

## Russian Orthodox Icon of the Tikhvin Holy Mother of God, circa XIX C.

In wood, pigment paints, matte lacquer. Measures 30 cm x 25 cm (11 ¾" x 10"), weighs a little over 2 lbs. Theotokos of Tikhvin is one of the most celebrated Russian Orthodox icons. It is said to be one of the icons painted by St. Luke the Evangelist. It belongs to the Hodegetria type (Our Lady of Way). Theotokos is holding the child at her side while pointing to him as the source of salvation. The icon of the Tikhvin Holy Mother of God is one of most venerated miracle-making images of Russia. There, it serves as a symbol of Holy Virgin Presence.

History tells us about the icon's miraculous appearance in 1383 in the small town of Tikhvin, near Novgorod Velikiy, one of the most ancient centers of Christianity in Russia. Visits by the royal dynasty began immediately, starting with the family of Czar Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) to the last days of the Romanov dynasty. In XVI - XVII centuries during the Time of Troubles (Smuta), Lithuania, Poland, and Sweden did not reach the Dormition monastery, where the icon had been preserved since its first days in Russia. During WW2, the icon was captured by Germans, changed hands, was brought by the Russian Diocese to Chicago out of consideration for its safety, and in 2004 was returned to Russia.

The icon is painted in warm tones, great attention is paid to the rich colors of the tunic and veil (maforiy) of the Virgin Mary. Her delicate features emphasize her spirituality. This icon is characterized by lyricism and decorative details. Our Lady of the Way inclines toward the child, who raises his hand in blessing, the heel of the infant is playfully turned towards the viewers, the tunic and maforij are adorned with embroidery. Unknown saints are depicted to both sides of them. The one in white attire with a sword is probably an angel from the host of the archangel Michael, reminding about the Holy Mother of God's help in wars and troubles.

In addition to shielding Russia from wars and fires, the blessed property of the Virgin is protection and patronage over children of all ages: from calming crying babies to helping teenagers choose a life path and protect them from evil influences, strengthen bonds between parents and children, saving from hatred and jealousy. The icon is still in the Tikhvin Dormition monastery to this day. The consecrated copies (spiski) of the icon can be found almost in every church and in every home iconostasis.

In very good condition. The crossbars holding the boards together are intact, only a slight warp is noticeable. In this icon, the crossbars are cut into the main board at the top and bottom, making them completely hidden. They are not very thick, and that probably explains the warp. The glue holding the boards looks solid. There is some minor wear and slight deterioration of the paint, mostly at the bottom of the obverse and some really minuscule spots of it along the edges. All of this wear just adds character and an aura of antiquity and authenticity. Overall, this is a beautiful and highly artistic delivery one of the most favorite Christian Orthodox images in the iconography of XIX century.

Please note that the pen in our photos is for size reference only.

Item# 39908

**\$1,100.00**







