

An ACTIVITY from ByziMom.com for
October 1

A Shrine to Protect Our Protectress



Every October we commemorate the great miracle of the Protection of the Theotokos and thank God for the wonderful gift of His mother and all the prayerful protection and intercession that she provides for us. Jesus loves His mother very much, and He wants us to love her too! When I was younger and before I had my own family, I liked to travel to exciting places and see new things. When I visited my family's village in Europe, I noticed these little wooden houses with icons in them on posts along the roadside. The icons were there for passersby to venerate, but safe from the rain and the wind in their little wooden houses. What a nice addition to someone's garden this would be! But what if you have no outdoor garden? Then perhaps placing one in an indoor planter would be just as nice! With this icon shrine, we can be reminded of the love and protection of Our Holy

Mother the Theotokos, and protect HER from the elements at the same time.

You Will Need

- A Paper Icon of the Protection of the Theotokos
- A recycled/washed and dried milk carton
- Craft sticks or a roll of duct tape (any color or pattern you would like, but the kind that looks like wood grain is really nice!)
- Glue (a glue gun is great, with proper supervision of course, but craft glue is fine too)
- Colored construction paper or contact paper, craft foam, or felt to line your milk carton(optional)
- Wooden beads, paint, doo-dads of any kind for decoration...all optional as well.

Instructions

Wash out your recycled milk carton and allow it to dry. With scissors, carefully cut out the white plastic pour spout from the top so that the "roof" is flat.

Next, cut out one side of your milk carton to make the front opening of your shrine. You may opt to line the inside with colored paper, pieces of craft foam, or felt (the stick-on kind is especially nice for this). Just use the outsides of your carton as a template to know what size to make the pieces, then arrange them and glue or stick them down inside the carton.

Take the copy of the icon you would like to use and glue it down to the back of the inside of the carton so that you can see it plainly through the opening.

Now it's time to decorate the outside! This can be done as elaborately or as simply as you like. You may choose to use duct tape to cover the carton, Cover it with pieces of craft foam (to look like shingles!), or use either hot glue (with adult supervision, of course!) or craft glue to cover your carton with craft sticks to look like a wooden church! Decorate it with little wooden embellishments, beads, or buttons that you can find at a craft store or even in a junk drawer at home! Be as creative as you like!

Place your icon shrine in a special place so that, when you look at it and say your prayers before it, you will be reminded of how the Theotokos loves and protects you!