15th November 2013

ICON FOR THE YEAR OF FAMILY PRAYER 2013-2014

This icon is a mixture of traditional Byzantine and contemporary iconographic styles.

It is most unusual to find a depiction in either Eastern or Western Rite art, of such expressions of tenderness between Mary, Joseph and the child Jesus.

This icon uses a circular shape to enclose the figures in a circle of love: a circle being a symbol of eternity.

Mary and Joseph are the background figures to Jesus who is at the centre of the icon. He is a child, but depicted as a small adult, his hand raised in blessing; his two fingers indicating that he is both human and divine. He looks straight ahead at the viewer who encounters his gaze, inviting a response of thanks and love.

The holiness of the figures is indicated by their haloes and by their robes. Jesus and Mary are dressed in imperial robes and colours to highlight their status as Son of God and Mother of God.

The Greek letters on the icon also point to their holiness:
Upper Left: Theotokos - God Bearer (Mother of God)
Upper Right: O Agios Joseph - Saint Joseph
Centre Right: IC XC - Jesus Christ
Inside halo: O WN (Ho On) - He Who Is - The Being

The icon weaves together the human and divinewithin a contemporary artwork in the classical icon tradition.

Dr Rose Duffy csb
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