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Our Lady of Canada icon unveiled

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Interim special

On September 14, 1995 a new Canadian icon was established at the Exaltation of the Holy Cross Church in Edmonton. Commissioned by the Very Reverend Joseph Royer, the icon of Our Lady of Canada, also known as the Canadian Icon of the Mother of God, was written by Andre Prevost, an iconographer who currently resides in Winnipeg.

The inscription on the back of the icon read as follows: *Our Lady of Canada, Come, all ye peoples, and let us praise her who alone is undefiled; She who, foretold by the prophets, the mother preordained before all ages. O Lord, at her intercession, grant our country thy peace and great mercy.*

The icon was completed in May, 1995 and written in acrylic on wood covered with muslin and covered with 22K gold. The design on the icon was based on the traditional mother of God, with the same stately attitude of the Theotokos and of the Christ-Child. The striking difference is found in the "maphorion" (veil) of the Theotokos. Unlike the traditional solid color with the three stars, the Mother of God is clothed with an embroidered 22K gold pattern of the maple leaf which is the national symbol of Canada. The pattern is set upon a cream-colored background with the traditional stars and trim. The iconographer took this symbol and wove it into the icon, presenting it to the Mother of God in due homage, reverence, and love. In doing so, it presented Our Lady with a precious fabric that upholds majesty, the love of Canadians for her, and her constant intercession for Canada.

The mother of God holds Christ who is seated and holding the book of the Living Word with his left hand and blessing the spectator with his right hand. The mother of God's head is slightly inclined towards him but does not turn her look to him. With her eyes fixed on the spectator her right hand guides the spectator to Christ. Her whole attitude shows us mercy and intercedes before her son on our behalf. She also presents Christ to mankind: to Canada.

Both tunics of the mother of God and the Infant-Emmanuel are blue, symbol of the spiritual and the heavenly. The colors of the maphorion and of the himation are of the earth. Christ's tunic also bears the symbol of the Trinity and has the band across His shoulders that both symbolize his stature as King of Kings and the Yoke which he bore for us, the cross.

The icon has the usual inscriptions for both the Theotokos and the Infant-Emmanuel: "MPOY" meaning the God-bearer/Mother of God, the ICXC meaning Jesus Christ, based on the Greek word for fish which contains the letters which were the initials of five words directly corresponding to: "Jesus Christ, Son of God, the Savior."

The two archangels on either side in the upper portion of the icon are presenting symbols of Canada to Christ; the one of the left holds an orb with an image representing Canada itself, and the orb on the right contains the red maple leaf. The maple leaf is the one national symbol that is recognized by all Canadians and throughout the world. The use of gold leafing is prevalent in icons as it symbolizes the light of God, light in its perfection.

No symbol was to be placed within her right hand as it immediately impeded the crucial realities of 'guiding' and 'presenting'. These are far too central to the truth of the icon. The archangels have the task of presenting the Canadian symbols to Christ for his blessing and protection.

A limited edition lithograph of this icon is available to the general public. Lithographs can be ordered directly from the iconographer. The cost is \$17.50, plus \$2.50 shipping. For further inquiries, please contact Andre Prevost, 46 Cunnington Avenue, Winnipeg, MB, R2M 0W5.

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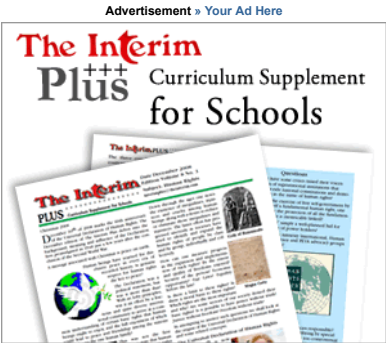
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The Interim Plus Curriculum Supplement for Schools. The image shows the cover of the supplement, which features the title 'The Interim Plus' in large, bold letters, followed by 'Curriculum Supplement for Schools'. Below the title, there are several smaller images of the supplement's pages, showing various articles and a globe.

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