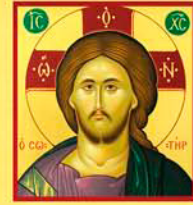




ICONOLOGICAL STUDIES



FIRST STUDY



THE HOLY ICON OF ALL SAINTS

*An Attempt at a
New Approach*

*From the Icon Studios of the Holy Monasteries of Sts.
Cyprian and Justina, Phyle, Attica and
of the Holy Angels, Aphidnai, Attica*

2004



The Holy Icon



THE HOLY ICON OF ALL SAINTS

An Attempt at a New Approach

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THE HOLY ICON OF ALL SAINTS

An Attempt at a New Approach

I. Three Fundamental Presuppositions

1. *Creative continuity*

IN THE FIRST PLACE, our endeavor bypasses the false dilemma, “creation or imitation?” which is constantly at issue and which pertains to all of the ecclesiastical arts in general, including their foundation, namely, Orthodox theology.

(i) Our new approach presupposes a firm belief in living Tradition. On this basis, a creative continuity, which has a restorative and transformative impact and influence on the history of the Church, has always existed within the charismatic boundaries of the Orthodox Church.

(ii) This means that the Church, as a realm within which the continuous present of God is dynamically experienced—“a dwelling-place of the infinite Fashioner”¹—never succumbs to the temptation to adhere slavishly to the past; were this to happen, then her character would assuredly be static, that is, ahistorical and, consequently, monophysite, and not soteriological.

(iii) The living presence and witness of the Church—in this case, by virtue of her liturgical arts—, entails, in essence, a continuous process, whereby the genuine and proven elements of her Tradition are creatively reappropriated, in order that they

¹ Orthros for the Sunday of Pentecost, First Canon, Ode 9, *Heirmos*.

might be “incarnated” in their new historical environment, and that in this way the challenges of any given historical present might be profitably confronted.

(iv) The desideratum has always been the transformative appropriation, in the Holy Spirit, of the present, as a continuation and “augmentation” of the ever-living past, in the restorative perspective of the future, that is, of the Kingdom of God, which is already present.

(v) In speaking ecclesiastically about past, present, and future, we have in mind the indivisible and unified realm of sacred history, in which the continuous present of God exists dynamically—a “realm in which God reveals Himself”—just as life is dynamically present and unified in the root, the trunk, and the branches of a tree.

(vi) Thus, far removed from the spurious pseudo-dilemmas of conservatism versus liberalism, or ahistoricity versus secularization, which are “rudiments of this world,”² the artistic nucleus of Orthodoxy, as a charismatic reality, is always new, ever “renewed” and “renewing,” that is, ever “contemporary,” as a continuous manifestation of the “New Creation”: “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”³

2. Christocentric creation

IN THE SECOND PLACE, our endeavor aims to underscore anew, and with particular emphasis, the Christocentricity of Orthodox ecclesiastical Iconography.

(i) A fundamental tenet of Orthodox theology is that the sanctified members of the Church, who bear the “form” and “type” of Christ, are “one in Christ Jesus”;⁴ that is to say, they

² Galatians 4:3; Colossians 2:8.

³ II Corinthians 5:17.

⁴ Galatians 3:27-28.

“resemble” Christ, are “similar” to each other, and, consequently, possess features in common with Christ and with each other.

(ii) “Each of the Baptized,” says St. Theophylact of Bulgaria, “has cast off his natural attributes; and all have put on a single figure and a single form, not of an Angel, but of the Master Himself, showing forth Christ in themselves. Hence, we are all one in Christ Jesus; that is, in that we have one form, that of Christ, imposed on us.”⁵

(iii) “We, too, become Christs, insofar as we suffer.”⁶

“And all Christians who suffer for the sake of Christ become Christs themselves insofar as they suffer.”⁷

(iv) Christians “have put on Christ,”⁸ that is, they “are clad in God,” since through the Incarnation the true God “has clad Himself in all of us”:

“All who are Spirit-bearers are clad in light, and all who are clad in light have put on Christ, and all who have put on Christ have put on the Father.”⁹

(v) This Christocentric and soteriological truth will be experienced in its fullness during the eternal Eighth Day, that is, the Kingdom of God, in which there will be no waning or darkness:

For another sun makes this day, the sun that shines forth the True Light; since it has shone upon us once and for all, it is no longer hidden in the sunset, but, embracing all things by its illuminative power, it instills continuous and perpetual light in those who are

⁵ “Commentary on Galatians,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CXXIV, col. 996B.

⁶ “Commentary on Philippians,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CXXIV, col. 1184D.

⁷ St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite, *Παύλου αἱ Δέκα Τέσσαρες Ἐπιστολαὶ Ἐρμηνευθεῖσαι ὑπὸ Θεοφυλάκτου Ἀρχιεπισκόπου Βουλγαρίας* [*The Fourteen Epistles of St. Paul Interpreted by Theophylact, Archbishop of Bulgaria*] (Venice: 1819), Vol. II, p. 337.

⁸ Galatians 3:27.

⁹ St. Athanasios the Great, cited by St. Nikodemos in *Παύλου αἱ Δέκα Τέσσαρες Ἐπιστολαὶ*, Vol. I, p. 160, n.1.

worthy, making other suns out of those who share in that Light.¹⁰

(vi) This commonality between Christ and Christians, through which we all become “one,” —that is, the one “form” of Christ impressed upon all who “bear the form of Christ [χριστομόρφους]”¹¹ upon all who are, in other words, Christs according to Grace in the light of the Holy Trinity—, when expressed pictorially in a clear and emphatic way, ultimately reveals the Icon as the Icon of the God-Man, that is, as a Christocentric creation, even if the Icon is comprised of many persons and events.

3. Eschatological identity

FINALLY, our endeavor naturally presupposes the eschatological identity of the holy Icon, which is borne out, moreover, by its three liturgical dimensions.

(i) First, we are reminded that since it is a function of the Church to disclose to us the age to come, that is, the Kingdom of God, and also to provide us with the possibility of participating therein (“Mysteriological realism”), it follows that the nature of the Church, her ontology, is eschatological.

(ii) Since the Church derives her hypostasis from the future, that is, since the roots of her tree are to be found in the eschatological realm, she “presentifies” the Kingdom of God here and now within the contours of her Mysteries; the entire life in Christ, and also the means that serve and express this life, are constantly illumined by the unwaning Light of the Eighth Day.

(iii) The holy Icon is not simply an “aperture” through which we see what lies beyond, the eschatological future, but is designated by the historico-eschatological Body of Christ, and

¹⁰ St. Gregory of Nyssa, “Exposition of the Sixth Psalm,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XLIV, col. 612A.

¹¹ Cf. St. John of Damascus, “Homily on the Annunciation,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCVI, col. 657A.

exclusively within its boundaries, as the pictorial medium that even now “presentifies” what transcends history.

(iv) The indisputably eschatological character of the Icon is manifest at the three levels of its exclusively ecclesiastical functioning:

1. He who honors and “venerates” through the Icon “the hypostasis of what is depicted”¹² communes with the person portrayed in the Icon; that is, he already participates, by means of the Icon, in eschatological reality.

2. The Holy Icon, in a preternatural way and by a preternatural rationale, becomes a channel of Divine Grace, which deifies the one who venerates it. Thus, the latter, by means of the Icon, is introduced, even now, into the eschatological realm.

“Divine Grace is given to material elements through the prayers addressed to those depicted in Icons.”¹³

3. The Icon functions like the sacred books of Holy Writ and the Holy Fathers, that is, pedagogically and didactically;¹⁴ consequently, he who “reads” the Icon is initiated into Orthodox theology, which, moreover, is apocalyptic, that is, eschatological.

(v) It is, therefore, evident that, with reference especially to the aforementioned points in §1, (i)-(vi) of the present chapter (I), the Orthodox iconographer is called to work first and foremost in a theological spirit, that is, to express in pictorial terms the dogmatic truth of the Church, her experience in Christ. His

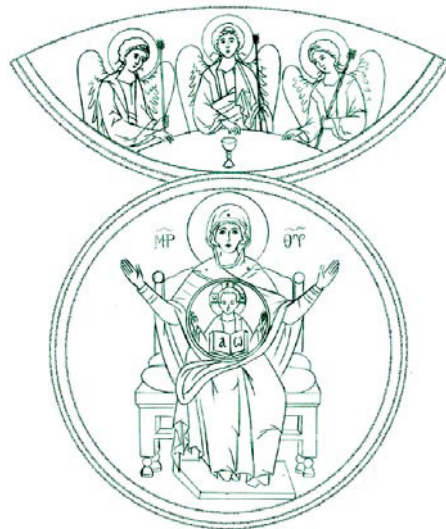
¹² “Decree” of the Seventh Œcumenical Synod, in Ioannes N. Karmires, *Τὰ Δογματικά και Συμβολικά Μνημεία τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (The dogmatic and credal monuments of the Orthodox Catholic Church) (Athens: 1952), Vol. I, p. 204.

¹³ St. John of Damascus, “First Apologetic Discourse Against Those Who Attack the Holy Icons,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIV, col. 1264B.

¹⁴ Cf. St. John of Damascus, “First Apologetic Discourse,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIV, col. 1268A-C; St. Theodore the Studite, “Epistle II.36,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1213A; “Epistle II.171,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIX, col. 1537CD.

personal style, enlivened by his charismatic relationship with the Divine Comforter,

is, precisely in this respect, most important and most noteworthy: the more deeply and more truly he is able to present the spirit, the profundity, and the essence of the Church, the more faithfully is he able to express her mystical experience in the Holy Spirit.¹⁵



¹⁵ Andreas Theodorou.

II. The Holy Icon of All Saints

1. A preëminently dogmatic Icon

IN THE FIRST PLACE, our new approach takes it for granted that the holy Icon of All Saints is a preëminently dogmatic Icon; that is, it is dogmatic in the broadest sense of the word.

(i) This assumption is to be understood primarily on the basis of our proposal, which will be set forth below in greater detail: that the Icon should consist of three conjoint and partially intersecting sections or “levels.”

(ii) This basis, like other points in our new approach, presupposes our hermeneutical work *“The Mystery of the Rapture: The Deifying Experience of the ‘Rapture’ of the Apostle Paul ‘to the Third Heaven,’ that is, ‘to Paradise’ (II Corinthians 12:2-4)”* (unpublished).

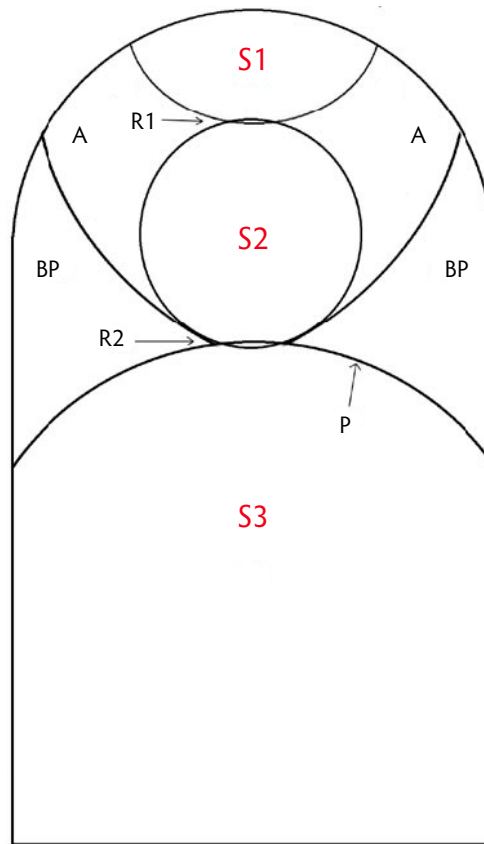
(iii) The three conjoint sections, upper-middle-lower, correspond to Triadology, Christology, and Ecclesiology.

(iv) All of the other dogmas flow from these three and are included in them, as we shall point out in detail in what follows.

2. The three sections of the Icon

NEXT, FOR THE sake of brevity, we will characterize the three sections of the Icon as S1 (the upper section), S2 (the middle section), and S3 (the lower section) [see Diagram 1].

Diagram 1



(i) The Holy Trinity, that is, the historical event of the revelation to the Patriarch Abraham, will be placed in S1.

(ii) The Theotokos as Queen, holding Our Lord in her bosom, will be placed in S2.

(iii) The Church, that is, the *Synaxis* of the Saints, will be placed in S3.

(iv) This pictorial composite constitutes in general terms a reminder of the Divine Economy: One of the Trinity (Holy Trinity–Christ) becomes incarnate (Theotokos–Christ) and deifies man (Church–Christ).

(v) This pictorial composite also constitutes the Icon of the Kingdom of God: the Lord “dwells” and “walks” among His People, that is, the Church, which is His Temple; in addition, the

People of Grace live in the Father, reconciled with Him through the Economy of the Son, Who was incarnate “of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary” and united us with God in His Body and Blood.

For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.¹⁶

(vi) S1, S2, and S3 are not simply conjoined, but one partially overlaps or intersects with the other, thereby alluding to the unitive theme of the three fundamental dogmas: God (S1) became incarnate (S2), in order that we might become His Body (S3).

3. The upper section (S1)

TO BEGIN WITH, in S1 there should be a reminder of the fundamental distinction between the unapproachable and incommunicable Divine Essence and the approachable and communicable Divine Energies.

(i) The unapproachability of the Divine Essence is suggested by three elements: first, S1 is located in the topmost (the “remotest”) point of the Icon; secondly, it is smaller in extent than S2 and S3; and thirdly, the area (A) around S1 is quite large.

(ii) The approachability of the Divine Energies is suggested by two elements: first, by the historicity of the event of the Hospitality of Abraham; and secondly, by the region, R1, in which S1 and S2 intersect (God becomes incarnate and shares in our nature).

(iii) Finally, it might perhaps be necessary for the table of hospitality to be placed in front of the Divine Persons, in order to lend a Eucharistic character to the event, one directly connected with S3. In this case there will be only one cup on the table, similar to that in S3, to indicate that it is the same Eucharist.

¹⁶ II Corinthians 6:16.

4. The middle section (S2)

FIRST AND FOREMOST, in S2 there should be a reminder of the truths of the Christological dogma, that is, of the Mystery of the Incarnation: the Incarnation has revealed the Triune God to us (S1); it has brought us into communion with God (R1) through the flesh of the Son, Who assumed this flesh from the Theotokos (S2); this flesh “subsists” in the Church (S3); the Mystery of the Incarnation (S2) and the Mystery of the Church intersect (R2).

(i) The Mystery of the Incarnation, as the only new thing under the sun,¹⁷ as the goal and culmination of creation, as the Great Counsel of God for mankind and the whole of creation, should in principle occupy the most central section of the Icon, and secondly, should be expressed most properly and uniquely by the Theotokos enthroned as the Queen of all, holding Our Lord in her bosom (not as *Ἀγκαλοφοροῦσα* [embracing] or *Γλυκοφιλοῦσα* [sweetly kissing]).

‘This is Mary the Theotokos,’ ‘the Cherubic Throne,’ ‘who holds the King and Lord of Hosts in her bosom.’¹⁸

(ii) Next, since the place of the Mother of God, “the cause of the deification of all,”¹⁹ occupies a unique place in the Mystery of Salvation, and since her contribution thereto is not confined to the historical moment of the Incarnation, it is necessary that she be situated in such an emphatic way in S2 for the sake of underscoring the following points: she holds “second place after the Trinity,”²⁰ for which reason the Heavenly Powers are not placed

¹⁷ St. John of Damascus, *Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, III.1, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCIV, col. 984B, alluding to Ecclesiastes 1:9.

¹⁸ St. Andrew of Crete, “Homily on the Nativity of the Theotokos,” *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. XCVII, col. 880CD.

¹⁹ Canon of the *Akathistos* to the Theotokos, Ode 6, *Troparion* 1.

²⁰ St. Andrew of Crete, *Prosmoion* at Monday Orthros, Plagal of the First Tone, in St. Nikodemos the Hagiorite (ed.), *Θεοτοκάριον* (Bolos: Ek tou Typographeiou Hyion Sot. Schoina, 1974), p. 107.

between S1 and S2 in R1; she is the “frontier” between uncreated (S1) and created (S3) nature;²¹ she constitutes the “Ladder by which God came down” (S1—S2);²² she is the “Bridge conveying those of earth unto Heaven” (S3—S2—S1).²³

(iii) Next, S2 should indicate the constant and truly central “presence” of the Queen of all in Sacred History, since through the Incarnation of One of the Trinity from her and since “she lent flesh to the Word Who hath devised all things,”²⁴ the flesh of the God-Man, that is, the flesh of the All-Pure Virgin, is the life-giving “center” of the Church.

(iv) Finally, the Theotokos, as the Throne of God and “dwelling-place of [her] infinite Fashioner,”²⁵ is located above the Heavenly Bodiless Powers (BP), while the gifts of God (S1) are conveyed through the All-Pure Mary, by virtue of the Incarnation (S2), to the Bodiless Powers (BP), and through them to the Church (S3).

(v) The Most Blessed Theotokos is not outside or above the Church, but, as the Mother of God and of the Church, she “unites” and “joins together” the created and the Uncreated: “[she] ha[th] united God the Word to men by [her] strange birthgiving, and ha[th] joined the outcast nature of our kind to heavenly things”;²⁶ “Rejoice, thou who renderest the faithful suitable to the Lord.”²⁷

(vi) As a corollary of the foregoing, the Bodiless Powers (BP) are placed in a semi-circle inclining upwards, in order to sug-

²¹ St. Athanasios I, Patriarch of Constantinople, *Prosomoion* at Monday Orthros, Second Tone, *Θεοτοκάριον*, p. 57; cf. St. Gregory Palamas, “Homily XXXVII, ‘On the All-Venerable Dormition of Our Most Pure Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary,’” §15, *Ἑλληνας Πατέρες τῆς Ἐκκλησίας* (Thessalonica: Paterikai Ekdoseis “Gregorios ho Palamas,” 1985), Vol. X, p. 458.

²² *Akathistos* to the Theotokos, Oikos 2.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Orthros for the Sunday of Pentecost, First Canon, Ode 9, *Heirmos*.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ “Prayer to the Most Holy Theotokos,” Small Compline.

²⁷ *Akathistos* to the Theotokos, Oikos 10.

gest Heaven, and they almost fill the region R2, though in such a way as to express their “obeisance” towards God enthroned and the Mystery of the Incarnation (S2).

5. *The lower section (S3)*

SINCE THE DOGMA of the Church has to be emphasized in S3, and since the Eucharist is the center thereof, the depiction of the Divine Liturgy is deemed most suitable to this end: in this Christocentric Mystery, the Church, which constitutes “the fullness of Him that filleth all in all”²⁸ is actualized, the Kingdom of God is made manifest, the eschatological future is experienced as present, and finally, the sacred realm of the Church, as the Body of Christ, is shown forth as the continuous present of God, within which the Creation is “transformed into the Church.”

(i) “The eschatological Kingdom of Heaven will not be anything other than the Eucharistic Lord’s Supper of the Kingdom, the eternal Liturgy, that is, the Divine and eternal Communion of God the Father in Christ the God-Man through the Holy Spirit with all of us. And this precisely is the Church and the Kingdom.”²⁹

(ii) “Let us see how through this Divine rite and action of the sacred *Proskomide* we behold Jesus Himself and His entire Church united in Him, having in its midst Him Who is the True Light and eternal life, being both illumined and held together by Him. For He is present in the middle [of the Diskos—Trans.] through the Bread [i.e., the Lamb—Trans.]; His Mother is present through the particle on the right; the Saints and the Angels are on the left; below is the devout assembly of those who believe in Him. And this is the great mystery: God among men and God in the midst of gods [cf. Psalm 82:1, LXX], who are deified by Him Who is truly God by nature becoming incarnate for

²⁸ Ephesians 1:23.

²⁹ Bishop Atanasije (Jevtić).

their sake. And this is the Kingdom to come and the polity of eternal life: God with us, being both seen and partaken."³⁰

(iii) The experience of the future within the historical present—"realized eschatology"—is made possible by virtue of the Incarnation (S2): the God-Man, through the Incarnation, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection has brought us, and brings us, continually into communion with God the Father in the Holy Spirit through our participation in the Mystery of Pentecost.

(iv) Consequently, this "communion," which is to be identified with the Kingdom of God, since the latter is actualized and revealed in the Divine Liturgy, will have to be emphasized in S3 by the following elements: the Cross, the Altar, Christ liturgizing and imparting the Mysteries, the glory of the Resurrection, and the choirs of Saints.

(v) Finally, the implied partition P will have to be a semi-circle inclining slightly downwards, so as to suggest that the created, that is, humanity and creation, is now "joined," through the Incarnation, the Church, and the Eucharist, with the Uncreated, that is, Heaven.

6. Summary

(i) The creative continuity, the Christocentricity, and the eschatological character of our new proposal for representing the holy Icon of All Saints is very clear: we are attempting to produce a unified vision of the past, the present, and the future, which are inseparable in the sacred realm of the Theandric Body and united in the Person of the Incarnate Word, always in the context of the Kingdom of God, which is already present in Christ through the Theotokos within the Mysteriological boundaries of the Church.

(ii) "The Church lives in the Divine Eucharist and already enjoys a foretaste of the transcending of temporal division, a transcending of the distance between past, present, and future,

³⁰ St. Symeon of Thessalonica, *Dialogue Against All Heresies*, "Concerning the Sacred Liturgy," ch. 94, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. CLV, col. 285AB.

since she truly experiences their organic unity in Christ in such a way that the past receives a new reality in the present and that in this same liturgical present the future already becomes a present reality, the presence and foretaste of the last things.”³¹

(iii) The sacred “continuity” emphasized by this new approach would be indicated still more clearly by the open Gospel Book and the apocalyptic letters Α and Ω inscribed therein, since the God-Man is He Who was (past), He Who is (present), and He Who is to come (future), the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last,³² filling all things and present at all times, saving and glorifying the creation.

(iv) In Orthodox eschatology “the perspective is not primarily chronological,” that is, “it is not one of rectilinear historical evolution and progress, in the sense of successive and continuous chronological movement and progressive development towards what lies ahead,” but Christological, “a perspective within a single unique eschatological event, an event in which all of time and history are encompassed, but also transcended, fulfilled, and brought to a conclusion in the new age of the Kingdom of God. This event, for the Orthodox theology of the New Testament and the Fathers, is Christ, or the ‘Mystery of Christ.’”³³

(v) As the most suitable location for the Gospel Book we propose the hands of the Lord held in the Virgin’s bosom (S2), because the most powerful and fundamental message of this holy Icon is thus broadcast from its most central place.

(vi) In closing, such an articulation of our new approach, in which Heaven and earth are united, illumined by the renewing Light of the Three-Sunned Godhead, constitutes an emphatic reminder of eschatological reality, as this is stirringly described in the Book of Revelation:

³¹ Bishop Atanasije (Jevtić).

³² Revelation 1:8, 11.

³³ Bishop Atanasije (Jevtić).

'And I saw a new heaven and a new earth'; 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them'; 'And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new'; 'And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.'³⁴



³⁴ Revelation 21:1, 3, 5, 22, 23.

III. Dogmatic Truths and Depictional Media

1. *Depictional techniques*

SINCE THE HOLY Icon of All Saints will be painted in the traditional way, it follows that our “palette” will be the “classic” combination of gold and natural colors.

This being the case, the depictional techniques that we will employ, that is, the tools that we have at our disposal to express both the aforementioned dogmatic truths and the Christocentric and eschatological character of our proposed new depiction, are the following:

(i) composition: the balanced distribution of lines, surfaces, light, and colors, calculated in advance on the basis of our objectives;

(ii) light: the distribution, in the same way, of light and dark regions, and

(iii) color: the corresponding distribution of different chromatic qualities.

2. *Composition*

In chapter 2, §§2ff of the present work we explained how we will handle the layout so that we might thereby express the dogmatic truths of the holy Icon.

• Additionally, and in order to express in artistic terms the Christocentricity of our proposal (see ch. 1, §2), special care will be taken over the following points:

(i) To “structure” our composition according to its central axis, on which are located: the middle Person among the Three (S1), the persons of Our Lady, the Theotokos and the Christ Child (S2), and the Lord celebrating the Liturgy (S3).

This will be accomplished in the three following ways:

(a) by balancing the different elements of our composition in relation to the central axis;

(b) by balancing the remaining axes of our composition in relation to the central axis in a chiastic rhythm [e.g., with mirrored symmetry].

(c) by creating implied lines through various “recognizable marks,” which will be directed towards the Lord (S1 – S2 – S3).

(ii) The morphological features of the faces of the Saints will be symbolic and recurring, similar to the features of the Lord.

(iii) The “fundamental message” of the holy Icon, that is, the open Gospel Book with the apocalyptic letters A and Ω, will coincide, if possible, with the center of the circular upper section of the Icon.

(iv) S1 will be rendered with the largest area of gold; the same will apply to the Christ Child (S2) and the Lord celebrating the Liturgy (S3), in which the equal ratio of gold to the painted portion will express the Christological dogma (the Incarnation of God [Who is Light], the union of the two natures in the one Hypostasis of God the Word).

* * *

• With regard to the eschatological character of the Icon, we offer the following observations:

(i) This is already suggested by its shape, which is the union of a circle and a rectangle, and which expresses precisely what the dome in a Church expresses.

(ii) It is also expressed by the use of gold as a symbol of the Kingdom, in which (gold: the Kingdom) all of the Christified members of the Church participate proportionately, in conformity with the ideas set forth in our aforementioned hermeneutical work, “The Mystery of the Rapture.”

3. Light

THE USE OF GOLD, as indicative of Christ the Light, will simultaneously express the Christocentricity and the eschatological character of our proposed new depiction.

(i) Its Christocentricity will be expressed through the special use of degrees of brightness for the different elements that comprise it, as follows:

We will make sure to develop each element of the Icon to a specific degree of brightness, so that the overall quantity of light reflected from its painted portion will be as much as is needed to “yield,” together with the gold background, an intermediate degree of brightness.

Thus, in combination with the special use of color, which is described below (§4), the Icon will “give,” over every area, the same impression of gold, that is, Christ.³⁵

(ii) The dogma of the Trinity will be expressed by the consistent use of three degrees of development for every element of the Icon (first layer, first highlight, and second highlight), in such a way that each element will emit an equal quantity of light.

(iii) Likewise, the consistent method of development by the use of three layers, in combination with the indispensable employment of gold in some proportion, expresses the Baptismal seal of the members and the boundaries of the Church, and, consequently, the dogma of the Church.

4. Color

The three sections of the Icon will emanate the following variations of hue and intensity, which will characterize them:

³⁵ Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor*, II.8, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. VIII, col. 469A; II.10, *Patrologia Græca*, Vol. VIII, col. 529B.

(i) S1 (the Holy Trinity) will emit white (solar) light, through the calculated use of three primary colors, with the greatest possible intensity.

(ii) S2 (the Theotokos and the Lord) will emit violet light, which suggests the union of Heaven (azure) and earth (red), with somewhat less intensity than S1.

(iii) S3 (the Bodiless Powers and All Saints) will emit the following:

(a) The Bodiless Powers will emit azure, which signifies Heaven. The intensity will be even less than that of S2.

(b) All the Saints will emit orange, which is the union of yellow (light) and red (earth), with less intensity than the Bodiless Powers.

• The dogma of the Trinity will be expressed, by a special use of color, as follows:

(i) The unapproachability and incommunicability of the Trinity will be emphasized by employing the widest possible color spectrum (hereafter: CS) in S1.

(ii) Its approachability and communicability will be emphasized by the repetition of the same hues in the other levels (S2, S3, and BP), but with a smaller CS, in combination, again, with the participation of all in gold (Divine Grace).

(iii) The elements that will emit, in line with the foregoing, an equal quantity of light will also simultaneously provide as much variation of color as will cumulatively reflect, with equal force, the three primary colors, which, in turn, when fused together, become [pure] light.

• The Incarnation will be expressed as follows:

(i) by the use of the color orange in the garment of the Christ Child, as indicative of the flesh (earth) that He assumed.

(ii) by the gold lines that half cover His garment, expressing the Divinity of the Child.

(iii) His tunic will be of the same hue as the inner garment of His Mother, who “lent flesh” to Him.

- The centrality of the flesh of the Lord and of the All-Pure Virgin will be expressed by the use of a specific hue in the flesh tones with a specific degree of brightness, so that they will emit a median quantity of light and color.

This “mean” (Aristotle) will express at the same time the perfection of the virtues of Our Lady, the Theotokos, but primarily of the Lord.

5. Epilogue

(i) The development of all of the elements of the Icon of All Saints, calculated in the detailed manner set forth above, with regard to light and color, will “yield” and express overall that which is expressed by gold-Christ-light, in such a way as to stress with particular emphasis the Christocentricity of the composition, that is, that Christ is all in all.³⁶

(ii) Likewise, this development will also suggest the presuppositions of the participation of the Saints in the Kingdom of God, as members of the Body of Christ, that is, their struggle to attain to virtue (the mean) and their Christification by means of this, within the unified realm of past, present, and future, always in the context of the Kingdom of God.

(iii) This special management of light and color is described and analyzed fully in our study, *Χρωματικὸν Ψαλτήριον. Ὁ χειρισμὸς τοῦ φωτὸς καὶ τοῦ χρώματος στὴν Ἀγιογραφία* [*Chromatic Psalter: the management of light and color in iconography*] (unpublished).

*January 30, 2003
The Holy Three Hierarchs
From the Icon Studios of the Holy
Monastery of Sts. Cyprrian and Justina, Phyle, Attica
and of the Holy Convent of the Holy Angels, Aphidnai, Attica*

³⁶ Ephesians 1:23.

IV. Appendix

A detailed listing of the Saints portrayed in the Icon

- The Holy Trinity
- The Theotokos, holding Our Lord in her bosom
- The Heavenly Powers
- The God-Man, liturgizing as the Great High Priest

The Saints


1. The Venerable Forerunner
2. St. Anthony the Great

Equals of the Apostles

3. St. Mary Magdalene
4. St. Photine
5. St. Constantine the Great
6. St. Helen
7. St. Gregory of Greater Armenia
8. St. Nina
9. St. Olga
10. St. Vladimir
11. St. Methodios
12. St. Cyril

Apostles

13. The Holy Apostle Peter
14. The Holy Apostle Andrew
15. The Holy Apostle John the Theologian
16. The Holy Apostle Bartholomew
17. The Holy Evangelist Mark
18. The Holy Apostle Thomas
19. The Holy Apostle Thaddæus
20. The Holy Apostle Paul
21. The Holy Apostle James, the son of Zebedee
22. The Holy Evangelist Matthew

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23. The Holy Apostle Philip
 24. The Holy Apostle Simon
 25. The Holy Evangelist Luke
 26. The Holy Apostle Matthias

Martyrs

27. St. Stephen the Protomartyr
28. St. Eleutherios
29. St. Charalambos
30. St. Demetrios
31. St. George
32. St. Panteleimon
33. St. Cosmas of Aitolia
34. The Holy Royal Martyr Nicholas
35. St. Thekla the Protomartyr
36. St. Paraskeve
37. St. Cyprian
38. St. Justina
39. St. Catherine
40. St. Philotheë
41. St. Maximos the Confessor
42. The Holy Royal Martyr Alexandra

Prophets and Righteous Ones

43. St. Joachim the Ancestor of God
44. St. Anna the Ancestor of God
45. The Righteous Joseph the Betrothed
46. St. Symeon the God-Receiver
47. The Righteous Anna the Prophetess
48. The Prophet David
49. The Prophet Daniel
50. The Forefather Adam
51. The Prophet Zacharias
52. St. Elizabeth
53. The Prophet Isaiah
54. The Prophet Elias
55. The Prophet Moses
57. The Righteous Enoch
58. The Foremother Eve

Hierarchs

59. St. James the Brother of God
60. St. Basil the Great
61. St. Gregory the Theologian
62. St. John Chrysostomos
63. St. Photios the Great
64. St. Mark of Ephesus
65. St. Gregory Palamas
66. St. John of Shanghai and San Francisco the Wonderworker
67. St. Nicholas the Wonderworker
68. St. Spyridon the Wonderworker
69. St. Parthenios of Lampsakos
70. St. Athanasios the Great
71. St. Cyril of Alexandria
72. St. John the Merciful
73. St. Nectarios of Aegina
74. St. Glicherie the Confessor

Monastics

75. St. John of Damascus
76. St. Euthymios the Great
77. St. Ephraim the Syrian
78. St. Makrina
79. St. Athanasios the Athonite
80. St. Symeon the New Theologian
81. St. Christodoulos of Patmos
82. St. Xenia the Fool for Christ
83. St. Theodore the Studite
84. St. Pachomios the Great
85. St. Paisios the Great
86. St. Mary of Egypt
87. St. Irene of Chrysobalantou
88. St. John the Russian
89. St. Seraphim of Sarov
90. St. John of Kronstadt

Supplication

Second Tone. O House of Ephratha.

*Be gracious, O Jesus, unto Thine unworthy servant, by the
prayers of my Father, and by the intercessions of
Thine All-Pure Mother, O Thou
Who lovest mankind.*

•

**Unto our All-Holy
Triune God Who loveth mankind
be glory, honor, worship,
and thanksgiving.
Amen.**

