

Steps for the Icon Of St. Joseph

by

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Step 1

Once the design and size of the icon is determined, the first step is to acquire the required materials, gold leaf supplies, and paint.

If the panel is large, I have it cut through a local lumber supplier that provides that service. This icon required specialty cut along the top of the icon and specially cut oak molding which will be later applied to the front of the surface.

Step 2

Prepare the design
to the cut panel
(before adding the
front molding)



Step 3

Once the design is prepared, the construction phase of the icon continues.

- 1) The oak trim is cut and glued to the face of the panel and let to completely dry and set with clamps.
- 2) Seal the wood with a watery coat of gel medium.
- 3) Glue the linen (or muslin) to the entire surface and sides.
This step is tricky as the gel medium used as the adhesive dries very quickly and you must assure that there are no air pockets under the cloth. You have to work as fast as possible and keep working the raised edges of the molding to assure that they are properly adhered.

Step 4

Once the construction phase is completed, and the adhered cloth is dry:

- 1) Trim excess cloth and trim corners.
- 2) Apply a minimum of 7 coats of gesso to the face, trim and sides, sanding all surfaces with a fine sandpaper in between each coat, removing all dust before the next coat.
- 3) Give a final sanding with a minimum of 320 paper.

Step 5

- * Transfer the design onto the gessoed panel using graphite paper.

- * Ink in design onto the panel.



Step 6

Begin blocking in main colours.
The colours are the mid tones from which I will build lighter and darker layers.



Step 7

After completing the base colours, a few coats of red bole are added to all areas which will be gold leafed. A first coat of Gold Size is allowed to dry to seal the surface.



Step 8

Work on lighter and darker layers throughout all fabrics and larger details.

But don't do last Shading colour or highlight.

*Note: Faces and hands must be left to the end of writing an icon.





Step 9

22K Gold leaf is added to the red bole once the fabrics are close to being completed; to minimize paint droplets on the gold when finishing the icon. The outer edge is left as red bole represents our nature in God's Creation. The gold symbolizes Heaven.

Step 10

- * The leaf is burnished
- * The halos and inscriptions are added
- * A coat of varnish is added to the gold surface to protect the leafing.



Step 11

- * Finish all final highlights and shadows as well as all decorative details.
- *Begin working on the faces and hands.



Step 12

Faces and Hands
are completed
final final coat
of varnish is
applied.

The icon is left to
dry before it can
be packed for
shipping.

