



# ICONOGRAPHY *Iconographers,* and ICONS





A town-hall webinar presented by the  
Christian Education Ministry  
of the Greek Orthodox Metropolis of  
San Francisco

September 18, 2023

Hosted by Dr. Paraskevè (Eve) Tibbs





ICONOGRAPHY, *Iconographers,* and ICONS



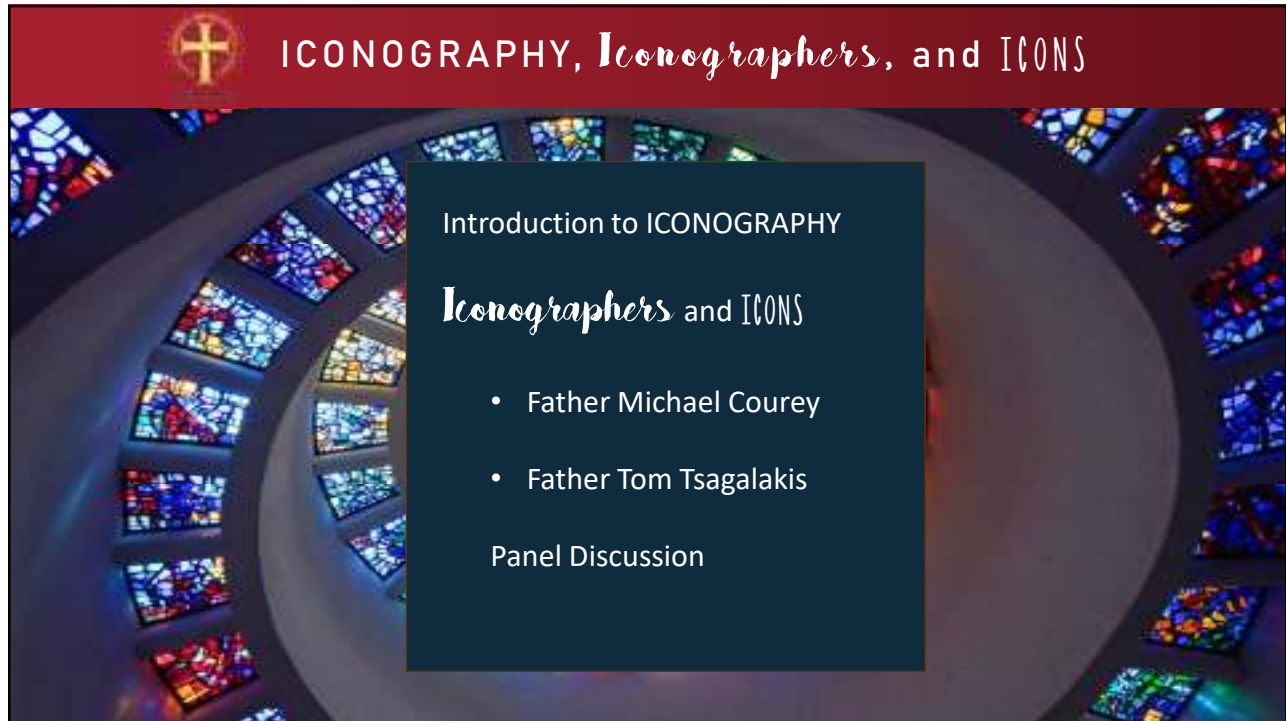
**Rev. Father Tom Tsagalakis**


PRESIDING PRIEST, HOLY APOSTLES  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
(SHORELINE, WA)



**Rev. Dr. Michael Courey**

PRESIDING PRIEST, ST. KATHERINE  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
(REDONDO BEACH, CA)



 **ICONOGRAPHY, *Iconographers*, and ICONS**

Introduction to ICONOGRAPHY

***Iconographers*** and ICONS

- Father Michael Courey
- Father Tom Tsagalakis

Panel Discussion



Saint Luke the Evangelist  
is credited with the first painted  
icon of the Theotokos and Christ

Icons can be traced back to the earliest Christian centuries.



"The Woman With the Issue of Blood"  
from the Catacomb of Saints  
Marcellinus and Peter

5



Three Youths in the fiery furnace - Priscilla Catacomb 2<sup>nd</sup> century



## THE PURPOSE OF ICONS



- ❖ to create reverence in worship
- ❖ to instruct those who were unable to read
- ❖ to serve as an existential link between the worshipper and God.

## SAINT BASIL THE GREAT

"What the word transmits through the ear, that painting silently shows through the image, and by these two means, mutually accompanying one another, we receive knowledge of one and the same thing."





## THE WORD OF GOD. THE GIVER OF LIGHT.

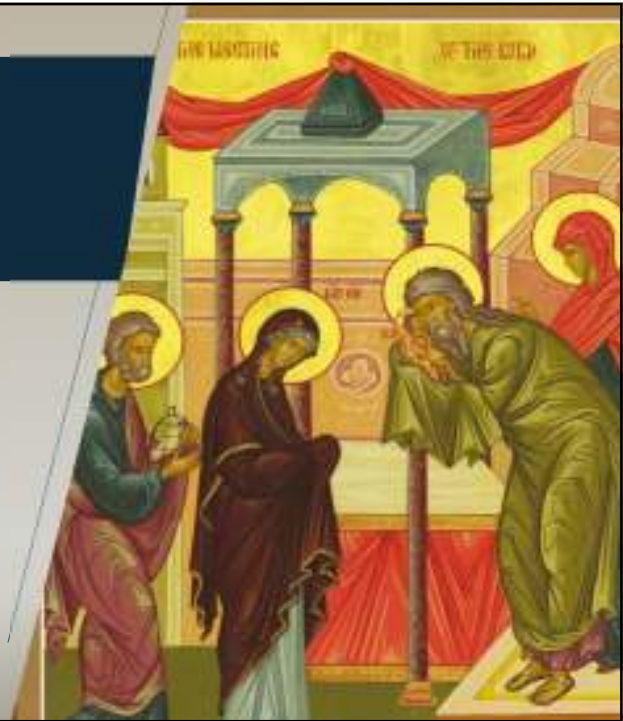
"And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory." John 1:14

"The True Light that gives light to everyone" (Jn 1:9).

## THE WORD OF GOD. THE GIVER OF LIGHT.

"Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,  
According to Your word;  
For my eyes have seen Your salvation  
Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,  
A light to *bring* revelation to the Gentiles,  
And the glory of Your people Israel."

Luke 2:19-32

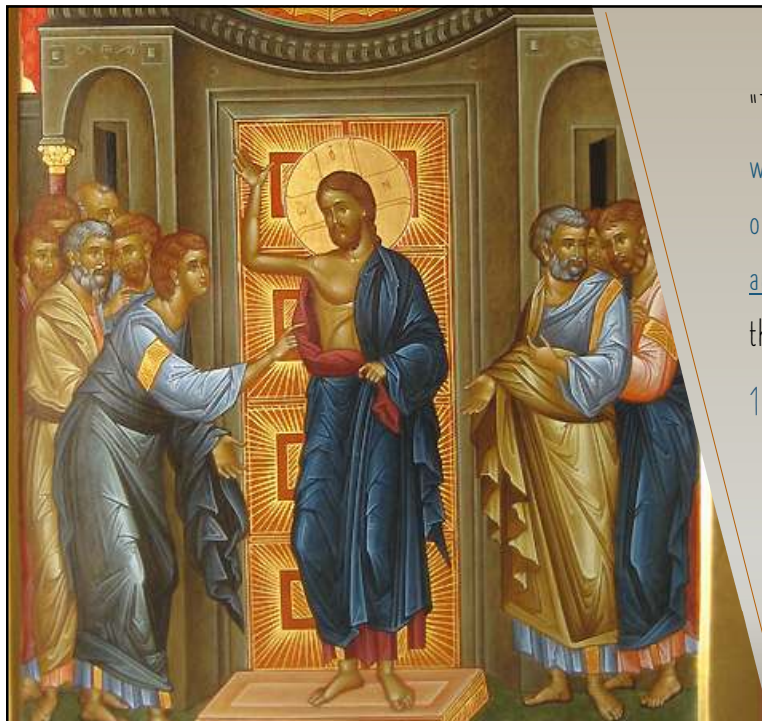


## THE WORD OF GOD. THE GIVER OF LIGHT.

"I am the light of the world. He who follows Me will not  
walk in darkness, but have the light of life." (John 8:12)







"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life."

1 John 1:1

*"I do not worship matter, but the Creator of matter, who for my sake became material and deigned to dwell in matter, who through matter effected my salvation"*

John of Damascus First Apology

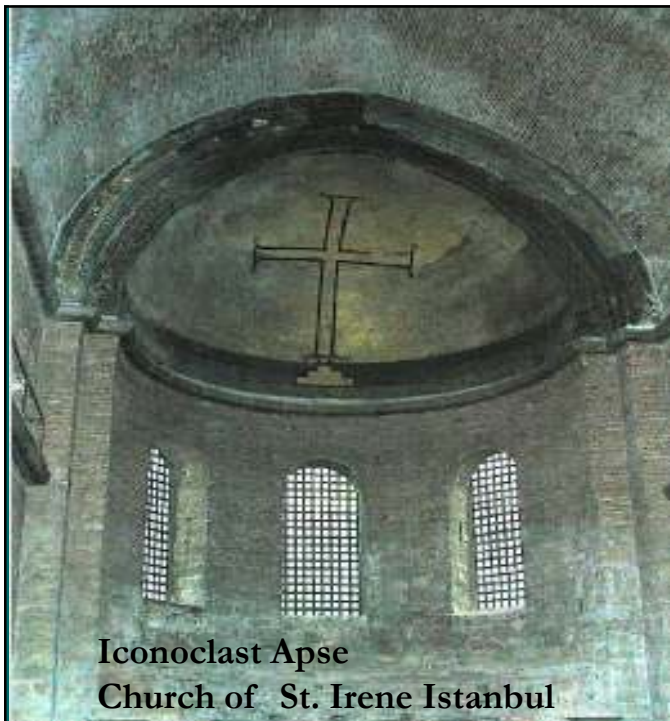


### Christianity alone possesses:

"The unique claims that spiritual knowledge begins with things that can be seen with the eyes and touched with the hands."

Robert Louis Wilken,  
*Spirit of Early Christian Thought*, 240.

15



Iconoclast Apse  
Church of St. Irene Istanbul

## Iconoclast Apse

Emperor Leo III the Isaurian in 726 had an image of Christ removed over the ceremonial entrance to the Great Palace of Constantinople, and replaced it with a cross.





Ζεστό

English  
Translation:

Temperature



Κρύο

English  
Translation:

Temperature



Gr: Idolos

English  
Translation:

Image



Gr: Eikon

English  
Translation:

Image

“Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven **image**, nor any likeness [of any thing] that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them, for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God” (Ex 20:4)

**image** = “pesel” (Hebrew) “idolon” (Greek)  
Both mean “false image” or idol.

Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” (Gen 1:26)

Image = “tselem” (Hebrew) “eikon” (Greek)  
Both mean “True Image” or “icon.”

He is the **image** (εικων) of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. (Col 1:15)





## Defenders of the Icons

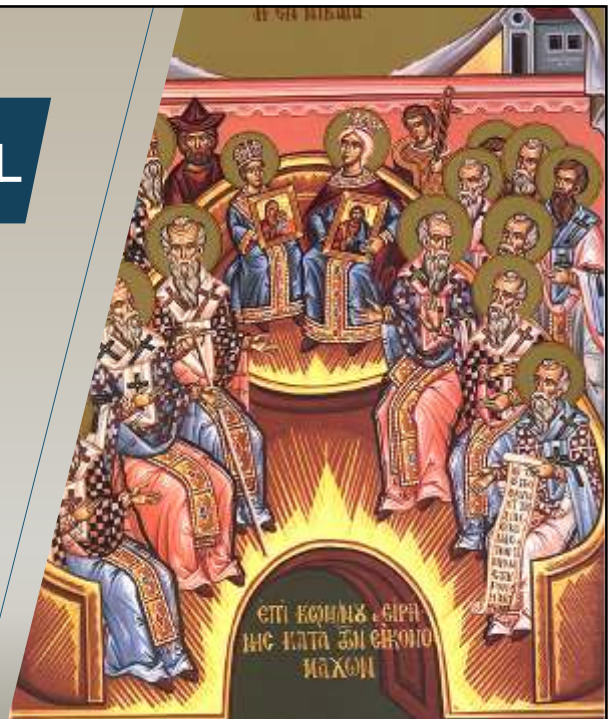
### St. John of Damascus:

Pagans make images of demons which they address as gods, but we make images of God incarnate, and of his servants and friends, and with them we drive away the demonic hosts."

## 7<sup>TH</sup> ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The writings of the Seventh Ecumenical Council  
(Second Nicaea)

"we decree with full precision and care that, the figure of the honored and life-giving cross, the revered and holy images, whether painted or made of mosaic or other suitable material, are to be visible in the holy churches of God, on sacred instruments and vestments, on walls and panels, in houses and by public ways."



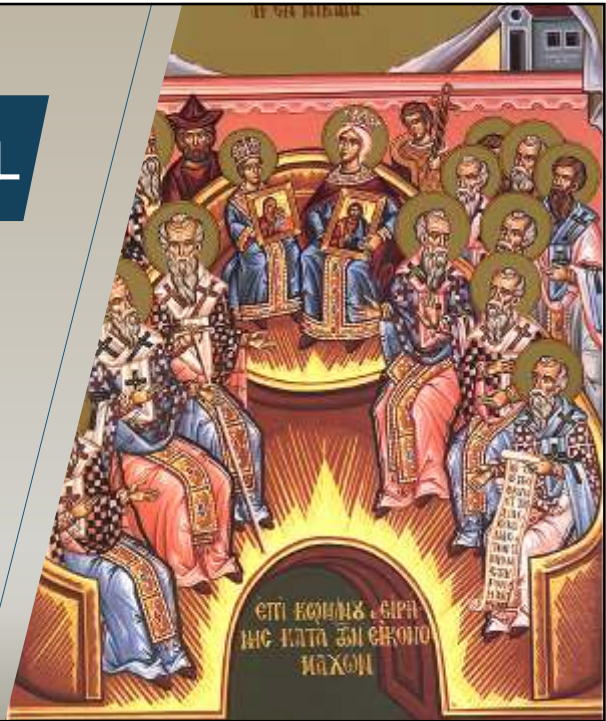


## 7<sup>TH</sup> ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

The writings of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (Second Nicaea)

"He who venerates the image,  
venerates the person represented in  
that image."

"Whether it be by the contemplation of  
the Scriptures or by the representation  
of the icon...we remember all the  
prototypes and *we are introduced into  
their presence.*"



## ICONOGRAPHY, *Iconographers*, and ICONS



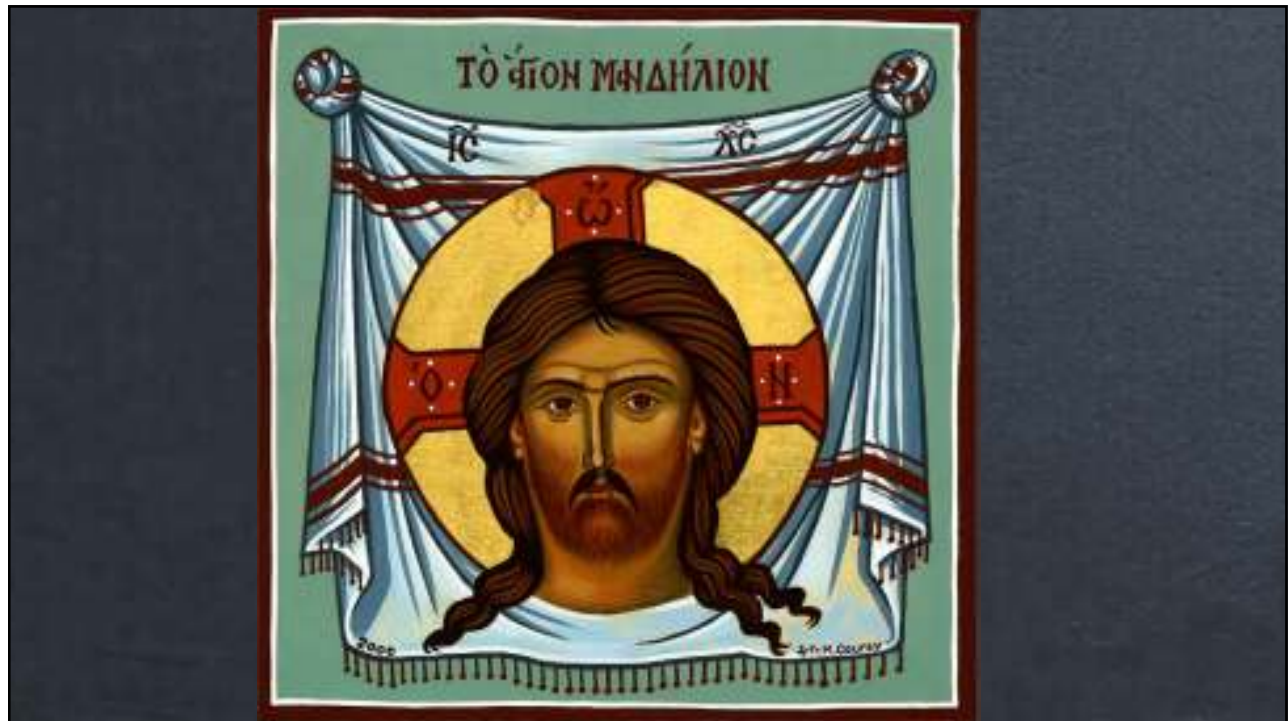
Rev. Dr. Michael Courey

PRESIDING PRIEST, ST. KATHERINE  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
(REDONDO BEACH, CA)

*"Walk in the Light: Spiritual  
Exercises in Great Lent for Young  
Adults"*

## Resources for Iconographers

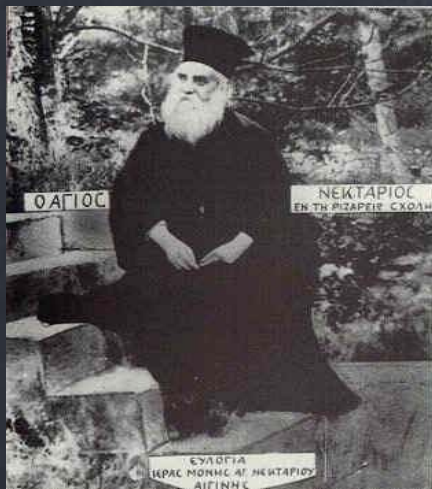
- *The Painter's Manual of Dionysius of Fourni*, Paul Hetherington, Translator. Oakwood Publications, Torrance, CA 1989
- *Ekphrasis Tis Orthodoxou Eikonographias*, Photios Kontoglou, Astir, Athens 1979 (in two volumes)
- *H Texniki Tis Agiographias*, Ioannou-Xarilaou Branou, Thessaloniki
- *O Kritikos Zographos Theophanis*, Monastery of Stavronikita, Mount Athos, 1986





ST. NEKTARIOS  
1846-1920





ST. NEKTARIOS  
1846-1920



## ICONOGRAPHY, *Iconographers*, and ICONS



Rev. Father Tom Tsagalakis

PRESIDING PRIEST, HOLY APOSTLES  
GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH  
(SHORELINE, WA)

"This art calls humans back to their roots to be a living, loving, Holy icon. Just as pictures of our loved ones in our wallets or homes remind us of family or friends gone from this earth, the icons are a reminder of the sacred people and events representing a world regenerated by divine Grace."

# ICONOGRAPHY *Iconographers,* and ICONS



*Glory to God for all  
things!*

