

Icon Writing Retreat

at Mount Joy College in Sooke, BC

Are you interested in the opportunity to study and write an icon in the ancient tradition of the Eastern Church while taking a retreat on a mountain overlooking the Pacific Ocean?

Mount Joy is hosting this residential retreat and workshop run by Kathleen van der Sande in March of 2026.

The workshop will cover:

- An introduction to the mystical teaching of the Church through the language of light, line, colour, image and symbols.
- The study and practice of the ancient technique of egg tempura painting.
- A step by step guide and one-on-one assistance so each participant can complete an icon depicting Mary, Mother of God based on the *Virgin of the Passion*.



More about the retreat:

- Except for instruction, classes will progress in relative silence, as part of the focus is on personal spiritual discipline and growth. Artistic ability is useful, but not necessary.
- In addition to daily classes and time to work on your icon in silence, there will be opportunity for group fellowship and prayer.
- There will be opportunities to walk the trails and take in the views around Mount Joy.
- Mass offered at Mount Joy (exact schedule TBD).
- After completing the icons, there will be an opportunity to visit St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church for an Eastern Rite blessing of icons.



When ~ March 15 - 21 (Monday - Saturday).

Where ~ Mount Joy in Sooke.

Cost ~ \$585 per person. This includes accommodation for 5 nights, all your meals, as well as the brushes, paints and other supplies needed to complete your icon.

About Kathleen van der Sande

Kathleen is a wife, mother, and grandmother, presently living in North Saanich. After attending a Fine Arts program at Fraser Valley College (now UFV), Kathleen worked for thirty-five years as an illustrator of the natural environment for signage for B.C. Parks, Parks Canada, and local organizations. She began writing icons in 2011 after attending an icon writing retreat at Mount Angel Abbey in Oregon. Since then Kathleen has attended four additional iconography workshops/courses and another icon writing retreat. She was a member of the Epiphany Sacred Art Guild for five years.

Collaborating with the Holy Spirit, Kathleen has completed approximately twenty-eight icons. Since icon writing is a work of evangelization, God calls us to share this gift. In response to this call Kathleen has led five icon writing workshops, four of which have taken place on the island.

Kathleen is a member of the Association of the Child Jesus and shares the charism of the Association's foundress, which is to share the love of God for the awakening and deepening of the faith among us. As an iconographer and illustrator Kathleen strives to share her love of God through the beauty of His created world.

To register or for more information please email Anna-Marie and Barnabas Ney at mountjoyretreats@gmail.com