

Mattins with the Akathist Hymn

(Fifth Friday Evening in Great Lent)

Presbyter: Blessed is our God, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee.

O heavenly king, the comforter, the Spirit of truth; who art everywhere and fillest all things; treasury of blessings, and giver of life; come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O good one.

Holy God, holy mighty, holy immortal, have mercy on us. *(3 times)*

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

O most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. O Lord, cleanse us from our sins. O master, pardon our transgressions. O holy one, visit and heal our infirmities, for thy name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

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

Presbyter: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,
now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. *(12 times)*

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

Come, let us worship God our king.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ, our
king and our God.

Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ
himself, our king and our God.

Royal Office

Psalm 19 (20)

The Lord hear thee in the day of sorrow; the name of the God of
Jacob defend thee. Let him send forth help unto thee from the
sanctuary, and of Sion let him help thee. Let him remember all thy
sacrifices, and let thy burnt offerings be fat.

The Lord grant thee according to thy heart's desire, and fulfil all
thy purposes. We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of

the Lord our God shall we be exalted. May the Lord fulfil all thy petitions.

Now have I known that the Lord has saved his anointed one. He will hear him out of his holy heaven; with power is the salvation of his right hand.

Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we will call upon the name of the Lord our God. They were bound and fell; but we have risen and have been set upright. O Lord, save the king, and hear us in the day when we call upon thee.

Psalm 20 (21)

The king shall rejoice in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice. Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withheld the request of his lips.

For thou goest before him with the blessings of goodness; thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head. He asked life of thee and thou gavest it to him, even length of days for ever and ever.

His glory is great in thy salvation; honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him. For thou hast made him most blessed for ever; thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance.

For the king trusts in the Lord, and through the mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved. Thy hand shall find out all thine enemies; thy right hand shall find out those that hate thee.

Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger; the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them. Their fruit shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men.

For they intended evil against thee; they contrived a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform. Therefore shalt thou make them turn their back when thou shalt ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them.

Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength; so will we sing and praise thy power.

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

Troparia

Reader: O Lord, save thy people, and bless thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries; and by virtue of thy cross, preserve thy habitation.

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

As thou wast voluntarily crucified for our sake, grant mercy to those who are called by thy name; make all Orthodox Christians glad by thy power, granting them victories over their adversaries, by bestowing on them the invincible trophy, thy weapon of peace.

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

O champion dread, who cannot be put to confusion, despise not our petitions, O good and all-praised Theotokos, exalt the horn of Orthodox Christians, save those who have been called upon to govern us, leading us all to that victory which is from heaven, for thou art

the one who gavest birth to God, and thou alone art blessed.

Litany

Presbyter: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great goodness, we pray thee, hear us and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for our Metropolitan Tikhon, for our Archbishop Irénée, for presbyters, deacons, and all other clergy, and for all our brethren in Christ.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for our sovereign lord, King Charles, for this land, and all those in seats of authority.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for all our brothers and sisters, and for all Orthodox Christians.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: For thou art a merciful and man-befriending God, and unto thee we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Opening Blessing and Verses

Reader: In the name of the Lord, Father, bless.

Presbyter: Glory to the holy, consubstantial, lifegiving and undivided Trinity, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace,
goodwill towards men. *(3 times)*

O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show
forth thy praise. *(2 times)*

Six Psalms

During the reading of the six psalms we stand attentively and watchfully, signifying our solemn and prayerful expectation of the Lord's saving return and judgement. We take care not to move around or make the sign of the cross until the end.

Psalm 3

O Lord, how many are my foes. Many are rising against me; many are saying of me, there is no help for him in God. But thou, O Lord, art a shield about me, my glory, and the lifter of my head.

I cry aloud to the Lord, and he answers me from his holy hill. I lie down and sleep; I wake again, for the Lord sustains me. I am not afraid of ten thousands of people who have set themselves against me round about.

Arise, O Lord, deliver me, O my God. For thou dost smite all my enemies on the cheek, thou dost break the teeth of the wicked.

Deliverance belongs to the Lord; thy blessing be upon thy people. I lie down and sleep; I wake again, for the Lord sustains me.

Psalm 37/38

O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, nor chasten me in thy wrath. For thine arrows have sunk into me, and thy hand has come down on me. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine indignation; there is no health in my bones because of my sin.

For my iniquities have gone over my head; they weigh like a burden too heavy for me. My wounds grow foul and fester because of my foolishness, I am utterly bowed down and prostrate; all the day I go about mourning.

For my loins are filled with burning, and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am utterly spent and crushed; I groan because of the tumult of my heart.

Lord, all my longing is known to thee, my sighing is not hidden from thee. My heart throbs, my strength fails me; and the light of my eyes—it also has gone from me.

My friends and companions stand aloof from my plague, and my kinsmen stand afar off. Those who seek my life lay their snares, those who seek my hurt speak of ruin, and meditate treachery all the day long.

But I am like a deaf man, I do not hear, like a dumb man who does not open his mouth. Yea, I am like a man who does not hear, and in whose mouth are no rebukes.

But for thee, O Lord, do I wait; it is thou, O Lord my God, who wilt answer. For I pray, 'Only let them not rejoice over me, who boast against me when my foot slips.'

For I am ready to fall, and my pain is ever with me. I confess my iniquity, I am sorry for my sin. Those who are my foes without cause are mighty, and many are those who hate me wrongfully. Those who render me evil for good are my adversaries because I follow after good.

Do not forsake me, O Lord. O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord of my salvation.

Psalm 62 (63)

O God, thou art my God, I seek thee, my soul thirsts for thee; my flesh faints for thee, as in a dry and weary land where no water is.

So I have looked upon thee in the sanctuary, beholding thy power and glory. Because thy steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise thee. So I will bless thee as long as I live; I will lift up my hands and call on thy name.

My soul is feasted as with marrow and fat, and my mouth praises thee with joyful lips, when I think of thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the watches of the night; for thou hast been my help, and in the shadow of thy wings I sing for joy.

My soul clings to thee; thy right hand upholds me. But those who seek to destroy my life shall go down into the depths of the earth; they shall be given over to the power of the sword, they shall be prey for jackals.

But the king shall rejoice in God; all who swear by him shall glory; for the mouths of liars will be stopped.

I meditate on thee in the watches of the night; for thou hast been my help, and in the shadow of thy wings I sing for joy. My soul clings to thee; thy right hand upholds me.

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

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (3 times)

Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

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

Second Reader: Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Psalm 87 (88)

O Lord, my God, I call for help by day; I cry out in the night before thee. Let my prayer come before thee, incline thine ear to my cry.

For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to Sheol. I am reckoned among those who go down to the pit; I am a man who has no strength, like one forsaken among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, like those whom thou dost remember no more, for they are cut off from thy hand.

Thou hast put me in the depths of the pit, in the regions dark and deep. Thy wrath lies heavy upon me, and thou dost overwhelm me with all thy waves.

Thou hast caused my companions to shun me; thou hast made me a thing of horror to them. I am shut in so that I cannot escape; my eye grows dim through sorrow.

Every day I call upon thee, O Lord; I spread out my hands to thee. Dost thou work wonders for the dead? Do the shades rise up to praise thee? Is thy steadfast love declared in the grave, or thy faithfulness in perdition? Are thy wonders known in the darkness, or thy saving help in the land of forgetfulness?

But I, O Lord, cry to thee; in the morning my prayer comes before thee. O Lord, why dost thou cast me off? Why dost thou hide thy face from me?

Afflicted and close to death from my youth up, I suffer thy terrors; I am helpless. Thy wrath has swept over me; thy dread assaults destroy me. They surround me like a flood all day long; they close in

upon me together. Thou hast caused lover and friend to shun me; my companions are in darkness.

O Lord, my God, I call for help by day; I cry out in the night before thee. Let my prayer come before thee, incline thine ear to my cry.

Psalm 102/103

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all thine iniquity, who heals all thy diseases, who redeems thy life from the pit, who crowns thee with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies thee with good as long as thou dost live so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.

The Lord is compassionate and merciful, long suffering and of great goodness. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger for ever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor requite us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.

As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a flower of the field; for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to

everlasting upon those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all.

Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, hearkening to the voice of his word. Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will. Bless the Lord, all his works.

In all places of his dominion, bless the Lord, O my soul.

Psalm 142 (143)

Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my supplications. In thy faithfulness answer me, in thy righteousness. Enter not into judgement with thy servant; for no man living is righteous before thee. For the enemy has pursued me; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me sit in darkness like those long dead.

Therefore my spirit faints within me; my heart within me is appalled. I remember the days of old, I meditate on all that thou hast done; I muse on what thy hands have wrought.

I stretch out my hands to thee; my soul thirsts for thee like a parched land. Make haste to answer me, O Lord. My spirit fails. Hide not thy face from me, lest I be like those who go down to the pit.

Let me hear in the morning of thy steadfast love, for in thee I put my trust. Teach me the way I should go, for to thee I lift up my soul. Deliver me, O Lord, from my enemies. I have fled to thee for refuge.

Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Let thy good spirit lead me on a level path. For thy name's sake, O Lord, preserve my life.

In thy righteousness bring me out of trouble. And in thy steadfast love cut off my enemies, and destroy all my adversaries, for I am thy servant.

Answer me, O Lord, in thy righteousness, and enter not into judgement with thy servant. Let thy good spirit lead me on a level path.

Reader: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory to thee, O God. (*3 times*)

Great Litany

Presbyter: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For the peace from above and for the salvation of our souls, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For the peace of the whole world, for the welfare of the holy churches of God, and for the union of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For this holy house and for those who enter with faith, reverence, and the fear of God, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For our Metropolitan Tikhon, for our Archbishop Irénée, the honourable presbyterate, the diaconate in Christ, for all the clergy and the people, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For our sovereign lord, King Charles, for this land and all those in seats of authority, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For this city, for every city and countryside, and for the faithful dwelling in them, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For seasonable weather, for abundance of the fruits of the earth, and for peaceful times, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For travellers by land, by sea, and by air; for the sick and the suffering; for captives and their salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: For our deliverance from all affliction, wrath, danger, and necessity, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Presbyter: For to thee belong all glory, honour, and worship, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

The Lord Is God

Presbyter: In the eighth tone: The Lord is God and has revealed himself to us. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endures for ever.

Chanters: The Lord is God and has revealed himself to us. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

Presbyter: All nations compassed me round about, but in the name of the Lord have I driven them back.

Chanters: The Lord is God and has revealed himself to us. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

Presbyter: I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.

Chanters: The Lord is God and has revealed himself to us. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

Presbyter: The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.

Chanters: The Lord is God and has revealed himself to us. Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord.

Troparion (Tone 8)

Taking knowledge of the secret command, the bodiless archangel went with haste to Joseph's dwelling, and said to her that knew not wedlock: 'He who in his self-abasement bowed the heavens and came down, is housed wholly and unchanged in thee. I see him take the form of a servant in thy womb, and in wonder cry to thee: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.' *(3 times)*

Kathisma 16, Stasis 1

Psalm 109 (110)

The Lord said unto my Lord, 'Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.' The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Sion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.

Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power; in the beauties of holiness, from the womb of the morning, thou hast the dew of thy youth.

The Lord has sworn and will not repent: 'Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.' The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath.

He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with dead bodies, he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook on the way; therefore shall he lift up the head.

Psalm 110 (111)

Praise the Lord! I will praise the Lord with my whole heart in the assembly of the upright and in the congregation.

The works of the Lord are great, sought out by all them that have pleasure therein. His work is honourable and glorious, and his righteousness endures for ever.

He has made his wonderful works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. He has given food unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his covenant.

He has shown his people the power of his works, that he may give them the heritage of the heathen. The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

He sent redemption unto his people; he has commanded his covenant for ever; holy and reverend is his name.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do his commandments. His praise endures for ever.

Psalm 111 (112)

Praise the Lord! Blessed is the man that fears the Lord, that delights greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon the earth; the generation of the upright shall be blessed. Wealth and riches shall be in his house, and his righteousness endures for ever.

Unto the upright there arises light in the darkness; he is gracious and full of compassion and righteous. A good man shows favour and lends; he will guide his affairs with discretion.

Surely he shall not be moved forever; the righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. His heart is established; he shall not be afraid until he sees his desires upon his enemies.

He has dispersed, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour. The wicked

shall see it and be grieved, he shall gnash with his teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked shall perish.

Little Litany

Presbyter: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Presbyter: For to thee belong all glory, honour, and worship, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Kontakion (Tone 8)

To thee, the champion leader, we thy flock dedicate a feast of victory of thanksgiving, as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos; but as thou art one with might which is invincible, from all dangers that can be do thou deliver us, that we may cry to thee: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos
(First Section)

Ikos One

A prince of the angels was sent from heaven, to say to the Theotokos, Rejoice! And seeing thee, O Lord, take bodily form at the sound of his bodiless voice, filled with amazement he stood still and cried aloud to her:

Rejoice, for through thee joy shall shine forth
Rejoice, for through thee the curse shall cease
Rejoice, recalling of fallen Adam
Rejoice, deliverance from the tears of Eve
Rejoice, height hard to climb for the thoughts of men
Rejoice, depth hard to scan even for the eyes of angels
Rejoice, for thou art the throne of the king
Rejoice, for thou holdest him who upholds all
Rejoice, star causing the sun to shine
Rejoice, womb of the divine incarnation
Rejoice, for through thee the creation is made new
Rejoice, for through thee the creator becomes a newborn child
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Two

The holy maiden, seeing herself in all her purity, said boldly unto Gabriel: 'Strange seem thy words and hard for my soul to accept. From a conception without seed how dost thou speak of childbirth, crying: alleluia!'

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Two

Seeking to know what passes knowledge, the virgin said to the ministering angel: 'From a maiden womb how can a Son be born? Tell me.' And to her in fear he answered, crying:

Rejoice, initiate of God's secret counsel
Rejoice, faith in that which must be guarded by silence
Rejoice, beginning of Christ's wonders
Rejoice, crown and fulfilment of his teachings
Rejoice, heavenly ladder by which God came down
Rejoice, bridge leading men from earth to heaven
Rejoice, marvel greatly renowned among the angels
Rejoice, wound bitterly lamented by the demons
Rejoice, for ineffably thou shalt bear the light
Rejoice, for thou hast revealed the mystery to none
Rejoice, wisdom surpassing the knowledge of the wise
Rejoice, dawn that illumines the minds of the faithful
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Three

Then the power of the most high overshadowed her that knew not wedlock, so that she might conceive: and he made her fruitful womb as a fertile field for all who long to reap the harvest of salvation, singing: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Three

Bearing God within her womb, the virgin hastened to Elisabeth;
whose unborn child, knowing at once the salutation of the
Theotokos, rejoiced and, leaping up as if in song, cried out to her:

Rejoice, vine whence springs a never-withering branch
Rejoice, orchard of pure fruit
Rejoice, for thou tendest the husbandman who loves man
Rejoice, for thou hast borne the gardener who cultivates our life
Rejoice, earth yielding a rich harvest of compassion
Rejoice, table laden with mercy in abundance
Rejoice, for through thee the fields of Eden flower again
Rejoice, for thou makest ready a haven for our souls
Rejoice, acceptable incense of intercession
Rejoice, propitiation for the whole world
Rejoice, lovingkindness of God unto mortal man
Rejoice, freedom of approach for mortals unto God
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Four

Tossed inwardly by a storm of doubts, prudent Joseph was troubled:
knowing thee to be unwedded, O blameless virgin, he feared a
stolen union. But when he learnt that thy conceiving was from the
Holy Spirit, he said: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Then we sing again the kontakion, 'To thee, the champion leader.'

Kathisma 17, stasis 1

Psalm 119:1-72

Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity; they walk in his ways.

Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently; O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes. Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect unto all thy commandments. I will praise thee with uprightness of heart when I shall have learned thy righteous judgements. I will keep thy statutes; O forsake me not utterly.

How shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee; O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord; teach me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as much as in all riches. I will meditate on thy precepts and attend unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes; I will not forget thy word.

Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live and keep thy word. Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. I am a stranger on the earth; hide not thy commandments from me. My soul breaks for the longing that it has for thy judgments at all times.

Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, that err from thy commandments. Remove from me reproach and contempt, for I have kept thy testimonies.

Princes also sat and spoke against me, but thy servant meditated on thy statutes. Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.

My soul cleaves unto the dust; quicken thou me according to thy word. I have declared my ways, and thou heardest me; teach me thy statutes. Make me to understand the way of thy precepts; so shall I talk of thy wondrous works.

My soul melts from heaviness; strengthen thou me according to thy word. Remove from me the way of lying, and grant me thy law graciously.

I have chosen the way of truth; thy judgements have I laid before me. I have held fast unto thy testimonies; O Lord, put me not to shame. I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.

Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.

Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for therein do I delight. Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness; turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and quicken thou me in thy way.

Establish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to the fear of thee. Turn away my reproach which I fear, for thy judgements are good.

Behold, I have longed after thy precepts; quicken me in thy righteousness. Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord, even thy salvation according to thy word; so shall I have the answer for him that reproaches me, for I trust in thy word. And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for I have hoped in thy judgements.

So shall I keep thy law continually, for ever and ever. And I will walk in liberty, for I seek thy precepts.

I will speak of thy testimonies also before kings, and will not be ashamed. And I will delight myself in thy commandments which I have loved. My hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments, which I have loved; and I will meditate on thy statutes.

Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word has quickened me. The proud have held me greatly in derision, yet have I not departed from thy law.

I remembered thy judgements of old, O Lord, and have comforted myself. Horror has taken hold upon me, because of the wicked that forsake thy law. Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.

I have remembered thy name, O Lord, in the night and have kept thy law. This I had, because I kept thy precepts. Thou art my portion, O Lord; I have said that I would keep thy words.

I entreated thy favour with my whole heart; be merciful unto me according to thy word. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments. The cords of the wicked have robbed me, but I have not forgotten thy law.

At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee, because of thy righteous judgements. I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy; teach me thy statutes. Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word. Each me good judgement and knowledge, for I have believed thy commandments. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word. Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

The proud have forged a lie against me, but I will keep thy precepts with my whole heart. Their heart is as fat as grease, but I delight in thy law.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better for me than thousands of gold and silver.

Little Litany

Presbyter: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Presbyter: For thou art a good and man-befriending God, and to thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Then we sing again the kontakion, 'To thee, the champion leader.'

***Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos
(Second Section)***

Ikos Four

The shepherds heard the angels glorify Christ's coming in the flesh. Quickly they ran to the shepherd, and beheld him as a lamb without spot, that had been pastured in the womb of Mary; and they sang praises to her, saying:

Rejoice, mother of the lamb and shepherd
Rejoice, fold of spiritual sheep
Rejoice, protection against unseen enemies
Rejoice, key to the door of paradise
Rejoice, for heaven exults with earth
Rejoice, for things on earth rejoice with the heavens
Rejoice, never-silent voice of the apostles
Rejoice, unconquered courage of the victorious martyrs
Rejoice, firm foundation of the faith
Rejoice, shining revelation of grace
Rejoice, for through thee hell is stripped bare
Rejoice, for through thee we are clothed in glory
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Five

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!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Five

The children of the Chaldæans saw the virgin holding in her hands him who with his hands fashioned man. 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:

Rejoice, mother of the star that never sets

Rejoice, bright dawn of the mystical day

Rejoice, for thou hast quenched the furnace of deception

Rejoice, for thou dost illumine all who love the mystery of the Trinity

Rejoice, for thou hast cast down from his dominion the tyrant that hates man

Rejoice, for thou hast made known the Lord Christ who loves man

Rejoice, deliverance from the worship of pagan idols

Rejoice, liberation from the filth of sin

Rejoice, for thou hast quenched the worship of fire

Rejoice, for thou hast released us from the flames of passion

Rejoice, guide of the faithful to chastity

Rejoice, joy of all generations

Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Six

Becoming God's messengers, the magi returned to Babylon. Having fulfilled the prophecy concerning thee, and preaching thee to all as Christ, they left Herod to his raving, for he knew not how to sing: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Six

Shining upon Egypt with the light of truth, thou hast dispelled the darkness of falsehood; for the idols of that land fell down, unable to endure thy power, O Saviour, and all who were delivered from them cried unto the Theotokos:

Rejoice, restoration of men

Rejoice, downfall of demons

Rejoice, for thou hast trampled on the delusion of error

Rejoice, for thou hast exposed the snares of the idols

Rejoice, sea that has drowned 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, wider than the cloud in the wilderness

Rejoice, food that takes the place of manna

Rejoice, minister of holy joy

Rejoice, promised land

Rejoice, source of milk and honey

Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Seven

As Simeon drew near to the time of his departure from this world of error, he received thee as an infant in his arms, but he knew thee to be perfect God; and, struck with wonder at thine ineffable wisdom, he cried: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Then we sing again the kontakion, 'To thee, the champion leader.'

Psalm 50 (51)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy steadfast love; according to thine abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in thy sight, so that thou art justified in thy sentence and blameless in thy judgement.

Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Fill me with joy and gladness; let the bones which thou hast broken rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners will return to thee.

Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of thy deliverance. O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise.

For thou hast no delight in sacrifice; were I to give a burnt offering, thou wouldst not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Do good to Zion in thy good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then wilt thou delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on thine altar.

And then we sing odes 1 and 3 of the canon to the Theotokos.

Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos

Ode 1

(Irmos) My mouth shall I open up, and by the Spirit shall it be filled; and words shall pour forth from me unto the mother and queen. Then shall I be seen in gladsome celebration, and joyfully I shall sing, praising her miracles.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Pure maiden, beholding thee, the great archangel called out to thee: 'Rejoice, for in thee is held all of our gladness and joy.' Living book of Christ, the Spirit has confirmed thee, who takest away the curse wrought by the mother Eve.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, virgin bride of God, the restoration of Adam's fall. To hades thou bringest death, all-blameless maiden. Rejoice, for our only God has made of thee his palace. Rejoice, the almighty one makes thee his fiery throne.

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

Rejoice, maiden, thou alone hast blossomed forth the unfading rose. Rejoice, for to thee was born the apple fragrant and sweet, for the king of all has found thee to be pleasing. Rejoice, never-wedded bride, ransom of all the world.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

O treasure of purity, rejoice. Through thee are we lifted up. Most delicate lily art thou, maiden. Sweet is thy scent, filling all the faithful with thy gentle fragrance. O most precious myrrh of all, incense beyond compare.

Ode 3

(Irmos) Make steadfast, O holy Theotokos, our living and never-failing spring, the chorus that is gathered here to sing thy praise in one accord and by the glory God gave thee, let them be worth of glory's crowns.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

From thee, who art untilled land, has burst forth the wheat that is holy and divine. Thou, maiden, art a living table, who hast held the bread of life. Thou art a never-failing spring of living water: to thee we cry.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, mother, who hast given birth to the calf that is free from any sin. Rejoice, thou art the mother of the lamb of God, who takes

away the sins of all the world. Rejoice, O greatest mercy of faithful men.

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

O daybreak most radiant, rejoice. Thou alone gavest birth to Christ the sun. Rejoice, for in thee dwells the light that has dispelled the gloom of night, and banished to oblivion the darkened ranks of demonic hosts.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice, only gate through which the Word alone has passed. By thy birthgiving, lady, thou hast broken the bars and gates of hell. Rejoice, bride of God, divine entry of the saved.

(Katavasia) Make steadfast, O holy Theotokos, our living and never-failing spring, the chorus that is gathered here to sing thy praise in one accord and by the glory God gave thee, let them be worth of glory's crowns.

Little Litany

Presbyter: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Presbyter: For thou art our God and unto thee we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Then we sing again the kontakion, 'To thee, the champion leader.'

Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos
(Third Section)

Ikos Seven

A new creation has the creator revealed, manifesting himself unto us his creatures. From a virgin's womb he came, preserving it inviolate as it was before: that, beholding the miracle, we might sing her praises, crying:

Rejoice, flower of incorruption

Rejoice, crown of chastity

Rejoice, bright foreshadowing of the resurrection glory

Rejoice, mirror of the angels' life

Rejoice, tree of glorious fruit on which the faithful feed

Rejoice, wood of shady leaves where many shelter

Rejoice, for thou hast conceived a guide for the wanderers

Rejoice, for thou hast borne a deliverer for the captives

Rejoice, intercessor with the righteous judge

Rejoice, forgiveness for many who have stumbled

Rejoice, robe for the naked and bereft of hope

Rejoice, love surpassing all desire

Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Eight

Seeing this strange birth, let us become strangers to the world, fixing our minds in heaven. To this end has the most high God appeared on earth as a lowly man, because he wishes to draw heavenward all who cry aloud to him: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Eight

The Word uncircumscribed was wholly present here below, yet in no wise absent from the realm on high: God descended to earth, yet underwent no change of place. He was born of a virgin, overshadowed by divine power, and unto her we sing:

Rejoice, enclosure of the God whom nothing can enclose
Rejoice, gate of the hallowed mystery
Rejoice, tidings doubted by unbelievers
Rejoice, undoubted glory of the faithful
Rejoice, most holy chariot of him who rides upon the cherubim
Rejoice, best of all dwellings for him who is above the seraphim
Rejoice, for thou bringest opposites to harmony
Rejoice, for thou hast joined in one childbirth and virginity
Rejoice, for through thee our sin is remitted
Rejoice, for through thee paradise is opened
Rejoice, key of Christ's kingdom
Rejoice, hope of blessings of the age to come
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Nine

All the ranks of angels marvelled at the great work of thine incarnation. For they saw God, whom none can approach, as a man approachable by all, dwelling in our midst, and hearing from our lips: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Nine

Eloquent orators we see dumb as the fishes in thy presence, O Theotokos, for they are at a loss to say how thou remainest virgin and yet hast power to bear a child. But we, marvelling at the mystery, cry aloud with faith:

Rejoice, casket of God's wisdom

Rejoice, treasury of his providence

Rejoice, for thou revealest lack of wisdom in the lovers of wisdom

Rejoice, for thou provest devoid of reason those skilled in reason's art

Rejoice, for the cunning disputants are shown to be fools

Rejoice, for the myth-makers have withered into silence

Rejoice, for thou hast torn asunder the tangled webs of the Athenians

Rejoice, for thou hast filled the nets of the fishermen

Rejoice, for thou dost draw men from the depths of ignorance

Rejoice, for thou dost illumine multitudes with knowledge

Rejoice, ship of all who would be saved

Rejoice, haven for the seafarers of life

Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Ten

Wishing to save the world, the fashioner of all things came to it of his own free choice. As God he is our shepherd, yet has he appeared for our sake as a man like us; and calling like by means of like, as God he hears our cry: Alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Then we sing again the kontakion, 'To thee, the champion leader.'

Sessional Hymn (Tone 1)

Coming to the city of Nazareth, the mighty leader of the spiritual angels proclaimed to thee, O undefiled, the incarnation of the king and lord of the ages, saying unto thee: 'Rejoice, blessed Mary, depth unsearchable beyond all understanding, and restoration of all mortal men.'

Then we continue with odes 4, 5 and 6 of the canon.

Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos

Ode 4

(Irmos) Jesus, God above all others, has appeared on a cloud of light in his holy glory, seated on a throne of divinity. And he has given salvation by his spotless hands to those crying to him: Glory, O Christ, to thy mighty power!

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

We in faith raise up our voices, singing praises to thee. Rejoice, worthy of all praises, mountain that is rich with the Spirit's grace. Rejoice, O lamp and rejoice, O vessel, filled art thou with the manna so sweet that has delight for all righteous ones.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Mercy seat of all creation, purest maiden art thou, rejoice. Ladder which has raised up everything on earth by thy grace, rejoice. Thou art the bridge that has truly led the way from death into life for all who sing thy praises in hymns. Rejoice.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

More exalted than the heavens art thou, maiden immaculate, free from pain of childbirth, bearing the foundation of all the earth. Rejoice, O seashell that coloured in thy virgin blood the divine crimson robe worn by the king of angelic powers.

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

Truly maiden, thou hast brought forth him who set down the law to us, granting to all sinners pardon from transgressions against the law. The depth we never can fathom, and the height beyond words. Bride unwedded, rejoice. We are made children of God through thee.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

For the world's sake hast thou woven a pure crown fashioned not by man. With our hymns we praise thee, crying out, 'Rejoice, virgin bride,' to thee. Thou art the fortification and defending wall, and the strength of men, the sacred refuge of all mankind.

Ode 5

(Irmos) Creation beheld amazed to see thee, ever-virgin bride, seated in the midst of holy glory, for in thy womb thou hast held the God of all; from thee comes the everlasting Son, who bestows salvation unto all who sing praise to thee.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, maiden ever-pure, who bringest forth the way of life, saving all of mankind from the torrent of our transgressions.

Rejoice, O bride of God, too awesome to speak of or to hear, who hast been a place of rest for the master of all the world.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, maiden free from sin, the fortress and the strength of men. Brightest chamber and delight of angels. A blessed temple to hold the glory of God. Rejoice, thou hast put an end to death, and thou art the source of help to the faithful who call to thee.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Rejoice, maiden, for the fiery chariot of the Word art thou. In thee hast the tree of life been planted, which is the Lord God, O living paradise. His sweetness grants life to all mankind who in faith partake of him, though corruption has held them fast.

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

Made firm by thy power we cry out to thee with faithful hearts, city of the king of all creation. Rejoice, O mountain that is not hewn by man. Rejoice, O unfathomable depth. Glorious and wonderful are the things that are told of thee.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Rejoice, purest maiden, spacious tabernacle of the Word, seashell that has brought forth the divine pearl. O Theotokos, most wondrous miracle who truly hast reconciled with God all of those who call thee blessed at all times and in every age.

Ode 6

(Irmos) You godly minded, come clap your hands, and join in celebration of this most honoured, sacred festival, and let the mother of God be praised, and let us sing the glory of God who is her Son.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

O bridal chamber that holds the Word, thou art for all thy people the source of godliness, all-purest one. Thou art the truth of the prophets' words. Rejoice, for thou adornest apostles with thy grace.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

From thee has flowed forth the godly dew, extinguishing the flames of the adoration of the pagan gods. For this, O virgin, we cry, 'Rejoice.' Thou art the dewy fleece as foretold by Gideon.

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

We cry, 'Rejoice,' calling out to thee to be a port and haven for all who sail upon the stormy seas, engulfed by sorrows and stumbling blocks and by deceits unnumbered the enemy has set.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

From thee come all joy and happiness: be gracious to our hearts and our minds that we may cry, 'Rejoice,' to thee who art the bush that will not be burned. Thou art the cloud most brilliant which shelters faithful men.

(Katavasia) You godly-minded, come clap your hands, and join in celebration of this most honoured, sacred festival, and let the mother of God be praised, and let us sing the glory of God who is her Son.

Little Litany

Presbyter: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us,
O God, by thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Presbyter: For thou art the king of peace and the saviour of our souls, and unto thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Then we sing again the kontakion, 'To thee, the champion leader.'

Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos (Fourth Section)

Ikos Ten

For virgins and for all who flee to thee thou art a wall, O virgin Theotokos undefiled: for the creator of heaven and earth has made thee ready and adorned thee, dwelling in thy womb, and teaching all to sing to thee:

Rejoice, pillar of virginity

Rejoice, gate of salvation

Rejoice, beginning of the new and spiritual creation

Rejoice, provider of God's mercy

Rejoice, for thou hast given new birth to those conceived in shame

Rejoice, for thou hast given good counsel to those robbed of understanding

Rejoice, for thou bringest to naught the corrupter of man's mind

Rejoice, for thou bringest to birth the sower of purity
Rejoice, bridal chamber of a marriage without seed
Rejoice, for thou joinest in union the faithful to their Lord
Rejoice, fair nursing-mother of virgins
Rejoice, bridal escort of holy souls
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Eleven

No hymn can recount the multitude of thy many mercies. For though we offer unto thee, O holy king, songs numberless as the sand upon the seashore, yet we do nothing worthy of the blessings thou hast given us, who cry unto thee: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Eleven

We see the holy virgin as a lamp of living light, shining upon those in darkness. Kindling the immaterial fire, she guides all men to divine knowledge; she illumines our mind with radiance, and we sing these praises in her honour:

Rejoice, beam of the spiritual sun
Rejoice, ray of the moon that never wanes
Rejoice, lightning-flash that shines upon our souls
Rejoice, thunder that brings terror to our enemies
Rejoice, dawn that makest the manifold splendour to arise
Rejoice, spring that makest the river with many streams to flow
Rejoice, for thou dost prefigure the baptismal font
Rejoice, for thou takest away the filth of sin
Rejoice, water washing clean the conscience
Rejoice, cup wherein is mixed the wine of mighty joy

Rejoice, scent of Christ's fragrance
Rejoice, life of mystical feasting
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Twelve

Wishing to grant release from ancient debts, the redeemer of all men came of his own will to those who were exiled from his grace; he has torn up the record of our sins, and from all he hears the cry: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Ikos Twelve

We all sing in honour of thy Son, O Theotokos, and praise thee as a living temple. For the Lord who holds all things in his hand made his dwelling in thy womb; he hallowed and he glorified thee, teaching all to cry to thee:

Rejoice, tabernacle of God the Word
Rejoice, greater holy of holies
Rejoice, ark made golden by the Spirit
Rejoice, never-empty treasure-house of life
Rejoice, precious crown of orthodox kings
Rejoice, honoured boast of godly priests
Rejoice, unshaken fortress of the church
Rejoice, unconquered rampart of the kingdom
Rejoice, for through thee the standards of victory are raised on high
Rejoice, for through thee our enemies are cast down
Rejoice, healing of my body
Rejoice, salvation of my soul
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Kontakion Thirteen

O mother worthy of all praise, who hast borne the Word, the holiest of all holies (*3 times*): accepting this our offering, deliver from every ill and from the punishment to come all those who cry aloud to thee: alleluia!

Chanters: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Then the first ikos is read again.

Ikos One

A prince of the angels was sent from heaven, to say to the Theotokos, Rejoice! And seeing thee, O Lord, take bodily form at the sound of his bodiless voice, filled with amazement he stood still and cried aloud to her:

Rejoice, for through thee joy shall shine forth
Rejoice, for through thee the curse shall cease
Rejoice, recalling of fallen Adam
Rejoice, deliverance from the tears of Eve
Rejoice, height hard to climb for the thoughts of men
Rejoice, depth hard to scan even for the eyes of angels
Rejoice, for thou art the throne of the king
Rejoice, for thou holdest him who upholds all
Rejoice, star causing the sun to shine
Rejoice, womb of the divine incarnation
Rejoice, for through thee the creation is made new
Rejoice, for through thee the creator becomes a newborn child
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded

Chanters: Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

Then we sing again the kontakion, 'To thee, the champion leader.'

Then we continue with odes 7, 8 and 9 of the canon.

Canon to the Most Holy Theotokos

Ode 7

(Irmos) Bravely trampling down the fiery flames, the godly-minded youths would not bow down before creations wrought by men, but steadfast to God alone, maker of all, they bowed, as they sang with joy, 'Most praised Lord who art the God of our fathers, thou art blessed.'

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

With our voices raised in hymns of praise, we cry to thee, 'Rejoice,' O chariot that carries forth the living sun, the true vine that bears fruit, clusters of grapes flowing sweet with wine and making glad the souls of those who in faith sing out thy glory.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

From thee, bride of God, the healer of mankind is born. Rejoice, O mystic rod: from thee the never-fading rose has budded and blossomed forth. Mankind is filled with joy, crying out to thee, 'Rejoice,' our lady, for through thee we are heirs of life eternal.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

All the tongues of men cannot acclaim thee worthily, O lady, who art raised yet higher than the seraphim in bringing forth Christ the king. Ask him for our sakes to deliver us from every harm that threatens us, who in faith bow down before thee.

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

All the world sings praise, pure maiden, unto thee, and cries out blessing thee. Rejoice, thou art the scroll on which the Word is penned by the Father's hand. Mother of God, we ask thee, implore thy son to enter in the book of life all the names of those who serve thee.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

We thy servants come, entreating thee on bended knee, with hearts bowed down to thee. Incline thine ear to our prayer, and save us from sinking down, drowning in suffering and preserve thy flock, and O Theotokos, guard thy city from all foes that assault her.

Ode 8

(Irmos) The holy children cast into the furnace were saved, Theotokos, by the child born of thee. He, who was foreshadowed then, now upon the earth hast come, and all creation gathers near that we may sing to him. Let all his works now sing the Lord's praises, and exalt him greatly from ages to all ages.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Pure maiden, in thy womb hast thou received him, the Word, and hast given birth to him who bears all things. He who at thy breast took milk, now through thee feeds the world by his own will, and unto him does all creation cry: 'Let all his works now sing the Lord's praises, and exalt him greatly from ages to all ages.'

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Moses in the burning bush perceived the great mystery of a child being born of thee, holy virgin undefiled. In a clear foreshadowing, the children standing in the flames were unconsumed by fire. For

this we sing a hymn of thy praises, and exult thee greatly from ages to all ages.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

We who by deceit are left unclothed have been robed in a garment free from any stain of sin. Seated in the dark of sin, we have come to see the light, for in thee, maiden full of grace, is the abode of light. For this we sing a hymn of thy praises, and exalt thee greatly from ages to all ages.

Chanters: Let us bless the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the Lord.

Through thee are the dead brought back to life, for from thee has been born the one who is himself the life. Speechless men are made to speak, lepers have been purified, all of the spirits that are lurking in the air depart, and all disease is cast off, defeated, for thou art, O virgin, humanity's salvation.

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Pure maiden, who brought forth the world's salvation, through thee we are raised from earth unto the heaven's heights. Ever-blessed one, rejoice. Shelter and protecting veil, a wall and rampart thou hast been to those who sing to thee. Let all his works now sing the Lord's praises, and exalt him greatly from ages to all ages.

Chanters: We praise, bless and worship the Lord.

(Katavasia) The holy children cast into the furnace were saved, Theotokos, by the child born of thee. He, who was foreshadowed then, now upon the earth hast come, and all creation gathers near that we may sing to him. Let all his works now sing the Lord's praises, and exalt him greatly from ages to all ages.

Ode 9

The Song of the Theotokos

Presbyter: The Theotokos and mother of the light, let us honour and magnify in song.

Reader: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my saviour.

Chanters: More honourable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word, true Theotokos, we magnify thee. *(sung as refrain)*

Reader: For he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; for behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

For he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name; and his mercy is on those who fear him, from generation to generation.

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away.

He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his posterity for ever.

(Irmos) Let all men on earth in spirit leap up for joy, with festal torches lit. Let angelic ranks rejoice, and with due honour celebrate this festival, and on this holy feast sing praises to the mother of

God. Let them cry out: Maiden ever-blessed, rejoice! Theotokos, most pure, ever-blessed art thou.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Save us from all harm, all evil and enemies which threaten mortal men, coming on the heels of sins too great to number which befall humanity. And let the faithful who believe in thee call out, 'Rejoice,' as partakers of the everlasting joy that through thee is bestowed over all mankind.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Thou hast come to us as our confirmation and our brightly shining light, wherefore unto thee we call, 'Rejoice, pure virgin.' Never-setting star art thou which to the world has given forth the greatest sun of all. Fiery pillar leading us to life above, who reopened the gates into paradise.

Chanters: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Let us stand in awe as we in the temple of the Lord cry out to thee, 'Queen of all the world, rejoice.' Rejoice, O Mary, vessel of unending myrrh which has been emptied into thee, and so we cry out, 'Rejoice, our lady,' purest and most beautiful among women art thou who hast known no sin.

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

Gentle dove, rejoice, for God the compassionate has been brought forth from thee. Ever-virgin maiden, hail. The crown of martyrs, glory of the saints art thou, and the divine adornment of all just and righteous men. We the faithful come before thee crying out, 'O salvation of those who believe, rejoice.'

Chanters: Both now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Overlook our sins, forgive thine inheritance, O God, and heed the prayer of her who has without seed on earth conceived thee. She has come before thee now to plead for us, O Christ, her son, who hast for mankind's sake in thy mercy chosen to become a man, and be clothed in a form that is not thine own.

(Katavasia) Let all men on earth in spirit leap up for joy, with festal torches lit. Let angelic ranks rejoice, and with due honour celebrate this festival, and on this holy feast sing praises to the mother of God. Let them cry out: Maiden ever-blessed, rejoice! Theotokos, most pure, ever-blessed art thou.

Little Litany

Presbyter: Again and again in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Presbyter: For all the powers of heaven praise thee, and unto thee do we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Hymn of Light (Tone 2)

The mystery hidden from all ages is made known today. God from God, the Word becomes in his compassion Son of the virgin Mary, and Gabriel proclaims the gospel of joy. With him let us all cry aloud: Rejoice, mother of the Lord.

Praises (Tone 4)

Let every breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens. Praise him in the highest. To thee, O God, is due a song.

Praise him, all you angels of his. Praise him, all his hosts. To thee, O God, is due a song.

Reader: To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron. To execute on them the judgement written: this is glory for all his saints.

A mystery hidden, unknown to the angels, is entrusted to the archangel Gabriel. Coming now to thee, the dove alone stainless and pure, the restoration of man, he shall greet thee, O most holy, with the salutation: 'Rejoice! Make ready to receive, through a word, God the Word within thy womb.'

Reader: Praise God in his sanctuary. Praise him in his mighty firmament. Praise him for his powers. Praise him according to his exceeding greatness.

A mystery hidden, unknown to the angels... *(repeat)*

Reader: Praise him with trumpet sound. Praise him with psalms and harp. Praise him with timbrel and dance. Praise him with strings and pipe.

A pavilion full of light is prepared for thee, O master: the undefiled womb of the child of God. Come down and enter it, taking pity on

thy creatures, whom the avenging spirit in his envy has attacked and holds in bondage. They have lost their former beauty, and await thy descent for their salvation.

Reader: Praise him with sounding cymbals. Praise him with loud clashing cymbals. Let every breath praise the Lord.

Gabriel the archangel shall come to thee openly, all-blameless virgin, and shall cry to thee: 'Rejoice, deliverance from the curse, and raising of the fallen; rejoice, thou who alone wast chosen by God; rejoice, living cloud of the sun. Receive him that has no body, whose will it is to dwell within thy womb.'

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

The Theotokos heard a voice she knew not, when the archangel brought her the glad tidings of the annunciation; and, accepting his salutation with faith, she conceived thee, the pre-eternal God. Therefore in great rejoicing we also cry aloud to thee: O God, who without change hast taken flesh from her, grant peace unto the world and to our souls great mercy.

Great Doxology

Presbyter: Glory to thee, who hast shown us the light.

And then we sing:

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will among men. We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee, we give thanks to thee for thy great glory. O Lord, heavenly King, God the 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 Lord, Jesus Christ, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Every day will I bless thee and I will praise thy name for ever, yea, for ever and ever. Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this day without sin. Blessed art thou, O Lord, the God of our fathers, and praised and glorified is thy name unto the ages. Amen. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we have hoped in thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, teach me thy statutes. *(3 times)*

Lord, thou hast been our refuge from generation to generation. I said: O Lord, have mercy on me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. Lord, unto thee have I fled for refuge. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. For in thee is the fountain of life; in thy light we shall see light. O continue thy mercy unto them that know thee.

Holy God, holy mighty, holy immortal, have mercy on us. *(3 times)*

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

Holy immortal, have mercy on us.

Holy God, holy mighty, holy immortal, have mercy on us.

Troparion (Tone 8)

Taking knowledge of the secret command, the bodiless archangel went with haste to Joseph's dwelling, and said to her that knew not wedlock: 'He who in his self-abasement bowed the heavens and came down, is housed wholly and unchanged in thee. I see him take

the form of a servant in thy womb, and in wonder cry to thee:
Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.'

Litany of Fervent Supplication

Presbyter: Have mercy on us, O God, according to thy great goodness, we pray thee, hear us and have mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for our Metropolitan Tikhon, our Archbishop Irénée, and for all our brethren in Christ.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for our sovereign lord, King Charles, for this land, and all those in seats of authority.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for the blessed and ever-memorable founders of this holy house; and for all our fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, the Orthodox departed this life before us, who here and in all the world lie asleep in the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, and visitation for the servants of God, the members of this holy mission, for those who have asked us to pray for them, and for the pardon and remission of their sins.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: Again we pray for those who bring offerings and do good works in this holy and all-venerable house, for

those who labour and those who sing; and for all the people here present, who await thy great and rich mercy.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy. *(3 times)*

Presbyter: For thou art a merciful and man-befriending God, and unto thee do we send up glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Litany of Supplication

Presbyter: Let us complete our prayer to the Lord.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: Help us, save us, have mercy on us, and keep us, O God, by thy grace.

Chanters: Lord, have mercy.

Presbyter: That the whole day may be perfect, holy, peaceful, and sinless, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant it, O Lord.

Presbyter: An angel of peace, a faithful guide, a guardian of our souls and bodies, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant it, O Lord.

Presbyter: Pardon and remission of our sins and transgressions, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant it, O Lord.

Presbyter: All things that are good and profitable for our souls, and peace for the world, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant it, O Lord.

Presbyter: That we may complete the remaining time of our life in peace and repentance, let us ask of the Lord.

Chanters: Grant it, O Lord.

Presbyter: A Christian ending to our life: painless, blameless, and peaceful, and a good defence before the dread judgement seat of Christ, let us ask.

Chanters: Grant it, O Lord.

Presbyter: Commemorating our most holy, most pure, most blessed and glorious lady Theotokos and ever-virgin Mary with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and each other, and all our life unto Christ our God.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Presbyter: For thou art a good and man-befriending God, and unto thee we send up glory, to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Peace and Prayer at the Bowing of Heads

Presbyter: Peace be unto all.

Chanters: And to thy spirit.

Presbyter: Let us bow our heads unto the Lord.

Chanters: To thee, O Lord.

Prêtre:

O holy Lord who dwellest on high and regardest the humble of heart, and with thine all-seeing eye dost behold all creation: unto thee have we bowed the neck of our soul and body, and we entreat thee, O holy of holies, stretch forth thine invisible hand from thy holy dwelling place, and bless us all. And if in any way we have sinned, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, forgive, inasmuch as thou art a good and man-befriending God, granting us thine earthly and heavenly good things.

For thine it is to show mercy and to save us, O our God, and unto thee do we send up glory: to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen.

Dismissal of Mattins

Presbyter: Wisdom.

Chanters: Father, bless.

Presbyter: Blessed be he who is, Christ our God, always, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Chanters: Amen. Confirm, O God, the holy Orthodox faith of Orthodox Christians, unto ages of ages.

Presbyter: Most holy Theotokos, save us.

Chanters: More honourable than the cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim, without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word: true Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Presbyter: Glory to thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to thee.

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

Lord, have mercy. (*3 times*)

Father, bless.

Presbyter: May Christ our true God, through the prayers of his most pure mother, of the holy, glorious, and all-laudable apostles, of the holy, glorious, and right-victorious martyrs, of our venerable and God-bearing fathers, of the holy and righteous myrrhbearers, whose mission this is, of (*the saints of the day*) whose memory we keep this day, of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna, and of all the saints, have mercy on us and save us, for he is good and the friend of man.

Chanters: Amen.