

ICONS AT HOLY TRINITY



Holy Trinity's collection of icons include saints and commemorations on the calendar of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and others that represent the congregation's ministry and mission.

In Eastern Orthodoxy, icons are representations of Jesus, Mary, and saints that are usually stylized, meaning the figures are easily recognizable. The icons are not simply art. They serve a spiritual or devotional purpose for the faithful. "Above all, icons show us the Incarnate God, the materials of the image becoming a channel between two worlds." (Linette Martin) Like a two-way mirror, grace is approached and channeled. Just as the Gospel is communicated through words, an icon reveals through symbols and forms.



Perpetua And Felicity And Companions

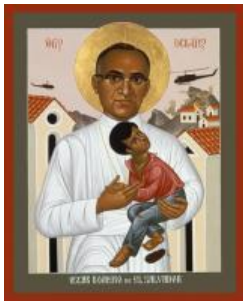
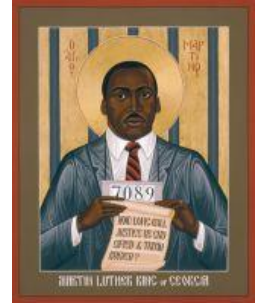
Martyrs at Carthage (202) - March 7

Vibia Perpetua was a noblewoman, and Felicity her slave, who were catechumens at Carthage, northern Africa. They, with four other catechumens, had defied the Roman emperor who had forbidden conversions to Christianity, and were put to death in the amphitheater.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Renewer of society, martyr (1968) - January 15

An American prophet of justice among races and nations, King was an eloquent preacher, a leader of the nonviolent resistance to race-segregated society, and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. Born on this date, he was assassinated on April 4, 1968.



Oscar Romero

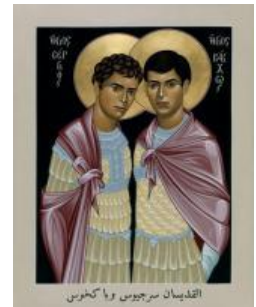
Bishop of El Salvador, martyr (1980) - March 24

Romero was deeply concerned with injustices evident toward the poor and powerless in El Salvador, and worked forthrightly against political repression. He was assassinated while presiding at the eucharist in a chapel near the cathedral in San Salvador.

Sergius And Bacchus

Martyrs (303)

Sergius and Bacchus are ancient Christian martyrs who were tortured to death in Syria because they refused to attend sacrifices in honor of Jupiter. Recent attention to early Greek manuscripts has also revealed that they were a same-sex couple. After their arrest, the two saints were paraded through city streets in women's clothing, and then tortured. According to the early manuscripts, Bacchus told Sergius to persevere, since they would be reunited in heaven.



Mary Magdalene

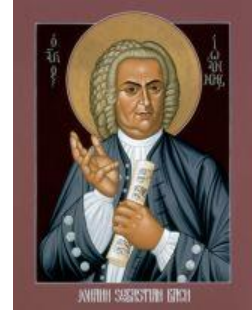
Apostle - July 22

Sometimes called "the apostle to the apostles" because she told them of her encounter with the risen Lord, Mary was a woman of Galilee who followed Jesus throughout his ministry. She was present at Jesus' crucifixion and his burial.

J.S. Bach

Musician (1750) – July 28

Johann Sebastian Bach drew on the Lutheran tradition of hymnody and wrote about two hundred cantatas, including at least two for each Sunday and festival day in the Lutheran calendar of his day. He has been called “the fifth evangelist” for the ways he proclaimed the gospel through his music.



Annunciation

March 25

Nine months before Christmas is the celebration of the annunciation, in which the angel Gabriel announced to Mary that she would give birth to the Son of God. The ancient church believed that this was also the date of the world’s creation and of Jesus’ death on the cross.

Mary, Mother Of Our Lord

August 15

The church (including Martin Luther) honored Mary with the title *theotokos*, meaning “God-bearer,” for her role in giving birth to the Son of God. The honor paid to Mary as *theotokos* and mother of our Lord goes back to biblical times, when Mary herself sang, “from now on all generations will call me blessed” (Luke 1:48). Mary’s life revealed the presence of God incarnate, and it revealed God’s presence among the humble and poor.



Julian Of Norwich

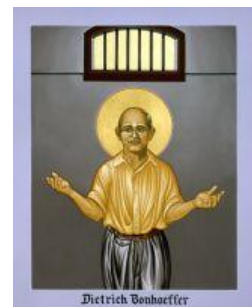
Renewer of the church (c. 1416) – May 8

When she was about thirty years old, Julian (or Juliana) reported visions that she later compiled into a book, *Sixteen Revelations of Divine Love*, now a classic of medieval mysticism. The visions declared that love was the meaning of religious experience, provided by Christ who is love, for the purpose of love.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Theologian (1945) – April 9

Bonhoeffer was a German theologian who wrote profoundly, yet in an accessible manner. In the Second World War, he became a leader of the Confessing Church in Germany that resisted the Nazi movement. Linked to a plot to kill Hitler, he was hanged shortly before the end of the war.





Michael And All Angels

September 29

Michael the archangel, captain of the heavenly hosts, is remembered on this day along with the other angels and archangels. The word “angel” means messenger, and in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, these beings have a fully spiritual nature and no physical body. Michael is an angel whose name appears in Daniel as the heavenly being who leads the faithful dead to God’s throne on the day of resurrection. In Revelation, Michael fights in a cosmic battle against Satan.

Francis Of Assisi

October 4

Born into the family of a wealthy merchant, Francis gave up his inheritance to serve poor people. He formed the Order of Friars Minor (called Franciscans), who took on poverty and the task of preaching “using words if necessary.” Francis had a spirit of gratitude for all of God’s creation. Some churches bless pets on or near Francis’ feast day.



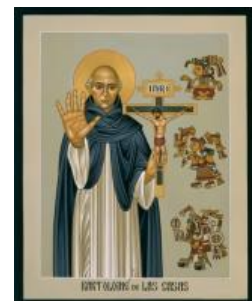
The Holy Trinity

This well-known icon pictures the Holy Trinity as the three angels who visited Abraham in an Old Testament story. The middle figure is seen to represent Christ the Great High Priest as he points to a chalice on the altar-table. The other figures would be God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Rather than a portrait of the Trinity, the artist is portraying the mystery of the ineffable Trinity, expressing relationship of unity and mutuality between the three figures.

Bartolome De Las Casas

Missionary to the Indies (1566) - July 17

A native of Spain, Las Casas first came to the Western hemisphere while serving in the military. Granted a large estate with indigenous slaves, he freed them after he was ordained a priest. He worked in the Caribbean and Central America to improve the lives of the native peoples.



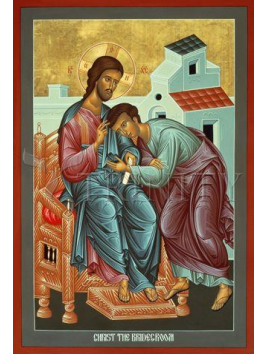
Monhandas Ghandi

(1948)

Gandhi spent his life fighting evil through non-resistance. For him the liberation of India was his duty. He saw it as a step toward the liberation of all humankind from the tyranny of violence in others, but especially in themselves. Gandhi was murdered on January 30, 1948. In the icon, Gandhi holds salt which he has gathered from the ocean – an act forbidden by English colonial law.

Christ The Bridegroom

The Old Testament prophets, and mystics ever since, have searched for ways to describe God's love for humankind. They have compared God to father, mother, bridegroom, and lover. Bridegroom was how many mystics thought of Christ in the high Middle Ages. This icon depicts Christ as the royal bridegroom, together with St. John the Evangelist, an intimate friend.



Baptism Of Our Lord

Jesus stands in a mound of water in a wide chasm that represents the dark world. John the Baptist stands to his left. Christ's right hand is downward in blessing, like a priest blessing the water in a baptismal font. Above Jesus' head is a dove, symbolizing the Holy Spirit. The figure in the lower left hand corner is a personification of the River Jordan.

Our Lady Of Guadalupe

December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe shows a Mexican woman who is clothed with the sun, with the moon at her feet. She appeared to Juan Diego, a poor man in Mexico. She proclaimed God's love for the poor. In the words of Mary's Magnificat, God lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things.



SOURCES:

Linette Martin. *Sacred Doorways: A Beginner's Guide to Icons*.

Information on Robert Lentz icons.

Sundays and Seasons.com. Augsburg Fortress Publishers.