



**A
FEATHER
ON THE
BREATH
OF
GOD**

**A PILGRIMAGE WITH THE SAINTS & HOLY FIGURES
THROUGH CREATIVE CLASSES, WORKSHOPS, & RETREATS**

choose-your-own-adventure style classes, workshops, and retreats on iconography,
hagiography, symbolism, meditation & prayer, and creative thinking



don't know about you, but I like options.

I am not a one-size-fits-all kinda gal. I am an artist and spiritual observer of the world, and with that comes a different way of thinking and processing the people, places, and objects around me. Through spiritual direction, discernment, and a whole lot of prayer time, I have come to the realization that I have a lot to share with folks in hopes that they take what I've learned as a non-expert and use it to learn and grow their own spiritual gardens.

“Iconography is the original tradition of Christian sacred art and has been an integral part of the worship and mystical life of Christians since apostolic times. Referred to in the Eastern Christian tradition as “windows into heaven,” they have inspired and uplifted millions of the faithful and have at times been the instruments for demonstrating God's miraculous intercession in the life of mankind.”

I've always loved traditional icons; they possess an inherent beauty that can be felt deep within our hearts and change us for the better. After researching traditional iconography, its specific techniques, processes, and materials, I discovered that I craved more of my voice as an artist to shine through rather than copying what's been done for centuries. Through this process I have created for myself and studying so much about the Saints and Holy Figures lives, I believe I have a unique take on their stories. I want to tell the truth, as much of it as we know anyway, and I want to tell it in a way that resonates with people of all ages, races, sexualities, beliefs, and identities. My entire life now revolves around these holy individuals of our history, and it's my call to make sure we remember them and remind others they can speak to us in ways we never knew possible.

In these series of classes, workshops, and retreats, I bring the Saints along with me to teach you about iconography, hagiography, symbolism, meditation & prayer, creative thinking, writing, & processing, and a more open and spiritual way of mystical being.

If you have any questions and want to schedule time together, please contact me through either of my websites:

moderniconographer.com

kristenannwheeler.com

Class/Workshop/Retreat Descriptions

Iconography: *visualizing holiness*

Rather than a history lesson on traditional iconography, in this “modern” iconography class I focus on using my call and unique lens to visualize the Saints. Call, vision, and how I got started creating icons is the topic of conversation. I touch lightly on each Saint’s story, not just interesting facts about them, but also how they came to me through other people. I offer reflections and original thought on visualizing holiness with the Saints and offering ourselves into prayer and meditation to God. There is time for feedback, questions, and conversation. You can even choose specific Saints from my list of icons if there are ones you would like to focus on.

Duration: 2 hours

Hagiography: *what comes before us*

How can we build on the history of Christian authors to use reading and/or writing to grow our faith? In the hagiography class we focus on studying the lives of the Saints and what hagiography means. Then I share a number of hagiographies I have written. There is time for discussion, feedback, and questions.

Duration: 2 hours

Duration: 4 hours (half day)

Hagiography Add-On: *writing exercise and study time*

This is an add on writing exercise and study time to the hagiography class. We touch on creative writing and sharing the Saints stories in a more unique and honest way. Then each participant chooses a Saint to focus on and spends time studying and writing a short hagiography on their life, ending the class with sharing what we learned and wrote.

Duration: additional 2 hours

Deconstruction of an Icon: *symbolism, color, and context*

What does the symbolism, colors, and context represent in an icon? How better can we tell the stories of the Saints through symbolism? What does traditional iconography tell us about the lives of a Saint without reading their life story?

Duration: 2 hours

Mary Magdalene: *meditation and prayer*

In this meditation and prayer time, we listen to a 30 minute audio piece of a vision I had of Mary Magdalene, share prayers of Mary, and discuss what the meditation revealed to each of us in the Divine Feminine.

Duration: 1 hour

Hildegard von Bingen: *meditation and prayer*

In this meditation and prayer time, we listen to Hildegard's angelic music and several of her own prayers and the hagiography I wrote on her life. We end by discussing what the meditation and prayer revealed to each of us.

Duration: 1 hour

On Creation: *meditation and prayer*

In this meditation and prayer time, we feel the sights and sounds of Creation. Whenever possible, this meditation should be done outside, but it can be achieved within built walls as well. We focus on creating a natural altar together while hearing prayers of Creation: Mother God, Father Spirit, Child of Creation, hear our prayers.

Duration: 1 hour

The Archangels: meditation and prayer

In this meditation and prayer time, we get acquainted with the Archangels and invite them into our lives for healing and sharing messages. We reflect on the Archangel icons and create an angelic altar together. This time is best spent in-person with incense for a fully immersive experience.

Duration: 1 hour

Meditation Add-On: creative prayer and writing exercise

As an add-on to any of the meditations, we learn about creative prayer using all of our senses. Given a creative writing prompt, I invite each participant to share their own prayers with the spirit of Mary, Hildegard, or Creation as their guide.

Duration: additional 2 hours

Creating & Cultivating a Rule of Life: using the lives & stories of the Saints to outline your own rule in a unique & creative way

What is a Rule of Life? How can we prepare our own Rule of Life in a more creative way that speaks to everyone? In this class you have a choice of a 2 or 4-hour timeframe. In the 2-hour class we discuss what a Rule of Life is, then I share a couple of stories of Saints who I feel may speak to the participants. Completing this time together, participants can take notes and layout the framework for their own rule. In the extended 4-hour class, we have time to concentrate on more Saints as well as time to write down our Rules, sharing what we feel called to with the group.

Duration: 2 hours

Duration: 4 hours (half day)

Inspired Prayer: a reflection on creativity and sharing your soul with the world around you

What does prayer mean to you? What traditions and histories have taught us what prayer is? What do we want prayer to look like regardless of those traditions? In this class we discuss creative and inspired ways to pray in a world that finds us moving about quickly, a world that is set on harsh realities and judgements, and find new and innovative ways to let God's message flow through us and back out into this world, making it a little brighter. I have a journal to go along with this class so there's no need for note-taking! This is a great retreat for the Advent season.

Duration: 2 hours

Duration: 4 hours (half day)

The Apostle to the Apostles immersive Mary Magdalene retreat

In this weekend retreat we use a workbook I have created on Mary Magdalene, the Apostle to the Apostles. We work on meditation and prayer, history, female empowerment, bible verses, and creative outlets to rediscover Mary and prayerfully focus on her experience with Jesus and her important role in his ministry. This is a great retreat for the Lent season.

Duration: 1 day (up to 6 hours)

Duration: 2 day (up to 12 hours)

The Inspired Prayer immersive retreat

In this weekend retreat we use a workbook I have created on Creative Prayer. We share new, innovative, and creative ways to experience prayer; discuss what prayer life means to us, and how we can think differently when it comes to prayer time in our busy everyday lives. We do fully active prayers together, along with silent moments of contemplation, and everything in between.

Duration: 1 day (up to 6 hours)

Duration: 2 day (up to 12 hours)

The Archangels immersive retreat

In this weekend retreat we use a workbook I have created on the Archangels. We discuss the difference between angels and Archangels, and concentrate on the stories, folklore, and scripture surrounding the three main Archangels: Raphael, Michael, and Gabriel. There is time for creative prayer, reflection, group discussion, and writing exercises. The Archangels can also be broken up into separate classes if you want something shorter and more condensed or focused on one particular Archangel.

Duration: 1 day (up to 6 hours) Duration: 2 day (up to 12 hours)

Class/Workshop/Retreat Options

One Class (Zoom or in-person)

Choose any 2-hour session for a zoom or in-person class.

Duration: 2 hours

Half Day (in-person only)

Choose any 2-hour session + a meditation and creative prayer/writing exercise, or any 4-hour session

Duration: 4 hours

Whole Day (in-person only)

Choose any TWO 2-hour sessions + meditation and creative prayer/writing exercise, or any 1-day retreat

Duration: 6 hours

All Saints Retreat Weekend (in-person only)

Choose any THREE 2-hour sessions + TWO meditation and creative prayer/writing exercises **OR** choose the Apostle to the Apostles option for an all-inclusive Mary Magdalene experience **OR** choose the Inspired Prayer option for an all-inclusive creative prayer experience **OR** choose the Archangels option for an immersive and angelic experience.

Duration: 12 hours

I did not include prices on purpose, as I am happy to work with your budget so everyone has the chance to experience these classes, workshops, and retreats. Just contact me to discuss further.

All in-person classes must include a vendor table for me to set-up my icons and handmade items for sale.

Travel Info: Departing from New Orleans, LA. All travel costs are separate and include lodging and food per diem. Flight and/or rental car when necessary, mileage rate for driving etc.