

Floor Icons

After the War of Dissolution, it became popular among hardcore Partisans to place icons of Claravian saints on the floor at the entrance to their homes, so guests would have to trample the icon under paw in order to enter. It became so popular, in fact, that special floor mats were manufactured for this specific purpose. The images used on these floor mats were almost always pre-existing icons found on the ansible network rather than specially commissioned pieces.

The Wayfarers within Partisan Territory (those who hadn't fled to Moonlitter during Firefly's genocide) were understandably scandalized. Until, that is, a savvy hearthkeeper pointed out that, whatever the motives of the Partisans who engaged in this practice, they were still putting icons of holy men and women in their homes, and although they didn't intend to, they were honoring the faith by doing so. She further suggested to her litter that they shouldn't regard treading on the saint's image as an act of sacrilege, but as an act of faith. Rather than trampling them, they were allowing their paws to be held up by the holy men and women who passed before them. The hearthkeeper further taught her litter to recite a small prayer, in secret, whenever they had occasion to tread upon a saint's image.

"O saint NN. Be thou to me a firm foundation and guiding path."

The Partisans continued the practice of floor icons, assuming it to be gravely insulting to their Wayfarer opponents. The hearthkeeper who proposed this new prayer later took the high perch at the City of Eternal Noon, the first Outlander to do so after the war, and, incidentally, the last non-Hearthsider to do so for quite some time after.

It just so happened that her assumption of the duty to tend the Eternal Hearth coincided with the opening of an otherwise inconsequential government building at some regional capitol within Partisan Territory. The Partisans, perhaps as a dig at their fellow Outlander, commissioned an artist to design a floor mosaic for this building echoing the practice of trampled icons. The artist, having heard rumors that the faithful had done the old Uno reverse on the whole practice, decided to up the ante by depicting a saint in a compromising position. Unfortunately for his clients, this artist was also a plagiarist, and simply poked around the ansible network for a suitable image to copy. The image he chose looked very compromising indeed, an elderly steadtree hermit striking a young woman across the muzzle. The artist was so thrilled at the potential scandal the image would cause that he didn't stop to ask why a Wayfarer would bother depicting the scene as an icon in the first place.

Opening day came for this hall of bureaucracy, and with it the unveiling of the mosaic. It turns out that the image the artist chose depicted Saint Sunfire administering a ceremonial blow to the muzzle of a penitent who sought his spiritual council in order to amend her life. The supposed victim, a future saint herself, was in fact a former gel-head parlor owner who, after her conversion, devoted her life to helping recovering addicts. Sunfire's gesture was (and still is as of First Contact) a common ceremony undertaken by such penitents. Tod, for example, would have experienced it

during his talks with the hearthkeeper at the AW military outpost at Moonlitter, and in any case, it's always shown in icons as being much more forceful than it is in practice, being more of a firm tap on the snout than a strike intended to cause pain.

The Partisans were left with egg on their face. The high hearthkeeper, in an effort to rub it in a little more, issued a statement thanking the Partisans for honoring these two holy Wayfarers with this art installation.

Now that this insult turned pious practice had been made public, Wayfarers at Moonlitter and within Partisan Territory started putting such floor icons in their own homes, the prayer mentioned above now written openly on the icon itself. Over time, the practice developed into an aspect of the region's sacred architecture, with lighthouses on and around Moonlitter being known for their lovingly decorated floors depicting the lives of saints, acts of virtue, or even hopeful scenes depicting missionaries fulfilling the Great Commandment.

Revision #1

Created 2026-06-05 22:47:07 UTC by Lurker

Updated 2026-06-05 22:47:07 UTC by Lurker