

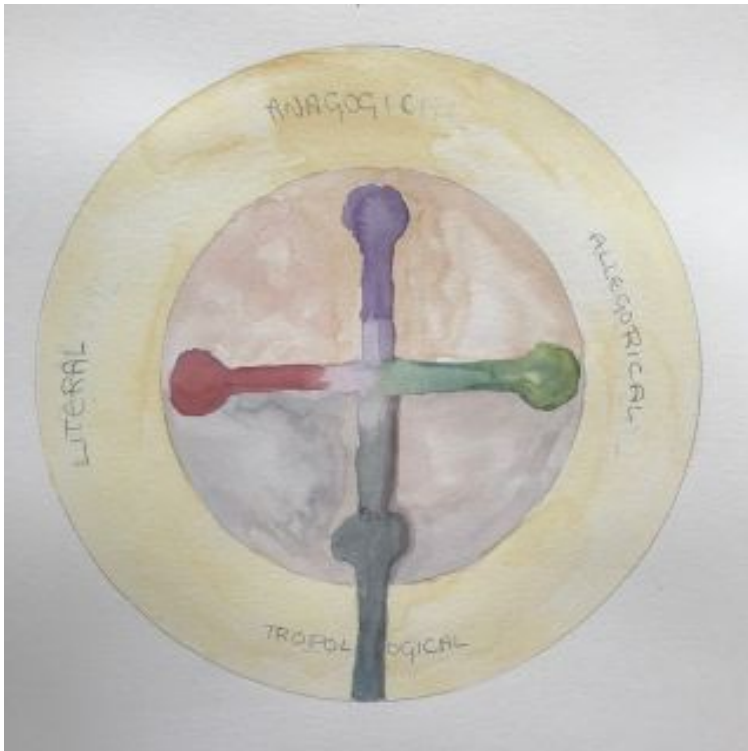
The Everyday Sacred Project.

Irene Godfrey

I wanted to make some small *aide memoires* for important ideas learned through the Diploma in Myth Cosmology and the Sacred. I intend to produce a series of *domestic icons* on plates or round boards to display on a *Delft Shelf* in the kitchen (a high place where you put your best china). Beginning from ideas as watercolour sketches, I have so far produced two finished *domestic icons*.



My starting point was a 13th C stone coffin lid (above) which I saw by chance, about a year ago in St Mary's Church, Luddenham, near Faversham, Kent. Carved in relief on the stone is a cross beneath a pair of hands holding a heart. The hands look like they are coming out of the coffin lid towards us. It is a moving gesture and impresses on me the complex meaning the heart had for Medieval people, when it was considered the absolute seat of the emotions.



The Four Senses

The first roundel is inspired by the stone relief cross.

It reminds me of the Four Senses of Interpretation:

Literal, Allegorical, Tropological and Anagogic.

Literal - as is.

Allegorical - where one thing means another. True but abstract.

Tropological - the realisation of the sign or symbol in action.

Anagogic - truth itself, the meeting of reason and revelation.

The shape of this cross is a cross pommee "finished with apples". It is found on ancient Assyrian monuments to the God Asshur and later in Jewish, then Christian symbolism.

The cross within a circle is a symbol of balance, male and female in unity.

As the Celtic cross it combines the Celtic with the Christian.



Heart and Hands

Here I was inspired by the carved stone hands, holding the heart out towards us as if in offering and a demonstration of what is important in life. A reminder to think both with and through the heart.

I chose green and pink, contrasting colours both associated with the heart. The yellow border could be gilded, suggesting a sacred space.

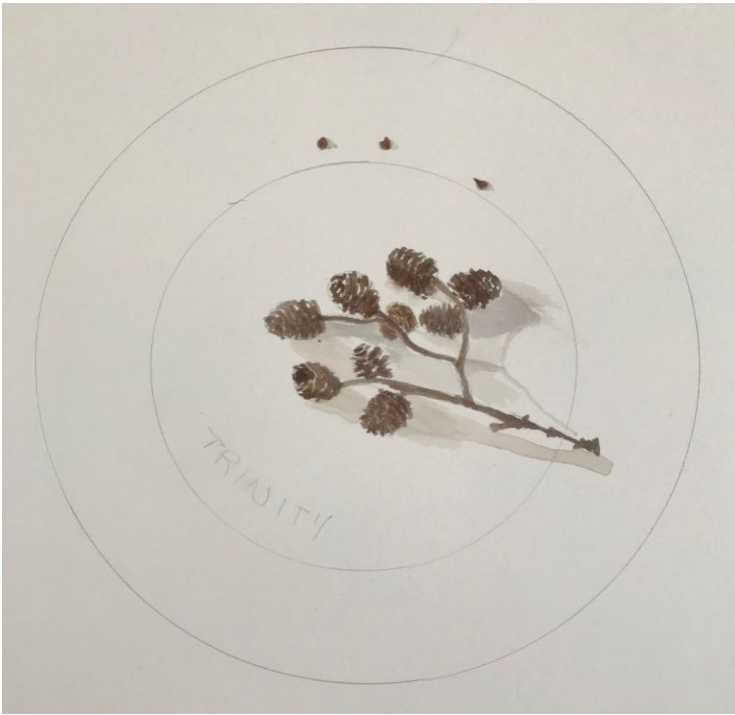


He Grasps the Sky with Both Hands

The power to remember one's higher identity in the midst of action in the world.

(McGilchrist). In an ancient Iroquois legend the brother known as *He Grasps the Sky with Both Hands* can be seen to symbolise the right brain hemisphere and his brother known as *Flint*, the left. Ian McGilchrist uses this myth to illustrate how the brain hemispheres ideally work together: the left hemisphere in balance with but overseen by the right hemisphere's bigger picture.

The flowers around the border of the plate are inspired by those seen covering the ground in Renaissance paintings.



The Triple Spiral

For a Goethean enquiry exercise I chose a sprig of Alder cones I found as windfall on a stormy January day. I saw that the cones:

are beautifully and intricately formed,
accommodate each other in how they grow,
are each uniquely different,
hold potential and
reflect the Celtic Triple Spiral.

This *three in one* which occurs in nature is also reflected in many religions and cultures e.g. the triune deities of both Celtic and Roman cultures and the Christian trinity.

Completed Domestic Icons



The Triple Spiral

Sculpture of gilded plate with
found Alder cones.

20 cm diameter.

Heart and Hands

Egg tempera and
gold leaf on panel.

20 cm diameter.



I aim to continue making *domestic icons* to further investigate the deep wisdom found in ancient yet relevant symbols, legends and myths.