

# Pray



**HOLY FAMILY ICON  
AND  
CHRISTMAS CARD**

# **This year's Christmas Card is the icon of the Holy Family**



**USING THE HOLY  
FAMILY ICON TO PRAY  
DEEPENS OUR  
RELATIONSHIP WITH  
CHRIST**



# What is the purpose of iconography?



- When an iconographer creates an icon, they are said to "write the icon", not paint it.
- Icons are prayerful exercise in humility before God.
- Praying with icons involves keeping **our eyes wide open, taking into our heart what the image visually communicates.**
- We focus not on what is seen in the icon, but rather on what is seen through it, the love of God expressed through God's creatures.
- Religious icons are referred to as "windows to heaven".
- It gives us a glimpse of the invisible that comes from Christology, "the study of the person of Christ", which focuses on the Incarnation, because God took on human flesh, He allows us to see the person of Christ, who is God.
- Icons are a way into contemplative prayer, and one way to let God speak to us.



- As you pray, cultivate an inner attitude of listening.
- We may speak words to God or just look attentively at the icon and let God speak to us.



- The Holy Family is a source of inspiration and support for all who journey in mutual support toward their eternal home.
- The Holy Family give us an example of how to respond to God's love and how to share that love with one another
- The Holy Family is the model and example for the Christian family. The mystery of the Word of God becoming incarnate a place for God's revelation to humanity.
- In fact, our family community is an everyday place to encounter Christ.



- The Icon hangs to the left of the sanctuary and connects visually with the altar and the crucifix which hangs above the tabernacle, it forms a striking statement on Jesus' incarnation.
- Its prophetic in that it focuses on a relationship between Jesus, truly man and truly Christ, which we become part of in a special way around the altar.



- The letters “ICXC” on the icon an abbreviation for Jesus Christ, the Name Above All Names.
- The letters beside Mary are the Latin word “Dei Genetrix” – Mother of God.





- The icon of the "Holy Family" shows the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, and infant Jesus.
- Holy Family Sanderstead is made up of many families. But we are made into one family.



- This icon, reveals the closeness in the Holy Family, all three persons are touching hands.
- At Holy Family Sanderstead, every act, when done with great love, is a real symbol of Christ's love. Closeness with one another.



- Mary and Joseph lean into one another as a sign of affection and mutual support, while Jesus sits apart and upright as the centre of the family, and the centre of the universe.
- At Holy Family Sanderstead, in reaching out with an ever more generous love we show mutual support as Jesus sits at the core of our family.



- Jesus' right hand is united with Mary and Joseph's hands representing the unity of Jesus' two natures, human and divine.



- The relationship between Jesus and His mother is overwhelming. Jesus keeps his gaze fixed on his mother
- At Holy Family Sanderstead, keeping our gaze on Mary we learn to love, and it is that love that will help us in relating to all people.



- Mary's expression is meditative and even pensive. She looks away as she contemplates the vocation of her Son's suffering, death and Resurrection.
- The left hand of Jesus, caresses his mother's face. In addition to comforting his Mother, this gesture symbolises Jesus comforting and reassuring her as she contemplates so awesome a mystery.



- Even through this coronavirus pandemic, we should look to the Holy Family and not lose hope
- In Mary and Joseph we meet a couple who show an openness to allowing God to lead their lives.
- The Holy Family serve as a model for the Church, for us at [Holy Family Sanderstead](#), as an example of the communion of persons.
- In fact, our family community is an everyday place to encounter Christ.



- We ask that like Mary and Joseph, we may face the future with faith and trust in Jesus, no matter what trials or uncertainties may stand before us.
- We ask the Holy Family how to love one another more deeply, support one another each day and forgive one another generously.
- May we have the courage to look to the future and find hope and inspiration in your Holy Family





- “Let us make this journey as families, let us keep walking together. What we have been promised is greater than we can imagine. May we never lose heart because of our limitations, or ever stop seeking that fullness of love and communion which God holds out before us.”

Pope Francis, *Amoris Laetitia*