



Our Lady of Alaska”

“Our Lady of Alaska” is an example of a Religious Icon. Icons have had a long history of use in Christian churches throughout the centuries. Much like stained glass windows, icons commonly depict Biblical characters or events. The most common themes for icons are Christ, Mary, saints, and angels. Although icons are painted (almost always on a piece or panel of wood), it is said that an icon is *written* (not painted). This is because the image is intended to invite the faithful viewer, spiritually and prayerfully, into the story depicted by the icon as an active participant. In this way, icons are not simply artworks, but a sacred image used in religious devotion.

“Our Lady of Alaska” was a joint project written by iconographer Sherry Lynch and her husband Ron Ridnor. It depicts the Virgin Mother and Child using traditional Tlingit symbols and art. It is uniquely Alaskan.

Each year at Diocesan Convention a parish is selected to receive “Our Lady of Alaska” for the following year. The icon is sent to the chosen parish with the prayers of the whole diocese. Traditionally, a community is selected to receive “Our Lady of Alaska” in honor of an important celebration in the life of the community, or in honor of a faithful member of the community, or because of a significant hardship or tragedy in the life of the community.

It is our prayer that the icon “Our Lady of Alaska” will provide a source for devotion and help inspire spiritual strength, prayer, healing, and hope. It is appropriate to display the icon in the parish church or wherever people may be inspired to prayer.