

**The icon of Our Lady of Perpetual Help represents the Christian mystery of Redemption.**

[Our Lady of Perpetual Help](#) is a Byzantine icon that is believed to have its origin sometime during the 13th -15th century. The image is also known as “Our Lady of Perpetual Succour.” The icon is known for being miraculous; over the centuries countless healings and special graces have been attributed to it, so much so that the image has been honored and venerated by many Popes.

The miraculous icon is painted on wood and measures about 20" in height (54 x 41.5 centimeters) and depicts the Virgin Mary, under the title “Mother of God,” holding the Child Jesus.

The Archangels Michael and Gabriel, hovering in the upper corners, hold the instruments of the Passion. St. Michael (in the left corner) holds the spear, the wine-soaked sponge, and the crown of thorns. St. Gabriel (in the right corner) holds the cross and the nails.

The intent of the artist was to portray the Child Jesus contemplating the vision of His future Passion. Frightened by the vision, he runs to his mother for consolation. The anguish He feels is shown by the loss of one of His sandals as he quickly flees into the arms of his Mother.

Despite a forboding vision of suffering, the icon also conveys the triumph of Christ over sin and death, symbolized by the golden background as a sign of the glory of the resurrection. The royal crowns on the heads of Jesus and Mary also symbolize their triumph as the King of Kings with his Queen Mother.

In a very beautiful way, the Child Jesus grasps the hand of the Blessed Mother. He seeks comfort from His mother as He sees the instruments of His passion. The position of Mary’s hands – both holding the Child Jesus (who seems like a small adult) and at the same time presenting Him to us – convey the reality of our Lord’s incarnation, that He is true God who became also true man.