

PASTOR'S CORNER (Fr. Jon Buffington)

A Brief Biography of the Iconographer, Fr. Jon Buffington

Since I have celebrated many a Sunday and weekday mass in your midst, I feel as if I know so many of you. I, on the other hand, might be more of an enigma. I was born in Regensburg, Germany, on All Saints Day, 1947, to an American military family. I have one brother and one sister, both older. I have done some sort of art for most of my life. I drew and painted watercolors early and at one long point, created ecclesiastical embroideries with silk and gold bullion.

When I came to Portland in 1990, I began to work as a hospital chaplain at Providence Medical Center. After a few years, I became determined to create a large crucifix for our chapel. I had the carpenters make a Byzantine cross for me and I painted one side in acrylic following an Eastern model. As I began to enjoy this new episode, I decided I needed to learn how to “write” icons in the traditional methods. I began with books, but soon signed up for the summer Iconography Institute at Mt. Angel. I studied with them for many years and realized I needed to broaden my studies. In the Spring of 2007, I took a 3 month sabbatical to study iconography with other teachers. I went to Florence, Evian Les Bains, France, Rome and finally to Siena. I was able to study with some of the best teachers in Europe including the author of the book on Iconography, The Icon: Image of the Invisible, Egon Sendler, S.J. Each teacher had their own methods of writing and gilding. Most worked in the Russian tradition but one taught the Greek. It was a wealth of ideas and learning.

Three years later I took the second half of my sabbatical to study the history and development of the icon. I started in Egypt with the Fayoum portraits of the Roman/Egyptian period. I visited St. Catherine Monastery in the Sinai to study the oldest icons in existence. Then off to Jordan and Israel, visiting St. George's tomb at the Tel Aviv airport. A short flight brought me to Turkey where I rented a car and drove to Cappadocia and then across the plains to the coast and up to Istanbul for a meeting with His All-Holiness, Bartholemew, the Ecumenical Patriarch and presented him with an icon of the Good Shepherd. He fixed my papers for a visit to Mt. Athos in Greece. I flew to Easter in Athens and then drove up the peninsula to Mt. Athos and then back to Athens to fly to Dubrovnik where I met some friends and finished my sabbatical.

Five years ago, I was asked to take over as “Master Iconographer” of the Trinity Iconography Institute at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral and have been teaching there ever since. Two years ago I was commissioned to write an 8 foot by 12 foot icon of the “Pantocrator” or “the Maker of All Things” for a Catholic Church in Colorado Springs. Now I am beginning preparations to write two icons for St. Therese. More on that next week.

Fr. John Buffington

Ordinary Time

Day	Date	Time	Observance	Mass Intention
VIGIL	Sept 9	5:00 pm	Vigil of the Sunday Mass	Joanna Kong +
SUNDAY	Sept 10	9:00 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Tricia Christensen Frances Geer
		11:30 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Missa pro populo
Monday	Sept 11		No service	
Tuesday	Sept 12		No service	
Wednesday	Sept 13	8:30 am	St. John Chrysostom, Bishop & Doctor of the Church	Don Erspamer +
Thursday	Sept 14	10:00 am	The Exaltation of the Holy Cross	Joan & John Delaney +
Friday	Sept 15	11:00 am	Funeral Mass	Ted Sofranko +
Saturday	Sept 16	8:30 am	Saints Cornelius, Pope, and Cyprian, Bishop, Martyrs	Joan & John Delaney +
			Readings for the Sunday Mass: Sirach 27.30 – 28.7; Psalm 103; Romans 14.7-9; Matthew 18.21-35	
VIGIL		5:00 pm	Vigil of the Sunday Mass	Joanna Kong +
SUNDAY	Sept 17	9:00 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Marylou Geer +
		11:30 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Missa pro populo