Mikhail, the Chernigov martyr and miracle-worker, is depicted on its cover. The shrine was transported in the Archangel Cathedral in 1774 and stays near the northern wall.



**6** Ivan I Danilovich Kalita, Prince of Moscow since 1325. An astute politician, he laid the foundation of the political and economic preeminence of Moscow.



**11** Ivan II Ivanovich the Red, Grand Prince since 1353. Second son of Ivan I, he contributed to the growth of the Moscow domains.



**10** Dmitry Ivanovich Donskoy, Grand Prince since 1359. In 1380, he defeated the Tatars on the Kulikovo field near the Don river, earning his nickname.



**12** Basil I Dmitrievich, Grand Prince since 1389, eldest son of Dmitry Donskoy. He enlarged his domains by buying new realms from the Great Khan.



**9** Basil II Vasilievich the Blind, Grand Prince since 1425. He defeated his enemies within the Principdom of Moscow in a bloody civil war.

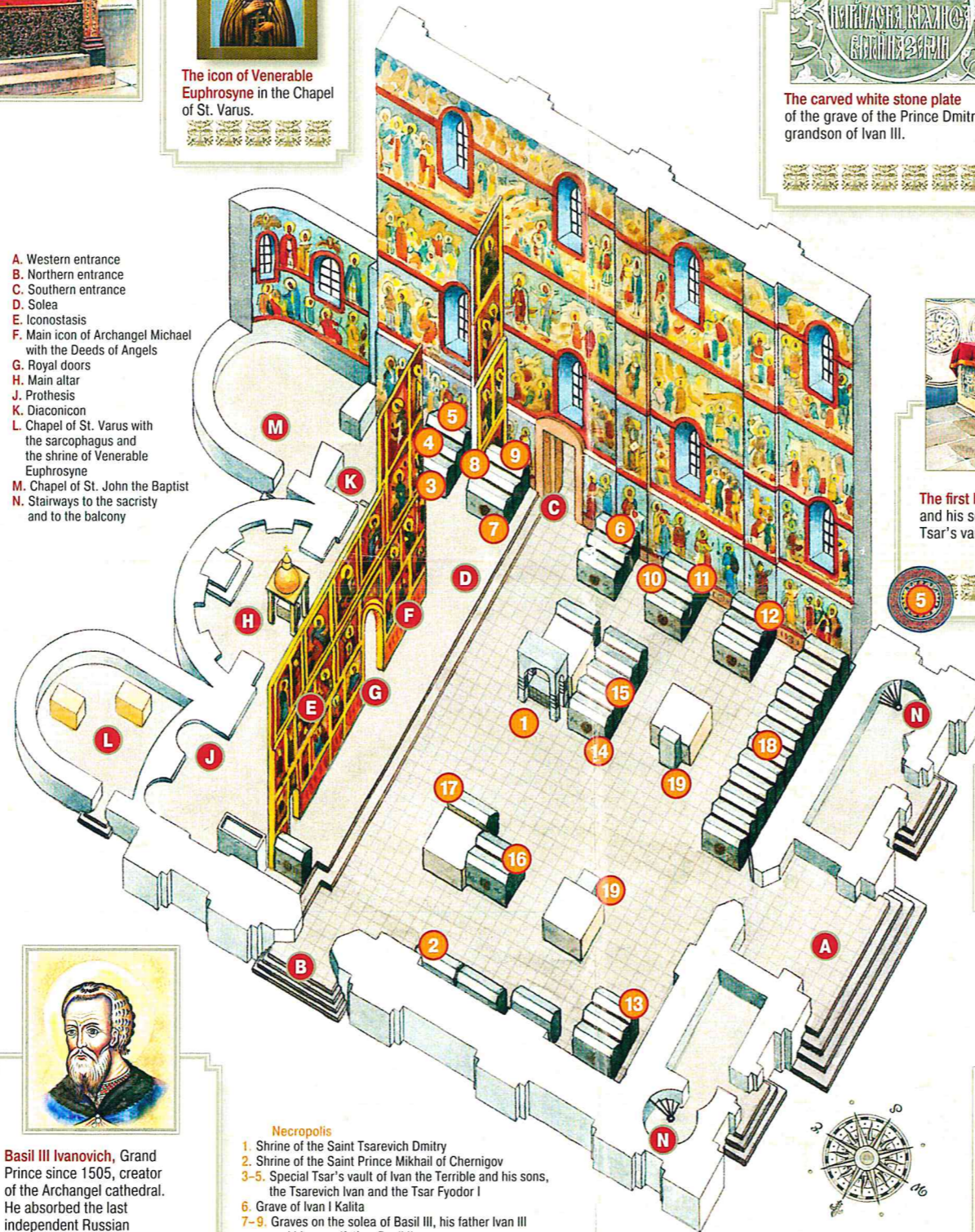


**8** Ivan III Vasilievich, Grand Prince since 1462. He liberated Muscovy from the Tatar yoke and united most Russian lands under his power, creating a powerful centralized state.



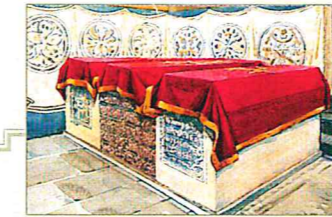
**7** Basil III Ivanovich, Grand Prince since 1505, creator of the Archangel cathedral. He absorbed the last independent Russian principedoms in his monarchy.

- A. Western entrance
- B. Northern entrance
- C. Southern entrance
- D. Solea
- E. Iconostasis
- F. Main icon of Archangel Michael with the Deeds of Angels
- G. Royal doors
- H. Main altar
- J. Prothesis
- K. Diaconicon
- L. Chapel of St. Varus with the sarcophagus and the shrine of Venerable Euphrosyne
- M. Chapel of St. John the Baptist
- N. Stairways to the sacristy and to the balcony



## Necropolis

- 1 Shrine of the Saint Tsarevich Dmitry
- 2 Shrine of the Saint Prince Mikhail of Chernigov
- 3-5 Special Tsar's vault of Ivan the Terrible and his sons, the Tsarevich Ivan and the Tsar Fyodor I
- 6 Grave of Ivan I Kalita
- 7-9 Graves on the solea of Basil III, his father Ivan III and his grandfather Basil II
- 10-12 Graves of the Grand Princes near the southern wall – Dmitry Donskoy, Ivan II the Red, Basil I
- 13 Grave of Basil IV Shuisky
- 14-17 Graves of the Romanov dynasty – Alexis, Mikhail, Fyodor III and Peter II
- 18 Graves of the appanage princes
- 19 Gravestones of the Tatar noblemen who adopted the Orthodox religion



The first Russian Tsar Ivan IV the Terrible and his sons Ivan and Fyodor lie in a special Tsar's vault in the altar part of the cathedral.



Ritual vases from the burials of Ivan the Terrible and his sons, 16<sup>th</sup> century.



**14** Alexis Mikhailovich the Most Quiet, Tsar since 1645. He started the reforms that were continued by his sons Fyodor III and Peter I.



**5** Ivan IV Vasilievich the Terrible, Grand Prince since 1533, first Russian Tsar since 1547. He conducted various administrative, law and military reforms.



**3** Fyodor I Ivanovich – last Tsar of the Rurikide dynasty, coronated in 1584. During his reign Western Siberia was annexed, Volga region opened up to Russian settlers.



**13** Basil IV Ivanovich Shuisky, Tsar since 1606. During the Time of Troubles, he was elected Tsar by boyars. Died in Polish captivity in 1612.



**15** Mikhail Fyodorovich, first Tsar of the Romanov dynasty. He was elected by the Assembly of the Land in 1613, which ended the Time of Troubles.



**16** Fyodor III Alekseevich, Tsar of Russia since 1676. He was an enlightened ruler, consolidated union with Eastern Ukraine, started preparing military reforms.



**17** Peter II Alekseevich, Emperor of Russia since 1727. Last of Russian tsars to be buried in the necropolis of the Archangel cathedral in 1730.