



## Our Lady of Kazan (Mother of God of Kazan)

According to tradition, the original icon of Our Lady of Kazan was brought to Russia from Constantinople in the 13th century. This type of icon is by far the most popular in Russian Orthodox tradition portraying the Virgin Mary. The prototype I used was created by a modern iconographer Grigory Gashev.

Our Lady of Kazan is of the Hodegetria genre, (She Who Shows the Way) a triangular structure in which the Virgin Mary holds Christ, gesturing to Him to show us the way, while He blesses us. I love how “classical” this icon is, its color palette and posture, to the point that its enormous popularity risks losing artistic vision and becoming the symbol of the icon. Yet, being re-created so many times by different iconographers, it continues to reemerge as a beautiful liturgical art.

The original icon disappeared from the Cathedral in Kazan in 1904, so the many copies painted of her, are all that remain.

Although I am from Moscow, Russia, I came to liturgical art and iconography here in the United States through the exploration of Russian folk embroidery.

*Alice Bolgova, Iconographer  
Classical Iconography Institute Calligraphy Instructor*

