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EVENING OF FRIDAY MARCH 31, 2023

(5th Friday in Lent)

READER'S SMALL COMPLINE WITH THE AKATHIST HYMN

An icon of the Theotokos is placed on a stand in the middle of the solea. The candles are lit and the church is darkened.

The Opening

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

All: Amen.

Reader: Glory to Thee, our God. Glory to Thee!

O heavenly King, Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, the Treasury of good things and Giver of life: Come, and abide in us, and cleanse us from every stain, and save our souls, O good One.

Trisagion Prayers

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (*Thrice*)

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

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

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 the evil one.

Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

All: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

O come, let us worship and fall down before God our King. (*Metania*)

O come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our King and our God. (*Metania*)

O come, let us worship and fall down before the Very Christ, our King and our God. (*Metania*)

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy great mercy; and according to the multitude of thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee only have I sinned and done this evil before thee, that thou mightest be justified in thy words, and prevail

when thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, thou has loved truth; the hidden and secret things of thy wisdom hast thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and with thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in thy righteousness. O Lord, thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare thy praise. For if thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in thy good pleasure unto Sion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be builded. Then shalt thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Psalm 69

O God, be attentive unto helping me; O Lord, make haste to help me. Let them be ashamed and confounded that seek after my soul. Let them be turned back and brought to shame that desire evils against me. Let them be turned back straightway in shame that say unto me: Well done! Well done! Let them be glad and rejoice in thee all that seek after thee, O God, and let them that love thy salvation say continually: The Lord be magnified. But as for me, I am poor and needy; O God, come unto mine aid. My Helper and my Deliverer art thou, O Lord; make no long tarrying.

Psalm 142

O Lord, hear my prayer, give ear unto my supplication in thy truth; hearken unto me in thy righteousness. And enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified. For the enemy hath persecuted my soul; he hath humbled my life down to the earth. He hath sat me in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit within me is become despondent; within me my heart is troubled. I remembered days of old, I meditated on all thy works, I pondered on the creations of thy hands. I stretched forth my hands unto thee; my soul thirsteth after thee like a waterless land. Quickly hear me, O Lord; my spirit hath fainted away. Turn not thy face away from me, lest I be like unto them that go down into the pit. Cause me to know, O Lord, the way wherein I should walk; for unto thee have I lifted up my soul. Rescue me from mine enemies, O Lord; unto thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Thy good Spirit shall lead me in the land of uprightness; for thy name's sake, O Lord, shalt thou quicken me. In thy righteousness shalt thou bring my soul out of affliction, and in thy mercy shalt thou utterly destroy mine enemies. And thou shalt cut off them that afflict my soul, for I am thy servant.

Little Doxology

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men.

We hymn thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks unto thee for thy great glory.

O Lord, King, heavenly God, Father Almighty; O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; and the Holy Spirit.

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us, thou that takest away the sins of the world.

Receive our prayer, thou that sittest at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us. For thou only art holy, thou only art the Lord, O Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every evening will I bless thee, and I will praise thy name forever; yea, forever and ever.

Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation. I said:

Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.

Lord, I have fled unto thee: teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God; for with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

O continue thy mercy unto them that know thee.

Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is thy name forever. Amen.

Let thy mercy be upon us, O Lord, even as we have set our hope on thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes. Blessed art thou, O Master: make me to understand thy statutes. Blessed art thou, O Holy One: enlighten me with thy statutes.

Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of thy hands.

To thee belongeth worship, to thee belongeth praise, to thee belongeth glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

The Symbol of Faith

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by 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. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried. And on the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose Kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets.

And I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen. *All:* It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos, the ever blessed and all-blameless, and the mother of our God. More honourable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

TROPARION OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 8

When the bodiless one learned the secret command, in haste he came and stood before Joseph's dwelling, and spake unto the Maiden who knew not wedlock: The One Who hath bowed the Heavens by His descent is held and contained unchanging wholly in thee. Seeing Him receiving the form of a servant in thy womb, I stand in awe and cry to thee: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom! (*3 times*)

THE FIRST STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 8

Oikos 1

(The Annunciation of Gabriel)

An archangel was sent from heaven, to say to the Theotokos: Rejoice! (*Thrice*)
And as he saw thee, O Lord, taking bodily form he stood in awe and with his bodiless voice he cried aloud to her:

- Rejoice, for through thee joy will shine forth.
- Rejoice, for through thee the curse will be destroyed.
- Rejoice, restoration of fallen Adam.
- Rejoice, redemption of the tears of Eve.
- Rejoice, height hard for the human thought to ascent.
- Rejoice, depth hard for the eyes of angels to explore.
- Rejoice, for thou art the throne of the King.
- Rejoice, for thou holdest the upholder of all.
- Rejoice, star making the Sun to appear.
- Rejoice, womb of the divine Incarnation.
- Rejoice, for through thee the creation is renewed.
- Rejoice, for through thee the Creator becomes a babe.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 2

(The perplexity of Mary)

Beholding herself in chastity, the Holy Maiden spoke boldly to Gabriel: Thy strange words seem hard to my soul to accept. How dost thou speak of childbirth from a virginal conception, crying aloud: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 2

(Mary's question and the Archangel's response)

Seeking to know the unknowable, the Virgin cried to him who ministered unto her: "From a virgin womb how can a Son be born? Tell thou me." Then he answered her in awe, crying:

- Rejoice, initiate of God's inexpressible will.
- Rejoice, thou faith in that which demands silence.
- Rejoice, prelude of Christ's miracles.
- Rejoice, culmination of His teachings.
- Rejoice, heavenly ladder by which God came down.
- Rejoice, bridge leading those of earth to heaven.
- Rejoice, marvel greatly valued by the angels.
- Rejoice, wound much mournful to the demons.
- Rejoice, thou who inexpressibly gavest birth to the Light.
- Rejoice, thou who hast taught no one how it was done.
- Rejoice, thou who surpassest the knowledge of the wise.
- Rejoice, thou who illuminest the minds of the faithful.

- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 3

(The conception of Mary)

Then the power of the Most High overshadowed her that did not know wedlock, so that she might conceive, and showed forth her fruitful womb as a pleasant field for all who wish to reap the harvest of salvation, chanting: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 3

(Mary's visit to Elizabeth and the hymn of John the Baptist)

Receiving God in her womb, the Virgin ran to Elizabeth; when her unborn child heard the Theotokos salutation rejoiced and leaped as it were with songs, and cried to her:

- Rejoice, vine of unfading bloom.
- Rejoice, orchard of untainted fruit.
- Rejoice, thou who dost tend the farmer who loves mankind.
- Rejoice, thou who dost blossom forth the sower of our life.
- Rejoice, field producing crops of compassion.
- Rejoice, table full-laden with an abundance of forgiveness.
- Rejoice, thou who dost revive the meadow of Eden.
- Rejoice, thou who dost prepare a haven for our souls.
- Rejoice, acceptable incense of intercession.
- Rejoice, oblation for the whole world.
- Rejoice, good will of God towards mortals.
- Rejoice, access of mortals to God.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 4

(The suspicion of Joseph)

Having inwardly a tempest of doubtful thoughts, chaste Joseph was disturbed: knowing thee to be unwedded, O blameless one, he suspected thee of an illicit love. But when he learned that thy pregnancy was of the Holy Spirit, he said: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

THE CANON OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 4

Ode 1

Irmos: I shall open my mouth and it will be filled with the Spirit, and I shall speak forth to the Queen and Mother: I shall be seen joyfully singing her praises, and I shall delight to sing her wonders.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

When the great Archangel saw thee, living book of Christ, sealed by the Spirit, O pure one, he cried unto thee: Rejoice, vessel of joy! Through thee the curse of the first mother is loosed.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, Virgin bride of God, restoration of Adam and death-knell of Hades; rejoice, O most blameless one, the palace of the only King; rejoice, fiery throne of the Almighty.

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

Rejoice, for thou alone didst give rise to the unfading Rose; rejoice, for thou didst produce the sweetly-smelling Apple, the fragrance of the King of all. Rejoice, unwedded Maiden, deliverance of the world.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Rejoice, treasury of purity, through thee we rose up from our fall; rejoice, Lady, fragrant lily perfuming all the faithful; rejoice, sweet smelling incense and precious ointment.

Ode 3

Irmos: As a living and copious fountain, O Theotokos, do thou strengthen those who hymn thy praises, and are joined together in a spiritual company: and in thy divine glory make them worthy of crowns of glory.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

As a field untilled thou hast given forth the divine ear of grain, Rejoice, living table that hast contained the Bread of Life; rejoice, Lady, unfailing fountain of the living water.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, O Heifer that didst bear the spotless Calf for the faithful; rejoice, Ewe-lamb that didst conceive the “Lamb of God who takes away the sins of all the world.” Rejoice, O fervent intercessor.

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

Rejoice, radiant dawn who alone didst bear Christ the Sun! Rejoice, O dwelling-place of the Light. Rejoice, O thou who didst dispel the darkness, and utterly conquer the gloomy demons.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Rejoice, only gate through which the Word alone didst pass. By thy birth-giving, O Lady, thou didst shatter the bars and gates of Hades. Rejoice, divine entry for the saved, O worthy of all praise.

KONTAKION OF THE AKATHIST, IN TONE 8

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.”

THE SECOND STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 8

Oikos 4

(The praise of the shepherds at the birth of Christ)

The shepherds heard the angels singing praises to Christ's coming in the flesh. When they ran to Him as to the Shepherd, they beheld Him as a lamb without blemish, pasturing in the womb of Mary; they sang praises to her, saying:

- Rejoice, Mother of the Lamb and Shepherd.
- Rejoice, fold of reason-endowed sheep.
- Rejoice, bulwark against unseen enemies.
- Rejoice, key to the gates of Paradise.
- Rejoice, for the things of heaven rejoice with earth.
- Rejoice, for things on earth dance with the heavens.
- Rejoice, never-silent voice of the apostles.

- Rejoice, never-conquered courage of the victorious martyrs.
- Rejoice, firm protector of the faith.
- Rejoice, shining proof of grace.
- Rejoice, thou through whom Hades was laid bare.
- Rejoice, thou through whom we are clothed with glory.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 5

(The wise men are led by a star)

When they saw the star pursuing divine course, the Wise Men followed in its splendor, and holding it as a lantern, they sought thereby the mighty King; and attaining the Unattainable, they rejoiced and cried to Him: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 5

(The praise of the wise men)

The children of the Chaldeans saw the Virgin holding in her hands Him Who fashioned man with His hand, and acknowledging Him as the Master, even though He took the form of a servant, they hastened to worship Him with their gifts, and cried out to the blessed one:

- Rejoice, Mother of the never setting star:
- Rejoice, daybreak of the mystical Day.
- Rejoice, thou who hast quenched the furnace of deception.
- Rejoice, thou who illuminest all who are initiated into the mystery of the Trinity.
- Rejoice, thou who didst cast out the inhuman tyrant.
- Rejoice, thou who didst show forth Christ to be the Lord and lover of mankind.
- Rejoice, deliverance from the worship of pagan idols.
- Rejoice, liberation from the mud of sin.
- Rejoice, thou who makest the worship of fire to cease.
- Rejoice, thou who hast set us free from the flames of passion.
- Rejoice, guide of the faithful to chastity.
- Rejoice, gladness of all generations.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 6

(Return of the Wise Men to Babylon)

The Wise Men become God-bearing preachers, returned to Babylon, fulfilling your command and preaching thee to all as the Christ, and leaving Herod to his foolish talking, for he did not know how to sing: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 6

(Out of Egypt I called my Son [Hos. 11:1])

Illuminating Egypt with the light of truth, thou didst cast out the darkness of falsehood; and unable to endure thy power, O Savior, their idols fell down, and those who had been delivered from them cried to the Theotokos:

- Rejoice, uplifting of mankind.
- Rejoice, downfall of demons.
- Rejoice, thou who hast trampled upon the error of deception.
- Rejoice thou who hast exposed the deceit of the idols.
- Rejoice, sea that has drowned the immaterial Pharaoh.
- Rejoice, rock that has refreshed all who thirst for life.
- Rejoice, pillar of fire, guiding those in darkness.
- Rejoice, protection of the world, more spacious than the cloud.
- Rejoice, food successor of manna.
- Rejoice, servant of holy joy.
- Rejoice, promised land.
- Rejoice, thou from whom flow milk and honey.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 7

(The presentation into the temple)

As Simeon was about to depart from this deceitful world, Thou wast presented to him as a newborn babe, but he recognized thee as the perfect God; and was amazed at thine inexpressible wisdom, and cried out: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

CONTINUATION OF THE CANON OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 4

Ode 4

Irmos: He who sits in glory upon the throne of Godhead, Jesus the most high God, came in a swift cloud and with His pure hand saves those who cry out unto Him: Glory to thy power, O Christ.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

With faith we utter the praise of song crying aloud unto thee, O Worthy of all praise: Rejoice, fertile mountain made full with the Spirit; rejoice, lamp-stand and vessel of manna, sweet to the senses of the godly.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, pure lady; Rejoice, the mercy-seat of the world. Rejoice, ladder, raised all from the earth by grace; rejoice, bridge that has certainly guided from death to life all those that sing thy praises.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, O pure one, higher than the heavens, who without weariness, didst hold within thy womb the Foundation of the earth. Rejoice, sea-shell that with thy blood didst dye a divine purple robe for the King of Hosts.

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

Rejoice, Lady that in truth hast given birth to the Lawgiver, who freely wipes away the lawlessness of all. O unwedded one, O unfathomable depth, O inexpressible height, through thee we have been made like God.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Thou didst weave for the world a crown not made by hand, and we sing thy praises, saying: O Virgin, Rejoice, for thou art the protection of all, a fortress and rampart and sacred refuge.

Ode 5

Irmos: All creation was amazed at thy divine glory, for thou, O unwedded Virgin, conceived in thy womb the God of all, and didst give birth to the eternal Son, who rewards with salvation all who praise thee.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, O all-blameless one for thou didst conceive the Way of life, saving the world from drowning in the flood of sin. Rejoice, Bride of God, thou of awesome tidings to tell and hear; rejoice, dwelling-place of the Master of Creation.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, O pure one, strength and fortress of mankind, holy place of Glory; rejoice, death of Hades, bridal chamber, full of light. Rejoice, joy of the angels; rejoice, help of those who implore thee in faith.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, Lady, Fiery chariot of the Word, rejoice, living Paradise, holding in its midst the Lord, the Tree of Life. His sweetness gives life to those who partake in faith, even though corruption once ruled over them.

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

Strengthened by thy might, we cry out unto thee with faith: Rejoice, city of the King of all! Glorious and laudable things, are plainly spoken of thee. Rejoice, unhewn mountain, and depth never fathomless.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Rejoice, O pure one, spacious tabernacle of the Word, oyster which produced the divine Pearl. Rejoice, O wholly marvelous Theotokos who reconciled with God all those who ever call thee blessed.

Ode 6

Irmos: As we, the Godly-minded, celebrate this divine and all-honorable feast of the mother of God, come, let us clap our hands together, and glorify God who was born of her.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, O all-pure one, spotless bridal chamber of the Word, through thee all become god-like. Rejoice, most spotless one, echoing the prophets' words; rejoice, the ornament of the apostles.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

From thee distilled the dew that quenched the flame of polytheism. We, therefore, cry out unto thee: Rejoice, O Virgin, fleece of wool wet with dew that Gideon foresaw.

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

Behold! we cry out unto thee, 'Rejoice!'. Be thou our haven and shelter, as we are tossed by heavy seas of affliction and the snares of the adversary.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

O cause of joy, shed grace on our thoughts, so that we may cry out unto thee: Rejoice, bush burning yet unconsumed, a cloud full of light that unceasingly overshadows the faithful.

KONTAKION OF THE AKATHIST, IN TONE 8

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: "Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom."

THE THIRD STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 8

Oikos 7

(The redemptive ministry of Christ)

Manifesting Himself to us, His creatures, the Creator revealed a new creation. From a Virgin's womb He blossomed, preserving it intact as it was before: so that, at the sight of this miracle, we might sing her praises, crying:

- Rejoice, flower of incorruption.
- Rejoice, crown of abstinence.
- Rejoice, bright foreshadowing the resurrection.
- Rejoice, reflector of the angels' life.
- Rejoice, tree of marvelous fruit from which the faithful are nourished.
- Rejoice, tree of shady leaves where many are sheltered.
- Rejoice, for thou hast born the Guide for the lost.
- Rejoice, for thou hast born a Deliverer for the captives.
- Rejoice, intercessor with the Righteous Judge.
- Rejoice, pardon for many who have fallen.
- Rejoice, robe for those stripped of boldness of speech.
- Rejoice, tenderness overcoming all desire.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 8

(Drawing the faithful to the heights)

Seeing this strange childbirth, let us become strangers to the world, turning our minds to heaven. For this reason the most high God appeared on earth as a humble man, that he may draw to the heights those who cry aloud to Him: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 8

(The Divine condescension)

While fully present here below, the infinite Word was in no wise absent from those on high: for the condescension was divine, and not a mere change of place. He was born of a Virgin, chosen by God who heard such words as these:

- Rejoice, space of the spaceless God.
- Rejoice, gate of the solemn mystery.
- Rejoice, tidings doubted by unbelievers.
- Rejoice, undoubted pride of the faithful.
- Rejoice, most holy chariot of Him who rides upon the cherubim.
- Rejoice, best of all dwellings for Him who rides upon the seraphim.
- Rejoice, thou who bringst opposites to harmony.
- Rejoice, thou who joinest together childbirth and virginity.
- Rejoice, thou through whom our transgression was annulled.
- Rejoice, thou through whom Paradise was opened.
- Rejoice, key to the kingdom of Christ.

- Rejoice, hope of eternal blessings.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 9

(Marvel of the Angels at the Incarnation)

All the hosts of angels marveled at the great work of 2Thine Incarnation. For they saw the unapproachable God, as a man approachable by all, living with us, and hearing from all: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 9

(Mute orators and eloquent faithful)

O Theotokos, we see eloquent orators as dumb as fish before thee, for they are at a loss to say how thou couldst give birth, while remaining a virgin. But we, marveling at the mystery, cry aloud with faith:

- Rejoice, vessel of God's wisdom.
- Rejoice, treasury of His providence.
- Rejoice, thou who showest forth the lovers of wisdom without wisdom.
- Rejoice, thou who provest logicians illogical.
- Rejoice, for the cunning disputants are shown to be fools.
- Rejoice, for the myth-makers have withered away.
- Rejoice, thou who didst disperse the complications of the Athenian thought.
- Rejoice, thou who didst fill the fishermen's nets.
- Rejoice, thou who didst draw us from the depth of ignorance.
- Rejoice, thou who didst illumine many with knowledge.
- Rejoice, Raft of those who seek salvation.
- Rejoice, haven for the seafarers of life.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 10

(Incarnation of God and deification of man)

Wishing to save the world, the Creator of all things came to it of His own will. As God He is our Shepherd, yet He appeared for our sake as a man like us; and so the like called upon the like, as God He hears our cry: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

CONTINUATION OF THE CANON OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 4

Ode 7

Irmos: The godly-minded Children, worshipped not the creature but the Creator, bravely trampling upon the threat of fire, as they sang in joy: 'O all- praised Lord, and God of our fathers Blessed art thou.'

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

We sing thy praises, crying: Rejoice! chariot of the spiritual Sun; true vine that did give forth the ripe Cluster of grapes, dripping with the wine that fills with joy the souls of those who faithfully glorify thee.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, Bride of God, for thou didst bear the Healer of mankind; mystical rod on whom blossomed the unfading Flower. Rejoice, Lady, for through thee we are made full with joy and inheritors of life.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

No tongue, however eloquent, has power to sing thy praises. Above the seraphim you are exalted, O Lady, for thou didst bear Christ the King. Implore Him now to deliver from every harm those who with faith bow down before thee.

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

The nations of the earth praise thee, and call thee blessed, and they cry unto thee: Rejoice, O pure one, scroll written by the Father's hand. Implore Him, O Theotokos, to inscribe thy servants in the Book of Life.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

We thy servants implore thee, O pure Theotokos, and bend the knee of our heart. Incline thine ear and save us, who sink in afflictions; and preserve thy people from all conquest of the enemy.

Ode 8

Irmos: The holy Children in the furnace the Child of the Theotokos saved, then was type, now is its fulfillment, and the whole creation gathers to sing: All ye works, praise the Lord, and exalt Him unto all ages.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

O pure one, thou didst receive the Word in thy womb, and didst hold Him Who holds all things. Thou didst feed with milk Him who by His command feeds all the universe; To Him we sing: All you His works, praise the Lord, and exalt Him unto all ages.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

O holy and pure Virgin, Moses perceived in the burning bush the great mystery of thy birth-giving; and the Children represented it in advance, and revealed it clearly as they stood in the midst of the fire and were not burnt. Therefore, we praise thee unto all ages.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

We have by thy child-bearing been clothed with incorruption, who once by deceit were stripped naked; and we have seen the Light, who once sat in the darkness of sins, O Maiden, dwelling-place of Light. Therefore, we praise thee unto all ages.

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

Through thee the dead are made alive, for thou hast given birth to Him who is the enhypostatic Life; the speechless are made eloquent, the lepers are cleansed; diseases are driven away; the hosts of aerial spirits are conquered, O Virgin, the salvation of mortals.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Thou hast given birth to world's salvation, O pure one, and through thee we are raised from earth to heaven. Rejoice, O most Blessed one, protection and strength, rampart and fortress of those who sing: All you His works, praise the Lord, and exalt Him above unto all ages.

Ode 9

Irmos: Let all those earth born, illumined in spirit leap for joy, and let the order of the bodiless spiritual hosts celebrate with honor the holy feast of the Mother of God, and let them cry out: "Rejoice! All-blessed, pure, and Ever-Virgin, Theotokos!"

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

O Maiden, deliver us from temptation, from heathen attack, and from every other misfortune that comes upon sinful mortals, because of the multitude of our sins. Enable us the faithful to cry to thee, Rejoice! For through thee we have become partakers of eternal joy.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Thou hast appeared to be our illumination and confirmation, and so we cry out to thee: Rejoice, never-setting star that didst bring the mighty Sun into the world; rejoice, O pure one that didst open the locked gate of Eden; rejoice, pillar of fire, guiding mortal men towards the life on high.

Refrain: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Let us reverently stand in the house of our God, and let us cry aloud: Rejoice, Queen of the world; rejoice, Mary, the Lady of us all; rejoice, for thou alone art without blemish and most honorable among women; Rejoice, vessel that received the unfailing ointment, poured upon thee.

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

Rejoice, Ever-Virgin; rejoice, dove that has given birth to the merciful One; rejoice, pride of all the saints, crown of those engaged in spiritual combat; rejoice, divine ornament of all the righteous and salvation of us the faithful.

Both now, and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

O God, spare thine inheritance, and overlook all our sins. Receive the intercession of her that on earth conceived thee without seed, when in thy great mercy thou hast willed, O Christ, to assume a form that was not thine own.

KONTAKION OF THE AKATHIST, IN TONE 8

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.”

THE FOURTH STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 8

Oikos 10

(Praising Mary and her Son)

Rampart art thou for virgins and for all who recourse to thee, O Virgin Theotokos; for the Creator of heaven and earth prepared thee, O pure one, to dwell in thy womb, and teach all to cry out to thee:

- Rejoice, pillar of virginity.
- Rejoice, gate of salvation.
- Rejoice, leader of the spiritual regeneration.
- Rejoice, provider of divine goodness.
- Rejoice, for thou didst regenerate those conceived in sin.
- Rejoice, for thou didst give sense to those who lost sense.
- Rejoice, thou who didst annul the corrupter of minds.
- Rejoice, thou who gavest birth to the Sower of purity.
- Rejoice, bridal chamber of a virgin marriage.
- Rejoice, thou who didst join the faithful to the Lord.
- Rejoice, fair nursing-mother of virgins.
- Rejoice, leader of holy souls as brides to Christ.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 11

(Odes of praise to the holy King)

Every hymn falls short when it strives to dwell on the multitude of thy many mercies, O Holy King. For though we offer to thee songs of praise numberless as the sands, yet we do not do anything worthy of thy blessings to us who cry to thee: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 11

(Mary as a beacon-light)

We see the Holy Virgin as a beacon- Light, enlightening those who live in darkness; for having kindled the immaterial light, she leads all to divine knowledge; and she illumines their minds with radiance, so that they honor her saying:

- Rejoice, ray of the spiritual Sun.
- Rejoice, beam of the unfading moon.
- Rejoice, lightning-flash that shines within our souls.
- Rejoice, thunder that strikes down the enemies.
- Rejoice, for thou didst cause the many-lighted Star to dawn.
- Rejoice, spring that makes the River with many streams to flow.
- Rejoice, for thou dost prefigure the baptismal font.
- Rejoice, for thou dost wash away the stain of sin.
- Rejoice, laver that cleanses the conscience.
- Rejoice, cup wherein the wine of joy is mixed.
- Rejoice, sweetness of Christ's fragrance.
- Rejoice, life of mystical banquet.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Kontakion 12

(Renting asunder the record of our sins)

Willing to grant mankind release from the ancient debts, the Redeemer came of His own will to those who had departed from His grace; He rent asunder the record of their sins, and from all of them He hears the cry: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

Oikos 12

(The sanctification of His dwelling place)

While we hymn thine Offspring, we exalt thee, O Theotokos, as a living temple. For the Lord who holds all things in His hand made His dwelling in thy womb; He sanctified thee, glorified thee, and taught all to cry to thee:

- Rejoice, tabernacle of God the Word.
- Rejoice, Holy one, holier than the holy of holies.
- Rejoice, ark made golden by the Spirit.
- Rejoice, inexhaustible treasury of life.
- Rejoice, precious crown of rightful authorities.
- Rejoice, venerable boast of godly priests.

- Rejoice, unshaken tower of the Church.
- Rejoice, unconquered rampart of the Kingdom.
- Rejoice, thou through whom the signs of victory are raised on high.
- Rejoice, thou through whom our enemies fall down.
- Rejoice, healing of my body.
- Rejoice, Salvation of my soul.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

*Kontakion 13
(Supplication)*

O Mother, worthy of all praise, who hast given birth to the Word, Holiest of all the saints (*3 times*): accepting this our offering, deliver from every affliction and from the future torment all those who cry aloud to thee: Alleluia!

Choir: Alleluia!

*And again: Oikos 1
(The Annunciation of Gabriel)*

An archangel was sent from heaven, to say to the Theotokos: Rejoice! (*Thrice*)

And as he saw thee, O Lord, taking bodily form he stood in awe and with his bodiless voice he cried aloud to her:

- Rejoice, for through thee joy will shine forth.
- Rejoice, for through thee the curse will be destroyed.
- Rejoice, restoration of fallen Adam.
- Rejoice, redemption of the tears of Eve.
- Rejoice, height hard for the human thought to ascent.
- Rejoice, depth hard for the eyes of angels to explore.
- Rejoice, for thou art the throne of the King.
- Rejoice, for thou holdest the upholder of all.
- Rejoice, star making the Sun to appear.
- Rejoice, womb of the divine Incarnation.
- Rejoice, for through thee the creation is renewed.
- Rejoice, for through thee the Creator becomes a babe.
- Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

KONTAKION OF THE AKATHIST, IN TONE 8

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.”

Trisagion Prayers

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (*Thrice*)

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

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

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 the evil one.

Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us.

All: Amen.

TROPARION OF THE AKATHIST HYMN, IN TONE 8

(*plain reading*)

When the bodiless one learned the secret command, in haste he came and stood before Joseph's dwelling, and spake unto the Maiden who knew not wedlock: The One Who hath bowed the Heavens by His descent is held and contained unchanging wholly in thee. Seeing Him receiving the form of a servant in thy womb, I stand in awe and cry to thee: Rejoice, O Bride without bridegroom!

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*40 times*)

Prayer of the Hours

Thou who, at all times and at every hour, both in heaven and on earth art worshipped and glorified, O Christ God, long-suffering, plenteous in mercy and compassion, who lovest the just and showest mercy to sinners, who callest all men to salvation through the promise of good things to come: Do thou, the same Lord, receive also our supplications at this present hour, and direct our lives according to thy commandments. Sanctify our souls; purify our bodies; set aright our minds; cleanse our thoughts; and deliver us from all calamity, wrath and distress. Compass us round about with thy holy angels; that, guided and guarded by their host, we may attain unto the unity of the faith, and unto the comprehension of thine ineffable glory. For blessed art thou unto ages of ages. Amen

Lord, have mercy. (*Thrice*)

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

Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

More honourable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, thou who without corruption bearest God the Word and art truly Theotokos: We magnify thee.

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

All: Amen.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*12 times*)

Most holy Theotokos, save us.

The Supplicatory Prayer to the Most Holy Theotokos, by Paul the Monk

O Lady, Bride of God, spotless, blameless, pure and immaculate Virgin, thou who without corruption, by thy glorious birth-giving, has united God the Word to man and joined the fallen nature of our race to heavenly things; who alone art the hope of the hopeless, the help of those who do

battle; the ready help of those who flee unto thee and the refuge of all Christians: Despise me not, an accursed sinner, though I have rendered myself unworthy by my shameful thoughts, words and deeds, and through indolence have become a slave to the pleasures of life; but as the Mother of the God who lovest mankind, mercifully have compassion upon me, a sinner and a prodigal, and receive my prayer, though it be offered unto thee by unworthy lips; and using thy boldness as a mother, importune thy Son, our Lord and Master, that he may open to me also the tender compassions of his goodness so as to overlook my numberless transgressions and turn me to repentance and show me forth as a zealous doer of his commandments. And because thou art merciful, compassionate and benevolent, be thou ever near me in this present life as an ardent help and protection, defending me from the assaults of adversaries and leading me to salvation. And at the time of my departure from this life, care for my miserable soul, and drive far from it the dark visions of evil demons; and in the fearful day of judgement, deliver me from eternal punishment, and present me as an inheritor of the ineffable glory of thy Son, our God. May this be my lot, O Lady, most holy Theotokos, through thy mediation and help, through the grace and love toward mankind of thine only-begotten Son, our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom are due all glory, honour and worship, with his unoriginate Father and his all-holy and good and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen

A Prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ, by Antiochus the Monk

And grant unto us, O Master, when we depart to sleep, repose of body and soul; and protect us from the murky sleep of sin and from all the dark pleasures of the night. Calm the impulses of passions, and quench the fiery darts of evil which are craftily thrown against us; check the turbulence of our flesh, and still all earthly and material thoughts. And grant us, O God, a watchful mind, a prudent reason, a vigilant heart, a tranquil sleep free from all the fantasies of Satan. Raise us up again at the time of prayer strengthened in thy commandments, holding steadfastly within us the remembrance of thy judgements. Grant us grace to glorify thee all through the night, that we may praise and bless and glorify thine all-honourable and majestic name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O most glorious, ever-virgin, blessed Theotokos, present our prayer to thy Son our God, and intercede with him that through thee he may save our souls.

Prayer of Saint Ioannikios

The Father is my Hope; The Son is my Refuge; The Holy Spirit is my Protection; O Holy Trinity: Glory to thee.

In thee, O Mother of God, I place all my hope; keep me under thy protection.

Prayer to the Guardian Angel

O holy angel who accompanieth my wretched soul and lowly life, forsake me not, and depart not from me because of my extravagance and wickedness. Give not access to the evil demon to rule with his might this mortal body of mine, but hold me by my wretched, feeble hand; lead me in the path of salvation. Yea, o holy angel of God, guardian and protector of my wretched soul and body, forgive me all wherewith I have heretofore saddened thee all the days of my life. And though this day I have sinned, be thou my shelter this night. Keep me from all the wiles of the enemy, that I may not anger God with any sin. Intercede with the Lord for me, that He may confirm me in His fear and show me forth as a worthy servant of His goodness. Amen.

Optional (not included in some texts):

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos Mary full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the Fruit of thy womb, for thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.
(Thrice)

The Dismissal

All: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. O Lord, bless.

Leader: O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the intercessions of his all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; at the supplication of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing fathers; of *the Holy Myrrh-Bearer and Equal to the Apostles Mary Magdalene*, protector of this community; and of all the saints: have mercy on us, and save us, for Thou art good and lovest mankind.

All: Amen.

Leader: Remit, pardon, forgive, O God, our offenses, both voluntary and involuntary, in deed and word, in knowledge and ignorance, by day and by night, in mind and thought; forgive us all things, for Thou art good and the Lover of mankind.

All: Amen.

Leader: O Lord, Lover of mankind, forgive them that hate and wrong us. Do good to them that do good. Grant our brethren and kindred their saving petitions and life eternal; visit the infirm and grant them healing. Guide those at sea. Journey with them that travel. Help Orthodox Christians to struggle. To them that serve and are kind to us grant remissions of sins. On them that have charged us, the unworthy, to pray for them, have mercy according to Thy great mercy. Remember, O Lord, our fathers and brethren departed before us, and grant them rest where the light of Thy countenance shall visit them. Remember, O Lord, our brethren in captivity, and deliver them from every misfortune. Remember, O Lord, those that bear fruit and do good works in Thy holy churches, and grant them their saving petitions and life eternal. Remember also, O Lord, us Thy lowly and sinful and unworthy servants, and enlighten our minds with the light of Thy knowledge, and guide us in the way of Thy commandments; through the intercessions of our most pure Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary, and of all Thy saints, for blessed art Thou unto the ages of ages. Amen.

All: Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

The faithful now come forward to venerate the icon, as the choir sings the following hymn

Theotokion, in tone 3

Awed by the beauty of thy virginity and the exceeding radiance of thy purity, Gabriel stood amazed and cried to thee, O Mother of God: What praise may I offer thee, that is worthy of thy beauty? By what name shall I call thee? I am lost and bewildered. But I shall greet thee, as I was commanded: Hail! Thou that art full of grace.

After all have passed, the Leader faces the icon of Christ and says:

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

All: Amen.