



## **Mary Ponders Tenderly Icon**

**By: Transcendentia Designs**

Our original icon, “Mary Ponders Tenderly”, is known throughout Christendom and carries other titles such as “Mother of Mercy”, “Joy of All Joys”, “Virgin of Extreme Humility”, and most notably as the Pskov Caves Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God, named the “Tenderness” in 1542. She is the Patroness of all humanity, as well as mothers, women in childbirth, and travelers.

The Greek letters MP ΘΥ (short for ΜΗΤΗΡ ΘΕΟΥ, "Mother of God") are inscribed on the upper left and right of the head of the Virgin Mary. The three stars upon her robe symbolize her perpetual virginity as well as the Holy Trinity. Our Lady is depicted with downcast eyes and arms crossed, an example of humility and silent prayer to her Son.

Blue is commonly associated with Mary. Historically, blue was a rare and precious color, often used to signify royalty and her status as Queen of Heaven. In our icon, her blue mantle, represents her role as the Mother of God and Mother of humanity.

Mary’s red robe in our icon represents her sacrifice and her divine love. Her blue mantle over a red garment also represents her human nature (red) being covered by God (blue). Her white veil is used to indicate Mary’s sanctity, righteousness, purity, holiness, and the presence of God.