

THE VEIL OF VERONICA: FROM CONCEALMENT TO REVELATION



Image from *The Passion of the Christ*



AUGUST 16: TRANSFER OF THE ICON OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST FROM EDESSA TO CONSTANTINOPE

- “After making an image of Your most pure image, You sent it to the faithful **Abgar**, who desired to see You.”
- “You sent letters traced by Your divine hand to **Abgar**, who asked for salvation and health which come from the image of Your divine face.”



“On the 16th of August we commemorate the entrance of the *acheiropoiton* (not-made-by-hands) image of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ, brought from the city of Edessa to the God-protected Queen of cities (Constantinople).”
<https://iconandlight.wordpress.com/2017/08/16/synaxarion-for-the-holy-mandylation-of-edessa-and-the-holy-keramion-ceramic-tile-of-edessa/>



EASTERN COUNCILS

- Nicaea I: Jesus is “*consubstantial* [*homoousios*] with the Father” (325)
- Ephesus: Christ is truly one person, one being, with two natures. (431)
- Chalcedon: Christ is one person (*hypostasis*), “known in two natures.” (451)
- Constantinople III: Christ has “two natural wills without division, without change, without separation, without confusion.” (680 – 681)



Nicaea I (325)



EXODUS 20:4-6

“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.”



THREE TREATISES ON THE DIVINE IMAGES

- “I am emboldened to depict the invisible God, not as invisible, but as he became visible for our sake, by participation in flesh and blood. I do not depict the invisible divinity, but I depict God made visible in the flesh”
- “I do not worship matter, I worship the God of matter, who became matter for my sake and deigned to inhabit matter, who worked out my salvation through matter,” and “I will not cease from honouring that matter which works for my salvation. I venerate it, though not as God.”



**Demetrius Hraniotis
John of Damascus with
Virgin and Child**



NICAEA II

- “Representational art ...provides confirmation that the becoming man of the Word of God was real and not just imaginary.”
- “Revered and holy images ... are to be exposed in the holy churches of God ... these are the images of our Lord, God and saviour, Jesus Christ.”
- “Indeed, the honour paid to an image traverses it, reaching the model, and he who venerates the image, venerates the person represented in that image.”



Triumph of Orthodoxy
Byzantium (14th c.)



EVOLUTION OF THE VERONICA STORY

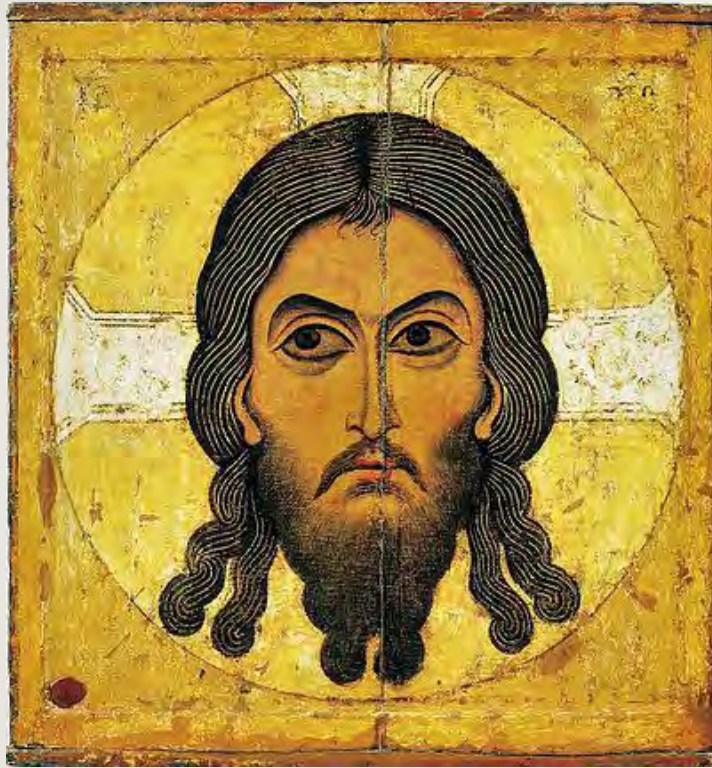
- Synoptic gospels (the woman with an issue of blood)
- *Church History* (“The Statue Erected by the Woman with an Issue of Blood”) (4th c.)
- *Acts of Pilate* (4th c.)
- *Curing of Tiberius* (early Medieval)
- *Vengeance of the Saviour* (early 8th c.)
- *Golden Legend* (13th c.)
- *Joseph d’Arimathie* (13th c.)
- *Bible en François* (14th c.)



**Veronica Heals Vespasian
Brussels, c. 1510**



“THE BLESSING OF CHRIST’S HUMANITY” AND “THE BLESSING OF CHRIST’S DEATH”



Savior “Made Without Hands”



**Domenico Fetti
The Veronica (c. 1618)**



SUDARIUM

- Pope John VII's alleged reliquary for the Veronica. (705)
- *Sudarium* (sweat cloth) venerated at Old St. Peter's Basilica. (c. 705-1011)
- Supposedly stained with Jesus' sweat and blood, but not considered a likeness of his face.
- Later revered as a portrait of the Saviour and relic of the Passion.



***Sudarium of Oviedo
(570 CE)***



***Giovanni Gasparro
La Veronica (2013)***



HOLY OFFICE OF THE VERONICA

- **Psalm 66:2:** “May God have mercy on us and bless us: may he cause the light of his countenance to shine upon us.” Psalm 66:2
- **Psalm 4:7:** “The light of thy countenance O Lord is signed upon us.”
- “O God, who didst will to leave to us, who are sealed with the light of Thy countenance, Thine image as a memorial of Thee, impressed on a handkerchief at the insistence of **Veronica.**”



*Omnis Terra procession of
Pope Innocent III with the Veronica
MS Liber Regulae Sancti Spiritus
in Saxia (1350)*



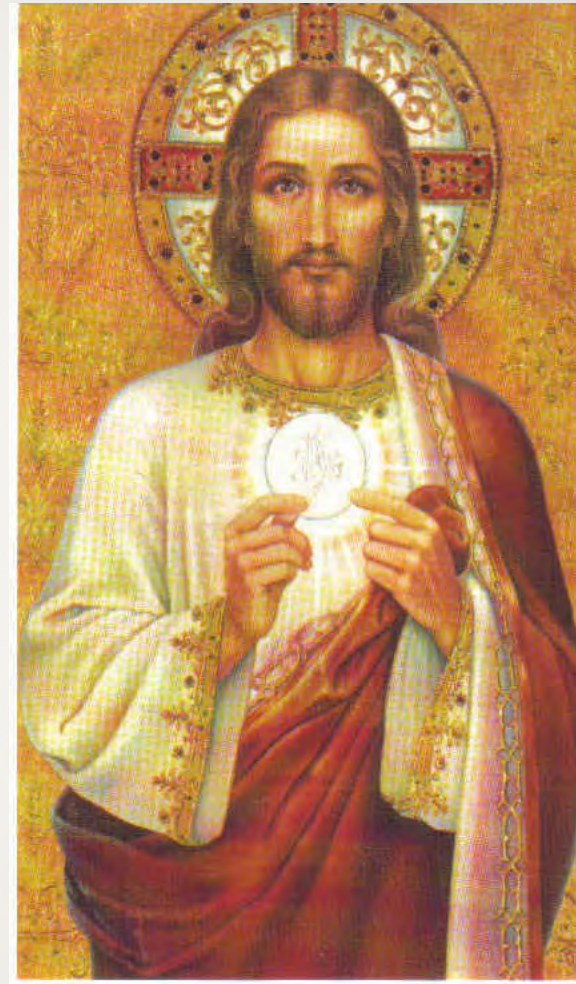
IMAGO DEI

- “For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.” Rom. 8:29
- “And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.” 1 Cor. 15:49
- “Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.” Col. 3:9-10



EUCCHARISTIC CONTROVERSIES

- **Ignatius of Antioch:** "[The heterodox] abstain from the Eucharist and ... do not admit that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, the flesh which suffered for our sins ..." *Letter to the Smyrnaeans*, c. 80 -110 CE.
- **Paschasius Rabertus:** "Yet [the bread and wine] must be believed to be fully ... Christ's flesh and blood." *On the Body and Blood of the Lord*, 831 CE.
- **Ratramnus:** the Eucharistic elements are not the actual body and blood of the Christ of history, but are mystic symbols of remembrance. *Concerning the Body and Blood of Our Lord*, after 831 CE.
- **Berengar of Tours:** Christ's Eucharistic presence is spiritual (i.e., no substantial change in the elements) c. 1050.



MASS OF ST. GREGORY



Robert Campin

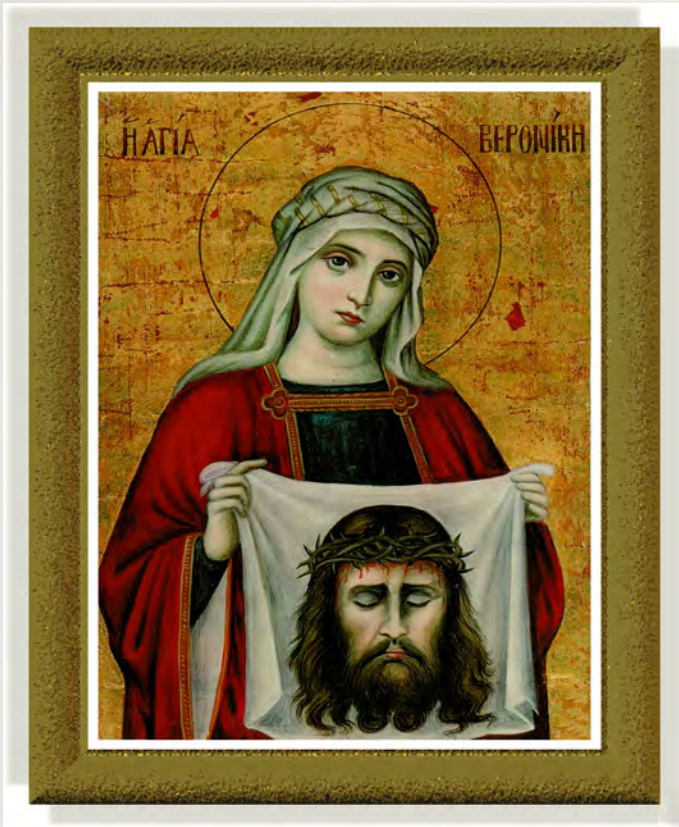
The Mass of St. Gregory (early 14th c.)

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2019-08-16



THE WOMAN WITH AN ISSUE OF BLOOD



Catholic icon



Orthodox icon

Holy Mother Veronica, pray to God for us

Holy Veronica, having an issue of blood for 12 years ... the holy one said in her heart, “If I can but touch the hem of His garment, I will be healed.” Then she touched the border of His garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchd. Glory to Thee Our God! (*Canon to St. Veronica*, Ode 3, from *St. Veronica - An Eastern Orthodox Overview and Liturgical Service* by Veronica Hughes)



SIXTH STATION OF THE CROSS

- *Veronica Wipes Jesus' Face* (not in Scripture).
- *Simon the Cyrene is made to Bear the Cross* (Synoptic gospels).
- Forced obedience contrasted with unconditional love.
- Humanity was created in God's image.
- Christ reveals the invisible God.



Giovanni Cariani
Road to Calvary with Veronica's Veil (c. 1519)



FROM CONCEALMENT TO REVELATION

- The Veil of Veronica reveals the Face of God.
- The mystery of God is revealed in Christ, the Incarnation.
- The gift of the Holy Face is linked to faith in the Incarnation of the Son of God.
- We encounter God on earth through the *sudarium*.
- Veronica's veil, rather than being an agent of concealment, is an agent of revelation.



The Master of St. Veronica
St. Veronica with the Holy Kerchief
(c. 1420)



THE TRUE IMAGE

- The True Icon of God is Christ, the Incarnate Word and perfect Image of God.
- Christ is “the image [*eikóna*] of the invisible God.” Col. 1:15
- “We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” 2 Cor. 3:18



Christ, the *Vera Icona* (True Image)

