

# **Guidelines for Visits of the Kursk-Root Icon Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America, ROCOR**

## **I. Instructions for those accompanying the miraculous Kursk Root Icon during her visit to the parishes and homes of the Diocese of Chicago and Mid-America**

1. The most holy Mother of God is one and the same in all of Her Icons. The clergy and laity who accompany the miraculous Kursk-Root Icon must recognize and understand that a particular mercy of the all-holy Theotokos has been revealed to them, and that this obedience must be undertaken with fear of God, piety, and responsibility.
2. When transporting the miraculous Icon on an airplane, it must absolutely be placed in the hard case to keep it from any damage. Under no circumstances is it permissible to place the Kursk-Root Icon in a suitcase and place it in checked luggage. The priest carrying the Icon with him should have an official letter of explanation from the Higher Church Authority regarding the Kursk Icon. It is allowed to place the Icon in the X-Ray machine if the airport security authorities request this.
3. In churches, the Kursk Icon is placed on a sturdy analogion, and under no circumstances on a folding one. A place for donations is placed near the Icon. The size of the Kursk Icon is approximately 14” wide by 16.5” tall.
4. During outdoor services with the Icon (for example, at a major holiday or a youth camp), all necessary measures must be taken to protect this ancient Icon from the heat of the sun and from rain. The Icon should be placed either in the shade or under a canopy.
5. When the Icon is taken in a car to visit homes and apartments of parishioners, other parishes, hospitals, and so on, no fewer than two people must accompany the miraculous Icon.
6. If the icon must be transported without the supervision of a diocesan clergyman a blessing for this must be obtained from Bishop Peter for each specific instance.
7. The Kursk Root Icon is never to be left without supervision, neither in a church or in a private home.
8. At night, the Icon is kept either by the ruling bishop, or the Rector of the church being visited, or with the priest assigned by the hierarch to accompany the Icon.
9. During parish meals, the Icon is solemnly carried into the parish hall-trapeza with the singing of the troparion of the Kursk Icon: “As an unassailable wall...”, and is placed on a sturdy analogion.
10. Removing the metallic riza (cover) from the Icon is forbidden.

11. On church property, the Kursk Icon may be carried without its case (the priest being vested in the epitachelion for this purpose). Outside of the church and its property, the Icon is carried in either the soft or hard case, even for the shortest of distances.
12. Dogs should not be in the room where the Icon is kept whether just for a visit to a home or overnight.
13. See the separate instructions concerned monies collected in connection with the Icon's travels.

## **II. Visitation of the homes and apartments of parishioners**

1. The priest who visits the homes of parishioners is vested in the epitachelion when he accompanies the miraculous Icon.
2. In the home to be visited a table should be prepared where the Icon may be set during the moleben. It is recommended that the table be covered with a clean white tablecloth, and that all be arranged so the Icon will be in a maximally stable position (a pillow would be sufficient for this purpose).
3. A candle or lampada (vigil lamp) is lit either before the Icon or in the icon corner.
4. A list of names (of the living only) is prepared and placed on the table for commemoration at the moleben.
5. If the visit with the Icon takes place in the evening when it is dark, the lights should be turned on in all of the rooms, since the miraculous Icon will be carried around the whole house or apartment.
6. It is the duty of parish Rectors to instruct their parishioners in advance (from the ambo, on the parish message board, in the parish newsletter, as a separate instruction sheet, on the web site of the parish) how they should receive the miraculous Icon in their homes and apartments.