



Icon of the Nativity of Christ

One of the most famous icons is that of the Nativity of Christ. It reminds us that the Creator of the World entered history as a newborn baby. The little helpless figure in swaddling clothes reminds us that Jesus became a human – but He remains Lord of Creation. The angels sing praises. The Magi and the shepherds bring their gifts. The sky salutes Him with a star. The earth gives Him a cave. The animals watch Him in silent wonder and we humans offer Him one of us, the Virgin Mother.

The Icon of the Nativity of Jesus Christ



This is the icon of the birth of Jesus Christ.

Icon of the Nativity of Christ

One of the most famous icons is that of the Nativity. Its symbolism is that of the Creator of the Universe entering history as a newborn babe. The little helpless figure in swaddling clothes represents the complete submission of Christ in the physical conditions governing the human race. Yet He remains Lord of Creation. The angels sing praises. The Magi and the shepherds bring their gifts. The sky salutes Him with a star. The earth provides Him with a cave. The animals watch Him in silent wonder and we humans offer Him one of us, the Virgin Mother.

The lower scenes underline the scandal of the Incarnation. The right-hand scene shows the washing of the infant by the mid-wife and her assistant.



It tells that Christ was born like any other child. The scene in the left portrays Joseph, who, having observed the washing of the infant, is once again assailed by doubts as to the virginity of his spouse.

He is tempted by the devil, who suggests that if the infant were truly divine He would not have been born in the human way. The Mother Mary is in the center, and from her reclining position looks at Joseph as if trying to overcome his doubts and temptations.

from *Nicholas Zernov, "Eastern Christendom."*