

THE FIRST SALUTATIONS SERVICE
TO THE VIRGIN MARY
(FIRST FRIDAY OF GREAT LENT)





THE AKATHIST HYMN

The *Akathist Hymn* was originally composed to be sung for the feast of the Annunciation, celebrated by the Church in both East and West on March 25th. Modern scholars believe that it was during the reign of the emperor Justinian (527-565AD), the builder of the great Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom in Constantinople, that the feast of the Annunciation came to be celebrated on March 25th. More recently, during the period of the Ottoman Empire, after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Hymn was transferred to its present position on the Orthodox liturgical calendar: the Saturday of the 5th week of Great Lent. Still more recent is the custom of singing a portion of the Hymn during Compline services on the first four Fridays of Great Lent, something unique to the Greek tradition of Orthodoxy that is not done by the Russian and broader Slavic traditions. The Greek word "*akathist*" literally means "not sitting," the Hymn being called this because all remain standing while it is sung. The *Akathist Hymn* celebrates the main events connected with the Incarnation of Christ: the announcement to Mary by the Archangel Gabriel, the flight into Egypt and the aged prophet Symeon's recognition of God's salvation in the child Jesus. The greater part of the Hymn is made up of praises addressed to Mary as the *Theotokos*—an ancient title applied to Mary at the Third Ecumenical Council held in the city of Ephesus in 431AD. Christians believe that Mary gave birth to the Word of God made flesh (*John 1:1-14*). These praises begin with the greeting of Gabriel to Mary as recorded in the Scriptures: "Rejoice" (*Luke 1:38*). The composer of the *Akathist Hymn* was St. Romanos the Melodist (+556AD), whose memory is celebrated in the Orthodox Church on October 1st. Romanos, a deacon of the Church in Beirut who would later serve in Constantinople, is one of the greatest composers in the history of the Church and this hymn celebrating the Incarnation of Christ is one of his finest compositions. The great popularity of the *Akathist Hymn* is attested by the fact that it has been translated into so many languages: Latin, Slavonic, Arabic, Romanian, French, German, Dutch, Spanish, English, Hungarian, Japanese and Finnish.



Priest: Blessed is our God always now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Priest: Glory You, our God, glory You!

Heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of Truth, present in all places and filling all things, the Treasury of blessings and the Giver of life; come and dwell in us, cleanse us of all stain and save our souls, O Good One!

People: Amen. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3x)



Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your Name's sake.

Lord have mercy. (3x)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive



us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *(12x)*

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Come, let us worship God, our King, and bow down before Him *(reverence)*.

Come, let us worship Christ God, our King, and bow down before Him *(reverence)*.

Come, let us worship Christ, our King and our God, and bow down before Him *(reverence)*.

The congregation prays the following Psalms together.

PSALM 50

A Prayer of Repentance



Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me.

In the greatness of Your love,

In the abundance of Your tender mercies,
wipe out my offense.

Wash me thoroughly from malice and cleanse me from sin,
For I am well aware of my malice
and my sins are before me always.

It is You alone I have offended,
I have done what is evil in Your sight;



Therefore You are justified in Your actions
and triumphant in Your judgment.

Behold, I was conceived in iniquities
and in sins my mother conceived me.

But You are the Lover of Truth;

You have shown me the depths and secrets of Your wisdom.

Wash me with hyssop and I shall be pure,
cleansing me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear the sounds of joy and feasting;
these bones that were afflicted shall rejoice.

Turn Your face away from my offenses
and wipe away all my sins.

A spotless heart create in me, O God;
renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Cast me not afar from Your face,
take not Your blessed Spirit out of me.

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation
and let Your guiding Spirit dwell in me.

I will teach Your ways to sinners
and the wicked shall return to You.



Deliver me from blood-guilt, O God, the God of my salvation,
and my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness.

O Lord, You shall open my lips
and my mouth will declare Your praise.

Had You desired sacrifice, I would have offered it,
but You will not be satisfied with whole-burnt offerings.

Sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit;
a crushed and humbled heart God will not spurn.

In Your kindness, O Lord, be bountiful to Zion;
may the walls of Jerusalem be rebuilt.



Then You shall delight in just oblation,
in sacrifice and whole-burnt offerings.
Then shall they offer calves upon Your altar.

PSALM 69

A Prayer for Remembrance

O God, come to my assistance! O Lord, hasten to help me!
Shame and disgrace upon those who seek my life!

Let those who wish me evil be turned back and put to shame!
Let those who jeer at me, “Well done! Well done!”
be turned back in shame

But let all who seek You, O God, be glad and rejoice in You.
Let those who love Your salvation always say,
“The Lord be exalted!”

As for me, I am wretched and poor; God shall be my help.
You are indeed my help and my salvation.
O Lord, do not delay!

PSALM 142

Confidence in the Lord

O Lord, hear my prayer;
in Your truth give heed to my request,
and in Your righteousness hear me.

Enter not into judgment with Your servant
since of all the living, no one is just before You.

The enemy has pursued my soul,
he has crushed my life into the ground;
He has forced me to dwell in darkness like those long dead.

My spirit was overwhelmed with grief
and within me, my heart was troubled.

Remembering the days of old,
I meditated on all Your deeds,
I pondered on the works of Your hands.

I stretched out my hands You;
like a parched land my soul thirsts for You.
Make haste to answer me, O Lord;
for my spirit has failed me.

Turn not Your face away from me
nor let me sink into the pit like the others.
Grant that I may hear Your love at dawn
for I have placed my hope in You.

O Lord, teach me the way on which I should walk,
for I have lifted up my soul to You.
Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies;
it is You that I have fled.

Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God;
may Your good Spirit lead me over level ground.
For the sake of Your Name, O Lord,
You will keep me alive.

In Your saving bounty,
You will deliver my soul from oppression,
And in Your loving kindness,
You will destroy my enemies.
And bring to nothing all those who grieve my soul,
for I am Your servant.







The congregation prays the Doxology together

The DOXOLOGY—Offering glory and praise to God

- Glory to God in the highest
and on earth peace, and good will to men.
- We praise You, we bless You, we worship You, we glorify
You, we give thanks to You for the splendor of Your glory.
- O Lord King, Heavenly God, Father Almighty! O Lord Only-
begotten Son, Jesus Christ! And You, All-Holy Spirit!
- O Lord God, Lamb of God, the Son of the Father, who take
away the sins of the world, have mercy on us: You who take
away the sins of the world!
- Accept our supplication, You who are enthroned at the right
hand of the Father, and have mercy on us!
- For You alone are holy, You alone are the Lord Jesus Christ
to the glory of God the Father. Amen.
- Every day will I bless You and sing to Your Name, always,
and to the ages of ages.
- O Lord, You have been a refuge for us from generation to
generation.
- I said, “Lord, have mercy on me and heal my soul, for I have
sinned against You.”
- O Lord, to You do I come for shelter;
teach me to do Your will, for You are my God.
- For with You is the fountain of life,
and in Your Light we shall see light.
- Extend Your mercy upon those who confess You.
- Deign, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin.
- Blessed are You, O Lord, teach me Your commandments.



- Blessed are You, O Master,
grant that I may understand Your commandments.

- Blessed are You, O Holy One,
enlighten me with Your commandments.

-Everlasting is Your love, O Lord;
do not turn away from the work of Your hands.

- Indeed, to You belongs praise, adoration and glory, to the
Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever
and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The people continue with the proclamation of their faith:

THE CREED

-I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and
earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

-And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of the Father before all ages; Light of Light, true God
of true God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the
Father through Whom all things were made. Who for us men
and for our salvation came down from heaven and was
incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became
man. He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered
and was buried. And He rose on the third day, according to the
Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right
hand of the Father; And He will come again with glory to
judge the living and dead. His kingdom shall have no end.

- And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life, Who
proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and
the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the
prophets.

-In one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

-I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

-I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the age to come. Amen.

A HYMN TO HONOR THE MOTHER OF GOD

It is fitting and right to call you blessed, O *Theotokos*, the ever-blessed and all-blameless one, and the Mother of our God. O you, higher in honor than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, you gave birth to God the Word in virginity. You are truly the Mother of God! You do we exalt!



The choir then sings the canon of hymns honoring the Mother of God and ever-virgin Mary

The First Ode (4th Tone)



My mouth shall I open up and by the Spirit shall it be filled;
And I shall pour out a word unto the Mother and Queen;
And I shall be seen in cheerful celebration;
And joyfully I shall sing lauding her miracles.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

O Pure one, beholding you, the great Archangel exclaimed to
You the animate book of Christ which by the Spirit was sealed:
Maiden full of grace, rejoice, O joy's container, through whom
shall be nullified the primal mother's curse.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

Rejoice, Virgin Bride of God, the restoration of fallen man, the
mortification of Hades, O Blameless one, and the palace of the
only King and Sovereign, rejoice. Fiery throne of the Ruler of
all, rejoice.



Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Rejoice, you the only one who budded forth the unfading rose.
Rejoice, who have given birth unto the sweet apple tree.
Aromatic balm of all creation's Monarch, rejoice, O unwedded
Bride, the world's deliverance.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Treasury of chastity, rejoice, through you we have risen up from
out of our fall. Rejoice, sweet smelling lily that sends forth its
fragrant scent, O Lady, to the faithful, aromatic incense and
costly anointing oil.

The Third Ode

Establish, All-holy *Theotokos*, O living and ever-welling fount,
your choristers assembled here in spiritual fellowship, and
crowns of glory graciously in your divine glory grant to them.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.



The land which has tillered the divine stalk while clearly
continuing untilled, rejoice, O table animate, which held the
holy bread of life. Rejoice, O never-empty fount of living
water, O blessed one.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

The heifer that mothered for the faithful the unblemished
Bullock, O rejoice. The ewe that weaned the Lamb of God who
takes away the sins of the world, rejoice. The golden mercy
seat of expiation for all, rejoice.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

The luminous morning that alone brings Christ the Son of
Righteousness, rejoice. O dwelling place of light, rejoice;



dispeller of the dark, rejoice, who has diminished utterly the darkened demons of Lucifer.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice, only veritable east gate that only the *Logos* has gone through. Rejoice, for in your giving birth you shattered Hades' bars and gates. All-laudable, rejoice, divine entrance of those who are being saved.

The Fourth Ode

He who sits in holy glory on the throne of Divinity on a swift and light cloud, Jesus has arrived, the surpassing God, and by the might of His undefiled hand has saved those who cry aloud: Glory, O Christ, to Your power be.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.


Unto you in songful voices do we loyally say rejoice, rich and curdled mountain in the Holy Spirit, All-laudable. Rejoice, O seven-branched lampstand and the golden jar with the manna bread sweet to the palate of pious folk.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

O rejoice, untainted Lady. Mercy seat for the world, rejoice. Ladder elevating everyone from earth by an act of grace. Rejoice, O heavenly bridge that is conveying from death unto life, in truth, all those who chant hymns of praise to you.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

More exalted than the heavens, O immaculate Maid, rejoice, as the one who carried earth's Foundation painlessly in your womb. Rejoice, O mollusk who dyed in your own virgin blood the divine purple robe worn by the King of angelic hosts.



Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

Lady, truly you gave birth to the divine Giver of the law Who erases freely everybody's record of lawlessness. Incomprehensible depth and height unspeakable, O unwedded Bride, rejoice, through whom we are deified.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

We extol you who have woven the unwoven by human hands, crown of hope and glory for the world, O Virgin, and say, rejoice, You the fortification and the citadel and protective wall and sacred refuge for everyone.

The Fifth Ode

Amazed was the universe by your divine magnificence. For while never consummating marriage, you held, O Virgin, the God of all in your womb, and gave birth unto a timeless Son who rewards salvation to all who chant hymns of praise to You.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.



Rejoice, for you carried in your womb the Way that leads to life. Bride of God, rejoice, all-blameless Maiden, who saved the world from the flood of sin. Rejoice, awe-inspiring message and report, habitation of the One who is Lord of creation all.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

The might and the fortress of the human race, O spotless one, O rejoice, the holy place of glory, slayer of Hades, the bridal chamber of light. Delight of the angels, O rejoice. Helper of the ones who pray to you faithfully, O rejoice.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

Rejoice, fiery chariot of God the Word and risen Sun, Lady, living paradisaal garden which in its center contains the tree of



life, the Lord whose deliciousness gives life unto those who eat with faith, who were subject unto decay.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Your power enheartens us. We loyally cry out, rejoice, unto you the city of the Great King, about which glorious and remarkable things perspicuously have been declared. O unquarried mountain and depth unfathomable, rejoice.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice, O Immaculate, the spacious dwelling of the Word; seashell that produces the divine pearl. Rejoice, O Lady, exceeding wonderful; reconciliation with the Lord for all who beatify you the Mother of God each day.

The Sixth Ode

O godly people, as we observe this solemn and divine feast in honor of the Mother of our God, come let us clap our hands for joy, while glorifying God who was truly born of her.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.



The undefiled chamber of the Word, for all the cause of deification, O Immaculate, rejoice. The Prophets' echoing prophesy, rejoice, and the adornment of the Apostles' word.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

From you has dripped the refreshing dew, undoing polytheism's fever, and we therefore say You: Rejoice, the fleece that was wondrously bedewed, O holy Virgin, which Gideon foresaw.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

Behold, we cry out to you, rejoice. Become for us a harbor and anchorage, for we are tossed about upon the sea of adversities and of the many scandals of him who wars with us.



Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

The cause and reason for holy joy, cause holy grace to shine on our reasoning that we may cry, rejoice, O unconsumed bush and shining cloud that overshadows ceaselessly the believers all.

The Seventh Ode

Godly-minded three did not adore created things in the Creator's stead, but bravely trampling upon the threat of the furnace fire they chanted joyfully; O supremely praised and most exalted Lord and God of our fathers, You are blessed.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

We sing hymns to you and shout: Rejoice, O chariot of the intelligible Sun. Rejoice, O veritable vine that cultured the ripened cluster dripping with wine, making glad the hearts and souls of all who faithfully praise and glorify you daily.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.



Bride of God, rejoice, who carried in your womb the Healer of the human race. Rejoice, O mystical rod that blossomed the flower that will never wilt away. O Lady, rejoice, through whom we are fulfilled with joy and inherit life eternal.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

Insufficient is the tongue of any orator for hymns extolling you who were exalted above the Seraphim, having given birth to Christ the King; Whom, O Lady, beseech to rescue now from every harm those who bow in faith before you.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

The ends of the earth extol you and beatify, and they cry out to



you: Rejoice, the tablet on which, O Pure one, the Word was by the Father's hand inscribed. Intercede with Him, O *Theotokos*, to enroll in the book of life your servants.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

We your servants now beseech you and we bend the knee of our heart to you. O Pure one, lend us an ear, and save us, for we are drowning in adversities. And your City redeem, O *Theotokos*, from the hands of her infidel invaders.

The Eighth Ode

Pious children stood within the furnace. The Child of the *Theotokos* went and rescued them. He who was prefigured then, manifestly acting now, is gathering together the entire universe to sing the hymn: O praise and supremely exalt the Lord, O all ye His works, unto the ages.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.



You welcomed into your womb the *Logos*; you held in your arms the One who holds all things. With your milk you nourished Him who with a nod gives nourishment, O purest Maiden, unto the entire universe, to Whom we sing; O praise and supremely exalt the Lord, O all ye His works, unto the ages.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

The glorious mystery of your childbirth did Moses perceive within the burning bush. Children once in Babylon vividly prefigured this when standing in the midst of fire remaining unconsumed, O undefiled and all-holy virgin. And therefore we extol you in hymns throughout the ages.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

We who were left naked through beguilement have worn



through your pregnancy the garment of incorruptibility, and we who were sitting in the darkness of our sins and errors now have seen the light, O dwelling place of light, holy Damsel. And therefore we extol you in hymns throughout the ages.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

The dead have been given life through your power, for pregnant were you with Life personified. They who once were speechless now speak with newfound eloquence. Diseases are exterminated, lepers purified. The legions of aerial spirits, O Virgin, are defeated, for you are man's salvation.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

O Birth-giver of the world's salvation, through you we are raised from earth unto the heights. Ever-blessed Maid, rejoice, fortress and protective veil, O pure one, the defense and the fortification of all who sing the hymn: O praise and supremely exalt the Lord, O all ye His works unto the ages.

The priest (or deacon) censures the Church and congregation during the singing of the Ninth Ode.

The Ninth Ode

Mortals one and all, with festival lamps in hand, in spirit leap for joy; and ye incorporeal angelic powers in heaven celebrate, thus honoring the sacred feast of the Mother of God, and salute her: O rejoice, All-blessed one, Ever-Virgin and Pure, who gave birth to God.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

So that we may cry, rejoice, unto you through whom we faithful have become sharers of eternal joy, O Maiden, rescue us from the coming trials, barbarian invasions and from every other scourge, which are bound to follow on the multitude of transgressions committed by sinful man.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

Since you have appeared, our light and our surety, we therefore shout to you: O unsetting star, rejoice, from which the great Sun emerged unto the world. Rejoice, O Pure one, for you opened Eden closed of old. Rejoice the fiery pillar ushering humankind out of bondage to life on high.

Most-Holy *Theotokos*, save us.

Come and let us stand with reverence within the temple of our God and say: mistress of the world, rejoice. Rejoice, O Mary, the Lady of us all. Rejoice, for among women you alone are blameless and fair; Holy vessel which accepted the divine inexhaustible ointment poured over you.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit

Pure and guileless dove who brought forth the Lord of mercy as an olive branch, Ever-Virgin, O rejoice. The boast of every devout monastic saint, rejoice, the crown of laurel of the martyr-athletes. Rejoice, the divine adornment of all the righteous, and for us the believers deliverance.

Both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Spare us, O our God, this Your own inheritance, by overlooking now all of our iniquities, Christ, accepting for this the fervent prayers of her who without seed conceived on earth and carried You who in Your great mercy and Your love for man willed to take on the form that was not Your own.



The Kontakion

You as champion unto victory invincible
Your city offers thanksgiving unto you.
From our trials, Theotokos, have you redeemed us.
For as you possess invincible might and power,
From all dangers, Theotokos, deliver us,
As we cry unto you, Hail, O Bride unwedded.

Ἦχος πλ. δ' Αυτόμελον

Τῆ υπερμάχῳ στρατηγῷ τὰ νικητήρια,
ὡς λυτρωθεῖσα τῶν δεινῶν, εὐχαριστήρια,
αναγράφῳ σοι ἡ Πόλις σου, Θεοτόκε,
ἀλλ' ὡς ἔχουσα τό κράτος ἀπροσμάχητον,
ἐκ παντοίων με κινδύνων ἐλευθέρῳσον
ἵνα κράζῳ σοι, Χαίρε, Νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.



The First Stanza

Priest: The Archangel was sent from heaven to say “Rejoice” to the *Theotokos*. Envisioning You incarnate, O Lord, he stood before her rapt in amazement and with his celestial voice cried out to her:

Rejoice! You, through whom joy will shine forth.

Rejoice! You, through whom the curse will vanish.

Rejoice! For you are the recalling of the fallen Adam.

Rejoice! For you are the redemption of Eve's tears.

Rejoice! O height beyond human logic.

Rejoice! O depth beyond even the sight of Angels.

Rejoice! You, who are the throne of the King.

Rejoice! For you gave birth to Him Who upholds
the universe.

Rejoice! O star revealing the Sun.

Rejoice! Womb of divine Incarnation.

Rejoice! You, through whom the creation is
remade.

Rejoice! You, through whom the Creator becomes a
newborn Child.

Rejoice! O Bride Unwedded.

Choir: Χαίρε, Νύμφη ανύμφευτε.

Priest: Knowing that she was a virgin, the holy Maiden boldly
said to Gabriel: "Your strange words seem almost
unbelievable to my soul; for how do you speak of
childbirth without seed, as you cry:
Alleluia."

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

(2)

Priest: Yearning to know that which is beyond knowledge, the
Virgin said to the ministering angel: "How may a Son
be born from a virginal womb? Tell me!" To her he
answered in fear, crying out:

Rejoice! O seer of the ineffable will of God.

Rejoice! Faith in the miracle guarded by silence.

Rejoice! You who are the beginning of Christ's

miracles.

Rejoice! You who are the fulfillment of His commandments.

Rejoice! Heavenly ladder, by which God descended.

Rejoice! Bridge, leading us from earth to heaven.

Rejoice! O wonder, much marveled at by angels.

Rejoice! O wound, bitterly mourned by demons.

Rejoice! You, who ineffably gave birth to the Light.

Rejoice! You, who revealed the Mystery to none.

Rejoice! O wisdom surpassing the knowledge of those who claim to be wise.

Rejoice! You, who enlighten the minds of believers.

Rejoice! O Bride Unwedded.



Choir: Χαίρε, Νύμφη ανύμφευτε.

Priest: The power of the Most High overshadowed the Virgin that she might conceive; and He made her fruitful womb a fertile meadow for all those who desire to reap the harvest of salvation by singing: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

(3)

Priest: Having received the Word of God in her womb, the Virgin hastened to Elizabeth, whose unborn son, recognizing Mary's greeting, rejoiced, and with stirrings, as though with praises, cried out to the *Theotokos*:



Rejoice! Branch of the true Vine that never withers.

Rejoice! You, who are the orchard of the purest fruit.

Rejoice! You, who tend to the Lover of mankind.

Rejoice! You, who gave birth to the Planter of our life.

Rejoice! Field, yielding a rich harvest of compassion.

Rejoice! Table, laden with forgiveness in abundance.

Rejoice! You, through whom the fields of Eden flower again.

Rejoice! For you prepare a haven for our souls.

Rejoice! O incense acceptable for intercession.

Rejoice! You, who are the whole world's expiation.

Rejoice! Loving kindness of God to mortals.

Rejoice! Freedom of approach to God for all mortals.

Rejoice! O Bride Unwedded.

Choir: Χαίρε, Νύμφη ανύμφευτε.

Priest: The righteous Joseph, having doubtful thoughts seeing you, O blameless *Theotokos*, and suspecting a hidden wedlock, was troubled; but when he learned of Your conception by the Holy Spirit, he cried out: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

The Kontakion

**You as champion unto victory invincible
Your city offers thanksgiving unto you.**

From our trials, Theotokos, have you redeemed us.
For as you possess invincible might and power,
From all dangers, Theotokos, deliver us,
As we cry unto you, Hail, O Bride unwedded.

Ἦχος πλ. δ' Αυτόμελον

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ἐκ παντοίων με κινδύνων ἐλευθέρωσον
ἵνα κράζῳ σοι, Χαίρει, Νύμφη ἀνύμφευτε.

The Trisagion Prayers

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3x)



Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for Your Name's sake.

Lord have mercy. (3x)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, both now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.



Priest: For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

People: Amen.

The Kontakion of St. Theodore the Recruit

People: You have carried the shield of faith of Christ within your heart, and trampled underfoot the power of the Enemy, O greatly-suffering martyr Theodore; you have received a heavenly and eternal crown, for you were undefeated in the battle.

People: Lord, have mercy. (40x)

The priest extends his hands and prays:

Priest: O You who in all times and places are worshiped and glorified, both in heaven and on earth, Christ God, long-suffering, generous in mercy and rich in compassion, loving to the just and merciful to the sinner: You call all to repentance through the promise of blessings to come! Deign, O Lord, at this very hour to receive our supplications and to direct our lives in the way of Your commandments. Sanctify our souls, purify our bodies, set our minds aright, cleanse our thoughts; deliver us from all affliction, wrath, danger, and need. Surround us with your holy angels, so that, guided and guarded by them, we may reach the unity of the Faith and the knowledge of your unutterable glory, for You are blessed to the ages of ages!

People: Amen.

People: Lord, have mercy (3x)

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.



HYMN TO HONOR THE MOTHER OF GOD

People: O you, higher in honor than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, you gave birth to God the Word in virginity. You are truly the Mother of God! You do we exalt!

Give the blessing, Father, in the Name of the Lord.

Priest: May God be merciful to us and bless us; may He cause the light of His countenance to shine upon us, and have mercy on us (*Psalm 67:1*).

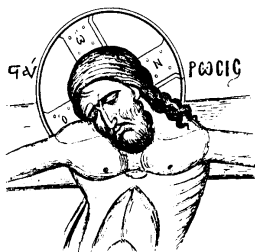
People: Amen.

*The first reader
stands before the icon of the Theotokos and prays*

A PRAYER TO THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF GOD

O Lady, Bride of God, virginal, pure, blameless, without stain or disgrace, who through your giving birth to the Word of God brought together our fallen state and the things of heaven: you are the only hope of the hopeless, the helper of the oppressed, a ready protection of those who flee to You and refuge for all Christians. Do not despise me, a wretched sinner, having defiled myself with unclean thoughts, words and deeds, and in my slothfulness becoming a slave to the passions of life. As you are the Mother of God, who is the Lover of mankind, have mercy, and compassion on me a sinner and a prodigal. Accept this prayer from my impure lips and with your intimacy as a mother, beg your Son, my Lord and my God, to open to me the depths of His loving kindness, forgive my countless sins, convert me to true repentance, and enable me to do His commandments. Always be near me, for you are merciful, compassionate, and

loving. In this present life, be with me as an intercessor, as a powerful help to turn away the assaults of my enemies and to guide me to salvation. At the hour of my death, be with me to embrace my poor soul and keep away the dreadful sight of the evil demons. On the fearful day of judgment, deliver me from eternal punishment and make me an heir of your Son's glory, through the grace and love for mankind of your Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To Him and to His eternal Father, and to His all-holy, good and life-giving Spirit, we offer glory, honor, and adoration, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.



*The second reader
stands before the icon of Christ our Lord and says the:*

PRAYER TO OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST

Now that we are about to lie down to sleep, grant us, O Master, rest for our souls and bodies. Preserve us against the dark slumber of sin and against any impure pleasure of the night. Quiet the assaults of our passions, arrest the darts that the Evil One insidiously throws at us, still the turbulence of our flesh, and calm all earthly and worldly desires within us. Grant us, O Lord, a watchful mind, innocent thoughts, a sober heart, and a gentle sleep free from evil dreams. Raise us at the hour of prayer, strong in the practice of Your commandments and ever mindful of Your desires. Give us the grace to sing of Your glory throughout the night, to praise, bless, and glorify Your all-honorable and magnificent Name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

First Reader:

O you most glorious, ever-virgin, and blessed Mother of God, commend our prayers to your Son, our God, and entreat Him to save our souls through your intercession.

Second Reader:

The Father is my hope, the Son my refuge, the Holy Spirit my protection: O All-Holy Trinity, glory to You!

First Reader:

In you do I place all my hope, O Mother of God. Keep me under your protection.



THE READING OF THE HOLY GOSPEL

Deacon: Let us pray to the Lord our God that He will deem us worthy to hear the Holy Gospel

Choir: Lord have mercy (3x)

Deacon: Wisdom! Arise! Let us hear the Holy Gospel!

Priest: Peace be with you all.



Choir: And with your spirit.

Deacon: The reading is from the holy Gospel according to St. John. Let us listen attentively.

Choir: Glory You O Lord, glory You.

John 15:1-7

The Lord said to His disciples. "I am the true Vine, and my



Father is the Vinedresser. Every branch in Me that bears no fruit He takes away, and every branch that bears fruit He will trim it that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word that I have spoken You. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he shall be cast out as the branch and wither; and they shall gather them up and cast them into the fire, and they shall burn. If you abide in Me, and if My words abide in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done unto You.

Choir: Glory You O Lord, glory You.

Priest: Peace be with all!

People: And with your spirit.

Priest: Let us bow our heads to the Lord.

People: To You, O Lord.

Priest: O most merciful Master, Lord Jesus Christ our God, through the intercessions of our all-pure Lady the Mother of God and ever-Virgin Mary; by the power of Your precious and life-giving Cross, the protection of the honorable bodiless powers of heaven; the prayers of the honorable and glorious prophet and forerunner, John the Baptist; of the holy, glorious and praiseworthy apostles; of the holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs; of our righteous and God-bearing Fathers; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna and of all your saints:

Priest: Make our supplications acceptable to You.

People: Amen.



Priest: Grant the remission of our sins.

People: Amen.

Priest: Protect us beneath the shelter of Your wings.

People: Amen.

Priest: Drive away all our enemies and foes.

People: Amen.

Priest: Preserve our lives in peace.

People: Amen.

Priest: O Lord, have mercy on us and upon Your world, and save our souls, for You are merciful and You love mankind.

People: Amen.

The priest asks the brethren to forgive him and to pray for him.

Priest: Bless me and forgive me, holy brethren, for I am a sinner.

People: May God forgive you, holy Father!

Priest: Let us pray for peace in the world.



People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our President and those in civil authority, that they may be strengthened in every good deed.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For our Archbishop (*Name*) and all our brothers in Christ.

People: Lord, have mercy.



Priest: For those who are away from us, our parents and our brethren.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For those who have mercy on us and those who serve us.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For those who hate us and for those who love us.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For those who have asked us, unworthy as we are, to pray for them.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For the release of captives.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For travelers by sea, air and land.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For those afflicted with sickness.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: Let us pray also for an abundance of the fruits of the earth.

People: Lord, have mercy.

Priest: For all our parents and brethren departed from this life, for those who rest in this place and in every other place.

People: Eternal be their memory.

Priest: Let us pray also for ourselves.

People: Lord, have mercy! (3x)

Choir: Awed by the beauty of your virginity.
And the exceeding radiance of your purity.
Gabriel stood amazed and cried out to you O Theotokos.
What praise may I offer that is worthy of your beauty.
By what name shall I call you? I am lost and bewildered.
But I shall cry to you as commanded:
Rejoice O woman full of grace.

Ἦχος γ'
Τὴν ωραιότητα τῆς Παρθενίας σου,
καὶ τὸ υπέρλαμπρον τὸ τῆς αγνείας σου,
ο Γαβριήλ καταπλαγεῖς, εβόα σοι Θεοτόκε,
Ποῖόν σοι εγκώμιον,
προσαγάγω ἐπάζιον,
τί δέ ονομάσω σε; απορῶ καὶ ἐξίσταμαι.
Διό ως προσετάγην βοῶ σοι,
Χαίρε, ἡ Κεχαριτωμένη.

Priest: Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

People: Amen.





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