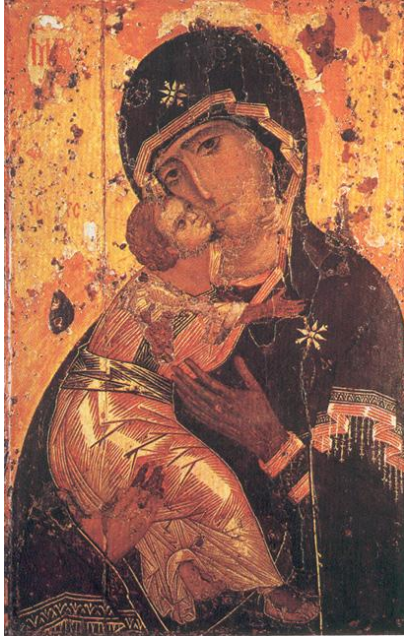


St. Luke's Email Newsletter August 15, 2011



According to our “Episcopal Kalendar” today is the feast of “Saint Mary the Virgin, Mother of our Lord Jesus Christ.” One could say a great deal about Mary and perhaps a great deal too much. The nature of her personage was often a great point of contention in the church. It was first debated in the earliest period of the church that we call the patristic period. Of course the nature of Christ hinged on Mary’s nature. In the third century the term “Theotokos” or “God bearer”, was the accepted term for Mary. She was again a bone of contention during the protestant reformation when her statues and shrines

were torn down or burned by pious Protestants. Actually Roman Catholics do not worship Mary. Worship is only due to the persons of the Trinity, though Mary receives a higher sort of devotion than the saints. Mary is of course a person mentioned more than once in the New Testament and clearly she became a follower of her son. She is rightly called the Queen of the Apostles. The icon here is the famous “Virgin of Vladimir.”



This contemporary picture of the Annunciation was done by John Collier for a Roman Catholic church in Texas. Its modernity which portrays Mary as a school girl may well be shocking to some but it is historically appropriate.

In England the Shrine of Walsingham (northeast of London) was the central spot for the veneration of Mary in England and one of the best known spots for same in all of Europe. It dates from 1061 when a noblewoman had a vision of Mary. People came to the shrine as pilgrims and some brought back small lead ampulla that they wore around their necks. These

were a bit less than two inches long and contained water from two wells at the site. They were used to bless fields at rogation time. Here are two from my collection.



Needless to say, Walsingham was destroyed during the reformation and her statue burned in London under the watchful eye of Oliver Cromwell. It wasn't until the 20th century that Walsingham was restored both by Anglicans and Roman Catholics.

Mary is the one that grieves and throughout human history there has been much to grieve about.

"Do all this unto my special praise and honour. And all who are distressed or in need, let them seek me here in that little house you have made me in Walsingham. To all that seek me there I will give my help. And there at Walsingham in this little house shall be held in remembrance the great joy of my salutation when Saint Gabriel told me that through humility, I should become the Mother of the Son of God."

-The Walsingham Ballad, written in 1465 before the Anglican Reformation

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The vestry meets Tuesday, August 16. As I mentioned last week, we are looking at the number of services we have at St. Luke's on the weekend. This may mean eliminating one. If you have an opinion, let me or the vestry know. You are free to come to the vestry meeting at 6:30 P.M. and voice your opinion in person.

Preschool at St. Luke's Child Enrichment Center starts August 24. Call the church office at 252-7186 if you are interested in enrolling someone. The director is Deb Gilbert.

The youth group starts after Labor Day on Wednesday, September 7th, at 6:00 P.M. We are planning on having both St. Luke's and St. Stephen's in one youth group. The ages for Youth Group are 5th grade through Sr. High. We meet from 6:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. Dinner is included.