

PASTOR'S CORNER (Fr. Jon Buffington)

Our Icons: A description

I will be writing two eight (8) foot square Icons to flank the sanctuary Crucifix. These Icons will refer to and explain the Crucified and his sacrifice. Since Icons are not "religious art" as in the Western tradition, but rather are considered a conversation with the Mystery or person portrayed as well as an opening upon the realm of the Divine, this request is the center of the development of the images chosen.

As you face the Crucifix wall, the icon to its left will be the story of creation and the Fall. In the center will be an oval "mandorla" (a halo of various shades of color studded with stars) within which the preexistent Word is shown blowing life into the nostrils of Adam. The Word is shown as a young man, beardless, in a white robe with wings. He can be recognized as the Word by the cruciform halo with the three Greek letters for "I AM" in the cross arms. Properly only Christ is ever shown with that form of halo.

Sweeping around his mandorla is the dynamic unfolding of creation that starts with the separation of Light from Darkness and references the days of Creation. At the bottom of the Square rises a vast tree that supports and embraces the Word's mandorla, the Tree of Life. On its left is the Peaceful Garden, and on its right is the Fall from Grace with Adam and Eve in the Garden with the tempter serpent leading them astray. Thus, in spite of the goodness of God's creation, evil sets its seed into the world and the need for and the promise of a great healing is shown and offered.

The Crucifix is, of course, the Healing promised but way more than just a healing. By it we are not only set free from sin, but also made heirs with Christ, who made himself one with us in life and death and rising. The right hand Icon is the celebration of the effects of the Christian Mystery of the Cross. In the lower portion, is an icon of the Anastasis, the Resurrection. Since there is no description of Christ coming from the tomb in the Gospels, the early Byzantines thought showing it would be unbiblical. Instead, they traditionally show Christ's descent to the "Place of the Righteous Dead" from the Apostles Creed. Here he will be treading on the doors of Hell, broken and lying in the form of a cross. The ground is littered with broken chains, locks and keys that indicate the victory of the Son over death and sin. In his right hand he clasps the hand of Adam and in his left the hand of Eve. He is raising them, and by extension, all those who died before the coming of the Savior, from their tombs and sending them on to Paradise. John the Baptist is also shown here as the last prophet of the Old Order and the first of the New. St. Michael will be on the other side to balance. Overhead the wild cliffs of hell separate the Resurrection healing of the Old Order from the result. of the New.

Above this scene will be what in *Hebrews* is called "the Cloud of Witnesses", saints who have lived the cross and gained life eternal. Crowning them all will be a roundel of the "Virgin of the Sign", that is, Mary in an *Orans* position (i.e., arms uplifted in prayer) with the unborn Emmanuel shown blessing the world in another Areola over the Virgin's womb. Recall that Icons do not follow linear history as we moderns like to do, hence the Incarnation implies the Cross and Resurrection as either of those imply the Incarnation.

Around the Virgin will be a grouping of saints that will represent your Parish life and community: St. Therese, of course, but also St. Joseph, Mother Seaton, St. Benedict and others who will watch over you in prayer in all their jubilant witness.

Fr. Jon Buffington

Ordinary Time

Day	Date	Time	Observance	Mass Intention
VIGIL	Sept 23	5:00 pm	Vigil of the Sunday Mass	Betty Susnjara +
SUNDAY	Sept 24	10:00 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Picnic follows!!	Missa pro populo
Monday	Sept 25		No service	
Tuesday	Sept 26	8:30 am	Sts. Cosmas and Damian, Martyrs	Stan Vandehey +
Wednesday	Sept 27	8:30 am	St. Vincent de Paul, Priest	Asiana Bui
Thursday	Sept 28	10:00 am	School Mass (The Most Holy Eucharist)	Chris Craeton +
Friday	Sept 29	8:30 am	Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels	Margaret Schommer +
Saturday	Sept 30	8:30 am	St. Jerome, Priest & Doctor of the Church	Martin Galvez +
			<u>Readings for the Sunday Mass:</u> Ezekiel 18.25-28; Psalm 25; Philippians 2.1-11; Matthew 21.28-32	
VIGIL		5:00 pm	Vigil of the Sunday Mass	Joanna Kong +
SUNDAY	Oct 1	9:00 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	James Murray +
		11:30 am	The Most Holy Eucharist of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ	Missa pro populo