



**AKATHIST HYMN  
To Our Lady the Theotokos**



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**To Our Lady the Theotokos**  
**In Honour of the Annunciation**  
**and the Incarnation of Our Lord**

**Opening Blessing**

**PRIEST:** Blessed be our God, always, now and for ever and ever.

**ALL:** Amen.

**Beginning Prayers**

**PRIEST:** Glory be to You, our God, glory be to You!

**ALL:** Heavenly King, \* Advocate, Spirit of Truth, \* Who are everywhere present and fill all things, \* Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life, \* come, and dwell within us; \* cleanse us of all that defiles us, \* and, O Good One, save our souls.

**PRIEST:** †Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us!

**ALL:** †Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us!

**PRIEST:** †Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us!

**ALL:** †Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

**PRIEST:** Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

**ALL:** Trinity most holy, have mercy on us. \* Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord; \* pardon our transgressions, O Master; \* look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One; \* for the sake of Your name.

PRIEST: Lord, have mercy. (3)

ALL: †Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,

PRIEST: Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

ALL: Our Father, \* Who art in heaven, \* hallowed be 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 the kingdom, the power and the glory are Yours, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever.

ALL: Amen.

### **Kontakion 1. Tone 8**

*Hymn of victory and thanksgiving*

ALL: To you, O Mother of God, \* unconquerable Leader in battle,\* we your servants, delivered from all calamity,\* offer hymns of victory and thanksgiving.\* Since you are invincible in power,\* set us free from every peril \* so that we may sing to you:\* Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Ikos 1**

*The Annunciation to Mary*

PRIEST: A prince of the angels was sent from heaven to greet the Mother of God, saying: "Rejoice." And as he saw You, O Lord, assuming human form, he stood rapt in amazement and cried out to her in these words:

ALL: Rejoice, for through you joy will shine forth.  
Rejoice, for through you the curse will disappear.  
Rejoice, restoration of fallen Adam.  
Rejoice, redemption of the tears of Eve.  
  
Rejoice, height, beyond human understanding.  
Rejoice, depth, not fathomed by the angels.  
Rejoice, for you are the throne of the King.  
Rejoice, for you carry Him, Who carries all.

Rejoice, morning star who brings forth the Sun.  
Rejoice, womb of the divine Incarnation.  
Rejoice, for through you creation is renewed.  
Rejoice, for through you the Creator becomes a newborn child.  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

## **Kontakion 2**

### *Mary's Virginit*

**PRIEST:** Knowing that she was pure, the holy Virgin quickly answered Gabriel saying: “Mysterious are your words and my soul is unable to understand. How is it, that you speak of a childbirth from a conception without seed, and sing: Alleluia?”

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

## **Ikos 2**

### *The Incarnation*

**PRIEST:** Trying to grasp the meaning of this mystery, the Virgin asked the holy messenger of God: “Tell me, how is it possible that a son be born of a virginal womb?” Then he spoke to her in fear, crying out in these words:

**ALL:** Rejoice, hidden secret of God's ineffable plan.  
Rejoice, for you believed in what calls for silence.  
Rejoice, beginning of the miracles of Christ.  
Rejoice, fulfillment of the truths concerning Him.  
Rejoice, heavenly ladder by which God came down.  
Rejoice, bridge leading those on earth to heaven.  
Rejoice, miracle most-wondrous to the angels.  
Rejoice, wounding much bewailed by the demons.  
Rejoice, for you have borne the glorious Light.  
Rejoice, for you have revealed the mystery to none.  
Rejoice, for you surpass the wisdom of the wise.  
Rejoice, for you enlighten the minds of the faithful.  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 3**

#### *Conceived by the Holy Spirit*

**PRIEST:** When the power of the Most High overshadowed the one who is blessed among women, she conceived. Her Fruitful womb became as a fertile field for all who long to reap the harvest of salvation, singing: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

### **Ikos 3**

#### *Mary visits Elizabeth*

**PRIEST:** Bearing God within her womb, the Virgin hastened to Elizabeth; whose unborn child, knowing at once the greeting of the Mother of God, rejoiced, and leaping up as if in song, cried out to her:

**ALL:** Rejoice, vine, bearing the unfading Bloom.  
Rejoice, orchard that bears immortal Fruit.  
Rejoice, for you care for the Lover of mankind.  
Rejoice, for you have borne the Gardener of our life.  
  
Rejoice, field bearing a rich harvest of compassion.  
Rejoice, table laden with an abundance of mercy.  
Rejoice, for you make paradise blossom again.  
Rejoice, for you prepare a haven for our souls.  
  
Rejoice, most-pleasing incense of intercession.  
Rejoice, offering for the whole world.  
Rejoice, loving-kindness of God to all mankind.  
Rejoice, confidence of all before God.  
  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 4**

#### *Joseph the Righteous*

**PRIEST:** Tossed inwardly by a storm of doubts, righteous Joseph was troubled: knowing you to be unwed, O blameless Virgin, he feared a stolen union. But when he learned that your

conceiving was by the power of the Holy Spirit, he cried out:  
Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

#### **Ikos 4**

*The announcement to the shepherds*

**PRIEST:** The shepherds heard the angels glorify Christ's coming in the flesh. Quickly they ran to the Shepherd, and beheld Him as a spotless Lamb, nurtured from the womb of Mary; and singing to her, they cried:

**ALL:** Rejoice, Mother of the Lamb and the Shepherd.  
Rejoice, fold of spiritual sheep.  
Rejoice, protection against invisible foes.  
Rejoice, key to the door of Paradise.

Rejoice, for the heavens exult with the earth.  
Rejoice, for the earth sings praise with heavens.  
Rejoice, never-silent voice of the Apostles.  
Rejoice, unconquerable courage of Martyrs.  
Rejoice, firm foundation of faith.  
Rejoice, shining revelation of grace.  
Rejoice, for through you Hades was stripped bare.  
Rejoice, for through you we are clothed in glory.  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

#### **Kontakion 5**

*The Magi follow a star*

**PRIEST:** Seeing the star pointing to God, the Magi followed its radiance. Keeping it before them as a beacon, with its help they sought the mighty King; and attaining the Unattainable, they rejoiced and cried to Him: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

#### **Ikos 5**

*The Magi behold the Child Jesus*

**PRIEST:** The sons of Chaldaeia saw the Virgin holding in her hands Him Who with His hands fashioned mankind. Though He had taken the form of a servant, yet they knew Him as their Master. In haste they knelt before Him with their gifts and cried out to the Blessed Virgin:

**ALL:** Rejoice, Mother of the Star that never sets.  
Rejoice, bright dawn of the mystic Day.  
Rejoice, for you quenched the furnace of deception.  
Rejoice, for you illumine the disciples of the Trinity.  
Rejoice, for you cast down the merciless tyrant from power.  
Rejoice, for you have shown us Christ, the Lord Who loves mankind.  
Rejoice, for you deliver us from pagan worship.  
Rejoice, for you free us from unclean deeds.  
Rejoice, for you suppressed the worship of fire.  
Rejoice, for you quench the flames of the passions.  
Rejoice, guide of the faithful to chastity.  
Rejoice, joy of all generations.  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 6**

*The Magi return home*

**PRIEST:** Becoming God's messengers, the Magi returned to Babylon. Having fulfilled the prophecy concerning you and preaching to all that You are the Christ, they left Herod to his raving, for he knew not how to sing: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

### **Ikos 6**

*The fall of idolatry*

**PRIEST:** Shining upon Egypt with the light of truth, You dispelled the darkness of falsehood. The idols of that land fell down, unable

to endure Your power, O Saviour, and all who were delivered from them cried to the Mother of God:

**ALL:** Rejoice, restoration of mankind.  
Rejoice, downfall of demons.  
Rejoice, for you crushed the power of deceit.  
Rejoice, for you exposed the fraud of idols.  
  
Rejoice, sea that drowns the invisible Pharaoh.  
Rejoice, rock that gives drink to all who thirst for life.  
Rejoice, pillar of fire, guiding those in darkness.  
Rejoice, protection of the world, broader than the cloud.  
  
Rejoice, successor to manna.  
Rejoice, servant of the banquet divine.  
Rejoice, Promised Land.  
Rejoice, land of milk and honey.  
  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 7**

#### *The Encounter in the Temple*

**PRIEST:** As Simeon drew near to the time of his departure from this deceitful world, he received You as an infant in his arms, knowing that You are the perfect God; and, struck with wonder at Your ineffable wisdom, he cried: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

### **Ikos 7**

#### *A New Creation is revealed*

**PRIEST:** The Creator revealed a new creation when He came down to us, His creation. He came forth from a womb that had received no seed, preserving it intact as it was before, so that seeing this miracle we might sing to the Mother of God:

**ALL:** Rejoice, flower of incorruption.  
Rejoice, crown of chastity.  
Rejoice, for you shine with the likeness of the resurrection.



Rejoice, for you reveal the life of the angels.

Rejoice, tree of good fruit from which the faithful feed.

Rejoice, shady glen where many find shelter.

Rejoice, for you carried in your womb the Guide of those astray.

Rejoice, for you gave birth to the Saviour of the captives.

Rejoice, intercessor with the righteous Judge.

Rejoice, forgiveness of many sins.

Rejoice, robe of confidence for those without hope.

Rejoice, loving-kindness surpassing all desire.

Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 8**

#### *Heaven is the Promised Land*

**PRIEST:** Seeing this miraculous birth, let us become strangers to the world and fix our minds on heaven. Indeed, it is for this reason that the God Most-High appeared on earth; He became a humble man, desiring to draw up to heaven all those who cry out to Him: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

### **Ikos 8**

#### *Paradise is opened*

**PRIEST:** The Word unfathomed was wholly present here below, yet in no way absent from the realm on high. For this was the descent of God, and not a change of place. A birth from a Virgin, who had received God, as she heard these words of praise:

**ALL:** Rejoice, enclosure of the uncontainable God;

Rejoice, gate of solemn Mystery.

Rejoice, strange wonder to the unbelievers.

Rejoice, undoubtable glory for the faithful.

Rejoice, most holy chariot of the *One-Who-Is* upon the Cherubim.

Rejoice, most glorious dwelling of the *One-Who-Lives* above the Seraphim.

Rejoice, for you bring opposites to harmony.

Rejoice, for you join virginity and motherhood.

Rejoice, for through you sin is absolved.

Rejoice, for through you Paradise is opened.

Rejoice, key to the kingdom of Christ.

Rejoice, hope of eternal blessings.

Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 9**

*The ranks of angels marvel*

**PRIEST:** All the ranks of angels marvelled at the great work of Your Incarnation. For they saw God, Whom none can approach, as a man approachable by all; dwelling among us and hearing from all: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

### **Ikos 9**

*The wise are speechless*

**PRIEST:** Eloquent orators become mute as fish before you, O Mother of God, for they are at a loss to say how you remained a virgin and yet were able to bear a child. As for us, while marvelling at this mystery, we cry out to you with faith:

**ALL:** Rejoice, vessel of the Wisdom of God.

Rejoice, treasury of His Providence.

Rejoice, reproof of foolish philosophers.

Rejoice, for the eloquent become speechless before you.

Rejoice, for the cunning are shown to be fools.

Rejoice, for the myth-makers are silenced.

Rejoice, for you dispelled the Athenian snares.

Rejoice, for you filled the fishermen's nets.

Rejoice, for you draw us from the depths of ignorance.

Rejoice, for you enlighten many with knowledge.  
Rejoice, ship for all who seek salvation.  
Rejoice, harbour in the voyage of life.  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 10**

*Jesus, our God and Shepherd*

**PRIEST:** Wishing to save the world, the Creator of all came to us as He had promised. Being our God and our Shepherd, out of love for us He took flesh and appeared to all. As man – He called out to all mankind; and as God – He heard from us: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

### **Ikos 10**

*Mary, our holy Protection*

**PRIEST:** O Virgin, Mother of God, you are the strength of virgins and of all those who take refuge in you. For the Creator of heaven and earth gave you to be our Protectress, O pure one. He dwelt in your womb and taught all to cry out to you:

**ALL:** Rejoice, pillar of virginity.  
Rejoice, gate of salvation.  
Rejoice, leader of spiritual restoration.  
Rejoice, bestower of divine grace.

Rejoice, for you renew those conceived in sin.  
Rejoice, for you counsel those lost in their understanding.  
Rejoice, for you bring to naught the corrupter of hearts.  
Rejoice, for you give birth to the Sower of purity.

Rejoice, bridal chamber of a marriage without seed.  
Rejoice, for you have united the faithful to their Lord.  
Rejoice, nursing-mother of virgins.  
Rejoice, bridal escort of holy souls.

Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

## **Kontakion 11**

*Jesus, our holy King*

**PRIEST:** The greatest song of praise cannot compare with the multitude of Your mercies, O Holy King! We could sing to You as many songs as there are grains of sand, and yet do nothing worthy of what You have given to us, who cry out to You: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

## **Ikos 11**

*Mary, the lamp of the living Light*

**PRIEST:** We see the holy Virgin as a lamp of living Light, shining upon those who live in darkness. For she is the one who kindled the immaterial Light, and now, she guides all mankind to the knowledge of God. She fills our minds with radiance and is worthy of being praised in these words:

**ALL:** Rejoice, ray of the spiritual Sun.  
Rejoice, radiance, unfading in splendour.  
Rejoice, lightning that enlightens our souls.  
Rejoice, thunder that strikes down all foes.  
  
Rejoice, for you caused the many-starred Light to dawn.  
Rejoice, for you caused the ever-flowing River to spring.  
Rejoice, image of the life-giving bath.  
Rejoice, for you wash away the stain of sin.  
  
Rejoice, font that cleanses the conscience.  
Rejoice, chalice overflowing with joy.  
Rejoice, scent of the fragrance of Christ.  
Rejoice, life full of mystical feasting.  
  
Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

## **Kontakion 12**

*Jesus, the Redeemer of all*

**PRIEST:** Wishing to release us from all ancient debts, the Redeemer of all came of His own will to those who were exiled from His

grace. He has torn up the records of our sins, and from all He hears the cry: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

### **Ikos 12**

*Mary, the living temple*

**PRIEST:** As we sing in honour of Your Son, we praise you as the living temple, O Mother of God. For the Lord, Who holds all things in His hand made His dwelling in your womb. He hallowed and He glorified you, teaching all to sing to you:

**ALL:** Rejoice, tabernacle of God the Word.

Rejoice, greater Holy of Holies.

Rejoice, ark made golden by the Spirit.

Rejoice, inexhaustible treasury of life.

Rejoice, precious crown of godly kings.

Rejoice, sacred glory of faithful priests.

Rejoice, unshaken fortress of the Church.

Rejoice, indestructible wall of the kingdom

Rejoice, for through you victory is assured.

Rejoice, for through you our enemies are cast down.

Rejoice, healing of my body.

Rejoice, salvation of my soul.

Rejoice, O Bride \* and Maiden ever-pure!

### **Kontakion 13**

*Mary, worthy of all praise*

**PRIEST:** O Mother worthy of all praise, who have borne the Word, the Holiest of all Holies: accept this present offering, deliver us from all affliction, and save from future punishment those who cry out to you: Alleluia!

**ALL:** Alleluia. (3)

*If you wish, Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1 may be repeated here. Then, the following prayer.*

### **Prayer to the Mother of God**

**PRIEST:** Bowing our heads (*and bending our knees*) in all humility, let us pray.

**ALL:** Lord, have mercy.

**PRIEST:** O most holy Sovereign Lady and Mother of God, powerful and all good, receive from your unworthy servants this praiseworthy hymn, which is due to you alone, for you have been chosen from among the human race and are higher than all celestial and earthly creatures.

For through you, our Almighty Lord has dwelt among us; through you, we have come to know the Son of God and are honoured to have his most holy Body and most precious Blood. Thus you are blessed among all generations. You are more honourable than the cherubim and by far more glorious than the seraphim.

O most honourable and most holy Mother of God, do not cease to pray for us today, your unworthy servants, so that we may be protected against the guile and greediness of the evil one, so that we may be delivered unharmed from his deadly temptations.

Protect each of us with your prayer until the end of our life and at the time of the eternal judgment, that we, being saved by your help and intercession, might give glory, praise, thanksgiving and honour for all, to the Holy Trinity, One God and Creator of all creatures, always, now and for ever and ever.

**ALL:** Amen.

### **Dismissal**

**DEACON:** Wisdom!

**ALL:** More honourable than the cherubim\* and by far more glorious than the seraphim;\* ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word;\* O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

**PRIEST:** Glory be to You, O Christ our God, our hope, glory be to You!

**ALL:** †Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,\* now and for ever and ever. Amen.\* Lord, have mercy. (3)\* Give the blessing.

**PRIEST:** Christ our true God, (*risen from the dead*), through the prayers of His immaculate Mother; of the holy, glorious and all-praise worthy apostles; of our venerable and godly fathers, and of all the saints, will have mercy on us and save us, for He is good and loves mankind.

**ALL:** Amen.