



Sacred Doorways : A Beginners Guide to Icons

By LINETTE MARTIN

Paraclete Pr November 2002, 2002. Paper Back. Book Condition: New. We think it's one of the best introductions to icons, other than the icons themselves. Might even become required reading for Eighth Day staff. Linette Martin takes nothing for granted in her study, and the result is a wonderfully clear commentary on everything from materials and technique to history, symbolism, prayer and the icon-makers themselves. Especially instructive (and edifying) is the chapter on "Visual Language," where our guide alphabetically examines and explains at least forty different visual and thematic details -- such as clothes, colors, buildings, inscriptions, landscapes, hands and body language. The two following chapters discuss the way particular figures are represented as well as the meaning of the scenes depicted in the New Testament Festal Cycle (the visual story of Christ's life on earth). Even the eight pages of color plates are well-done and well- chosen. In this case, "A Beginner's Guide" means the best of both worlds -- an extensive grounding in the academic tradition and a deep respect for the incarnate reality (and the Tradition) the icons present. Lots of "curiosity questions" (inevitable when looking at icons) are answered.

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