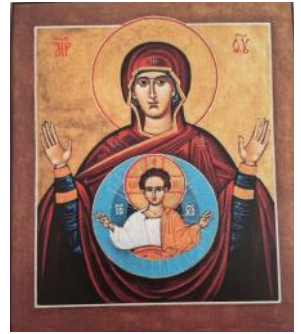




**LOOK DEEPER TO 'SEE' THE VOICE OF GOD.**  
***CHN Series: Aid to Prayer and Reflection***

Sister Josephine Margaret, CHN, October 2022



ICONS: The word icon means ‘image’ in Greek. It is an aid to worship and prayer. It is not an end in itself but invites us to go into the spiritual experience. The imagery is symbolic, like the language of Jesus’ parables.

Three artworks which have become personal ‘icons’ for me of the presence of God are:

1. ‘First steps by Van Gogh
2. Icon of Jesus and Abbot Menas
3. Icon of The Sign

*Look deeper to “see” the voice of God.*

CONSIDER:

Is there an artwork (or a leaf, or a flower, or a bird, ...) that especially appeals to you?

Spend some time with it.



*First Steps by Van Gogh, based on Millet*

***CHRIST CALLS, INVITES.***

Some references: Luke 5: 1-11 'Jesus calls his first disciples';

Matthew 7: 7-8 'Ask, seek, knock.'

'First steps' is an intimate family scene from everyday life. A humble mother and father leave their tasks to watch and help their little child taking their first steps.

***God reaches out to me, encourages me, to move towards Him, towards my own fullness of life - in Him.***

If, or as, I do step out I can expect there will be many attempts, challenges, failures and surprises in my life-long journey, all within God's loving care and loving purpose for me.

CONSIDER:

Does anything stand out in my memory?

Do I sense God is inviting me, challenging me in some way at present? What holds me back? To what do I cling, depend upon? What am I really seeking?

***Or am I just too comfortable as I am?***



The icon of 'Christ and the abbot Menas' is Egyptian Orthodox from Bawit, Middle Egypt and dates back to the 8th century.

It differs from more familiar Byzantine icons.

***FOR CHRIST, WITH CHRIST.***

Some references: Luke 5: 1-11 'Jesus calls his first disciples';

Mark 6: 7-12 'Jesus Sends Out the Twelve';

35-37 'You give them something to eat.'

Jesus, in the prime of life, stands side by side with Menas, of whom there is no record of any importance. Menas is old and grey, staring rigidly ahead - shy, wondering, even nervous.

Jesus has his arm around Menas' shoulder - a sign of affection, encouragement, or even commissioning for service.

Jesus cannot bless - one arm holds a Gospel Book and the other holds Menas.

***Jesus gives his blessing through his humble servant.***

We are called to serve the Lord Christ in his saving and healing purposes in the world. He has no hands now except ours, no voice except ours...

CONSIDER:

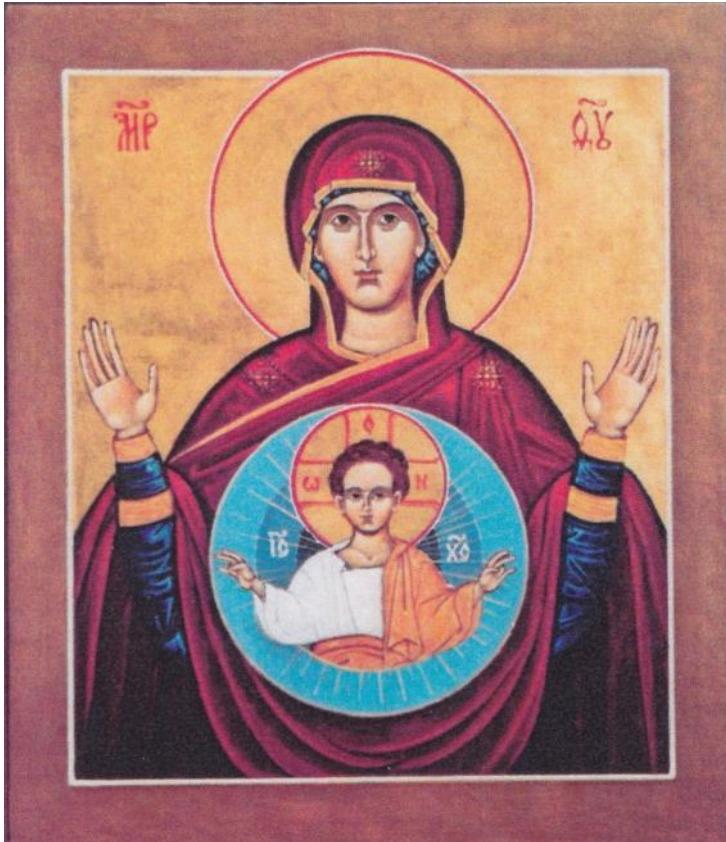
What kind of ministry have I been called into, however humble?

Or am I being called into?

Or do I wish to explore?

***Come as you are - that's how I want you, says the Lord*** in the song.

Thanks be to God.



‘The icon of the sign’ is also known as ‘  
Mother of God, ORANS (praying) with Christ in a medallion in her breast’ or  
‘Theotokos, birth-giver of God’ (rather than ‘Mother of God’).

## **CHRIST IN ME**

Some references:

Isaiah 7:14 'The virgin will conceive and bear a son...Immanuel'

Colossians 1: 15 'The Son is the image of the invisible God'

3: 17 'Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus'

Mary opens her hands (her will, her heart) to God in prayer.

Her eyes as open to the world,

with all its joy and pain,

its hunger and hope...

Her eyes are open to all creation.

This icon is a universal image for all time and every place.

It represents an historical event -

God gave Himself,

allowed Himself to be born,

revealed in the human person and life of Jesus,

born of Mary.

The Word of God became flesh (John 1: 1-18).

***In our intercession, are we learning to see with the heart of Jesus?***

Prayer is not simply talking to Jesus,

but letting Jesus talk to the Divine presence in us.

A REFLECTION OF ST. AUGUSTINE:

Of what help is it that Jesus was born if He is not born in me?

The content of this booklet is from Sister Josephine Margaret, CHN, based on her work for the Prayer Day of October 2022.

It is part of a series of 'Aids to Prayer and Reflection' which have been developed from our monthly Prayer Days, for your personal use. You may pick up other Aids from the Spirituality Centre or simply download copies from our website. We hope our readers find them helpful in their prayer lives.



You are welcome to join us for Days of Prayer and Reflection, which are held at the Spirituality Centre, on the first Thursday of the month, from March till November, 10am until 3pm.

The Eucharist is celebrated at midday and there are opportunities to sit quietly, use our library and wander in the gardens.

BYO lunch; tea and coffee are provided. There is no charge but a donation is appreciated.

*Community of the Holy Name, 31 Lorna Street, Cheltenham, Victoria 3192  
Phone 03 9583 2087 [www.chnmelb.org](http://www.chnmelb.org)*