

Just nu arbetar jag på *Gudsmodern av Czestochowa (april-16)*. Här är lite bakgrundsinfo om denna mycket kända ikon som är så starkt associerad med Polen . Se även youtube-klippet om ikoner i allmänhet och Gudsmodern av Czestochowa i synnerhet:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQWQtCH8s9M>

Summering på engelska

COMPOSITION

The four-foot-high painting displays a traditional composition well known in the icons of Eastern Christians. The Virgin Mary is shown as the *Hodegetria (One Who Shows the Way)*. In it the Virgin directs attention away from herself, gesturing with her right hand toward Jesus as the source of salvation. In turn, the child extends his right hand toward the viewer in blessing while holding a book of gospels in his left hand. The icon shows the Madonna in fleur-de-lis robes.

ICONS OF THE MOTHER OF GOD OF CZESTOCHOWA

The Mother of God of Czestochowa icon is of very old origin. According to one account, it was painted in Palestine (by tradition to St. Luke himself) and then traveled to Byzantium (Constantinople). The icon was painted over and fixed many times, and that is why fragments of it have more recent (medieval) origin. This icon is an important miracle working icon which in the middle ages was acquired by Polish princes from Western Rus (Kiev). It came to Western Rus from Constantinople where it was in possession of the Imperial family.

ARRIVAL in POLAND The Mother of God of Czestochowa was brought to Jasna Gora, Czestochowa in 1384 and has been at the Jasna Gora Pauline Monastery for over 500 years. The Mother of God of Czestochowa (also known as "Our Lady of Jasna Gora" and "Mother of God of Poland") is an important icon for Roman Catholics in Poland and in general.

HISTORY in POLAND The slashes on Mary's right cheek are probably from an attack in 1430 by Husites from a neighboring country. The Husites were unsuccessful in stealing the icon. The Mother of God of Czestochowa was carried in the forefront of battle against invading Swedes in the 1600s. According to one account, a special horseman held the icon high overhead in charging the Swedes. The ensuing defeat of the Swedes was ascribed as a miracle to the icon. In carrying the Mother of God of Czestochowa into battle, the painting was protected by a metal cover termed an "oklad". In present day, this oklad is still kept on the icon, although it is removed three times a day so that Pilgrims and others may view the original icon painting.

DARK PAINTING Within the church proper, the oklad also protected the icon from touching and kissing as well as from accumulation of soot from candles or vigil lamps. But over hundreds of years, an icon still tended to become darker from the soot. Hence the Mother of God of Czestochowa is presently quite dark. As a result, this icon is also known as the "Black Madonna of Czestochowa".