



Akathist to our Most Holy Lady, Mother of God

Icon of the Mother of God All-Merciful, also known as the Theotokos 'Nikopoia', or 'Bringer of Victory'. This copy of Byzantine origin now resides in St Mark's, Venice. Having secretly received the command, the Archangel hastened into Joseph's abode and spoke to the Holy Virgin. He Who bowed the Heavens with His descending, is wholly contained, yet unchanged in You. And seeing Him taking the likeness of a servant in your womb, I stand in amazement and cry unto you:

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride [3 times].

Kontakion 1

Unto you, O Theotokos, invincible Champion, your City [or "we your people"], in thanksgiving ascribes the victory for the deliverance from sufferings. And having your might unassailable, free us from all dangers, so that we may cry unto you:

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Eikos 1

The Archangel was sent from Heaven to cry 'Rejoice!' to the Theotokos. And beholding You, O Lord, taking bodily form, he stood in awe, and with his bodiless voice he cried aloud to her such things as these:

Rejoice, you through whom joy shall shine forth. Rejoice, you through whom the curse will vanish.

Rejoice, the Restoration of fallen Adam. Rejoice, the Redemption of the tears of Eve.

Rejoice, O Height beyond human logic. Rejoice, O depth invisible even to the eyes of Angels.

Rejoice, for you are the King's throne. Rejoice, you bear Him, Who bears the universe.

Rejoice, O Star revealing the Sun. Rejoice, O Womb of divine Incarnation.

Rejoice, you through whom creation is renewed. Rejoice, you through whom the Creator is born a Babe.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 2

Beholding herself in purity, the holy one courageously said to Gabriel: Your strange voice seems almost unbelievable to my soul; for how do you speak of birth-giving without seed? And she cried aloud:

Alleluia.

Eikos 2

Seeking to know the incomprehensible knowledge, the Virgin cried to him who ministered to her: How may a Son be born from a virginal womb? Tell me! To her he answered in fear, yet crying thus:

Rejoice, O seer of the ineffable Will. Rejoice, O surety of those praying in silence.

Rejoice, you the Preface of Christ's miracles. Rejoice, you the Pinnacle of His commandments.

Rejoice, O heavenly Ladder, by which God descended. Rejoice, O Bridge leading those from earth to Heaven.

Rejoice, O Miracle, much marveled of Angels. Rejoice, O trauma, much dirged of demons.

Rejoice, you who ineffably gave birth to the Light. Rejoice, you who revealed the mystery to none.

Rejoice, O knowledge superseding the wise. Rejoice, You who enlighten the minds of the faithful.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride

Kontakion 3

The power of the Most High then overshadowed the Virgin, that she might conceive; and her fruitful womb He made a fertile meadow for all those desiring to reap salvation, as they chant:

Alleluia.

Eikos 3

Carrying God in her womb, the Virgin hastened to Elizabeth, whose unborn babe forthwith recognizing Mary's salutation rejoiced, and with leaps as it were with songs, he cried out to the Theotokos:

Rejoice, O branch of the unwithering Vine. Rejoice, O Land yielding the untainted Fruit.

Rejoice, O Husbandry of the merciful Husbandman. Rejoice, O birthgiver to the Planter of our life.

Rejoice, O Field bearing abundant compassion. Rejoice, O Table laden with an abundance of mercies.

Rejoice, for you make the meadow produce contentment. Rejoice, for you prepare a haven for souls.

Rejoice, acceptable Incense of intercession. Rejoice, Oblation for all the world.

Rejoice, Favour of God to mortals. Rejoice, Access of mortals to God.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 4

Having doubtful thoughts, the righteous Joseph was troubled; for he suspected a secret union as he beheld you unwed, O blameless one; but when he learned of your conception through the Holy Spirit, he cried:

Alleluia.

Eikos 4

On hearing the Angels praising the incarnate presence of Christ, the shepherds hastened as to a Shepherd, and beholding Him as a spotless Lamb pastured in Mary's womb, her they hymned and said:

Rejoice, Mother of the Lamb and Shepherd. Rejoice, Fold of the rational sheep.

Rejoice, O Defense against invisible foes. Rejoice, Opener of the gates of Paradise.

Rejoice, for the things of Heaven rejoice with the earth. Rejoice, the things of earth join chorus with the Heavens.

Rejoice, never-silent Voice of the Apostles. Rejoice, never-conquered Courage of the Martyrs.

Rejoice, firm Support of the Faith. Rejoice, shining Token of grace.

Rejoice, you through whom Hades was laid bare. Rejoice, you through whom we are clothed with glory.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 5

Beholding the Godward-pointing Star, the Magi followed its radiance; and holding it as a lantern, they sought through it the mighty King. And having approached the Unreachable, they rejoiced and cried to Him:

Alleluia.

Eikos 5

The sons of the Chaldees saw in the hands of the Virgin Him Who by His hand fashioned man; and sensing Him as Lord, even though He had taken the form of a servant, they hastened with gifts to do homage, and they cried out to her who is blessed:

Rejoice, Mother of the never-setting Star. Rejoice, Dawn of the mystic Day.

Rejoice, you who have quenched the fiery furnace of error. Rejoice, you who enlighten the initiates of the Trinity.

Rejoice, you who have removed the inhuman tyrant from power. Rejoice, you who have shown Christ, the man-befriending Lord.

Rejoice, you who have redeemed us from the pagan religion. Rejoice, you who have rescued us from the works of mire.

Rejoice, you who ceased the worship of fire. Rejoice, you who saves us from the flames of passions.

Rejoice, Guide of the faithful to chastity. Rejoice, O Delight of all generations.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 6

Having become God-bearing heralds, the Magi returned to Babylon. Fulfilling Your prophecy, and having preached You as the Christ to all, they left Herod as a trifler, who knew not how to chant:

Alleluia.

Eikos 6

Having shed the light of truth in Egypt, You expelled the darkness of falsehood; and unable to bear Your strength, O Saviour, her idols fell; and they that were set free from them cried to the Theotokos:

Rejoice, Uplifting of men. Rejoice, Downfall of demons.

Rejoice, you who trampled upon the delusion of error. Rejoice, you who censured the deceit of the idols.

Rejoice, Sea which drowned the symbolic Pharaoh. Rejoice, Rock which refreshed those thirsting for life.

Rejoice, Pillar of fire, guiding those in darkness. Rejoice, Protection of the world, more spacious than a cloud.

Rejoice, Nourishment, successor to manna. Rejoice, Minister of holy joy.

Rejoice, Land of promise. Rejoice, you from whom flows milk and honey.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 7

When Symeon was prepared to leave from this age of deception, You were presented to him as a newborn Babe, but he recognized You as perfect God. Wherefore, he marveled at Your ineffable wisdom, chanting:

Alleluia.

Eikos 7

New was the Creation which the Creator showed to us His creatures when He sprang forth from the seedless womb; and He preserved it incorrupt, even as it was, that we, seeing this Miracle, may praise her and say:

Rejoice, Flower of incorruption. Rejoice, Crown of self-restraint.

Rejoice, O shining Token of Resurrection. Rejoice, you whom reflects the life of the Angels.

Rejoice, Tree of delectable Fruit that nourishes the faithful. Rejoice, well-shaded Tree under which many find shelter.

Rejoice you who bears the Guide of those astray. Rejoice, you who gives birth to the Redeemer of captives.

Rejoice, Intercession before the righteous Judge. Rejoice, Forgiveness for many transgressors.

Rejoice, Robe of confidence for those bare of courage. Rejoice, Tenderness conquering all desire.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 8

Seeing a strange childbirth, let us estrange ourselves from the world by transporting our minds to Heaven; to this end the Most High God appeared on earth a lowly man, that He might draw to the heights those who cry out to Him:

Alleluia.

Eikos 8

The Infinite Word was wholly present with those on earth, yet never absent from those in Heaven; for this was a divine condescension and not a mere change of place; and His birth was from a Virgin chosen of God, who heard such words as these:

Rejoice, Land of the Uncontained God. Rejoice, Gate of the sacred mystery.

Rejoice, doubted Rumor of the faithless. Rejoice, undoubted Pride of the faithful.

Rejoice, all-holy Chariot of Him Who is above the Cherubim. Rejoice, most excellent Dwelling-place of Him Who is above the Seraphim.

Rejoice, you who conducts the opposites of unity. Rejoice, you who has woven maidenhood into motherhood.

Rejoice, you through whom transgression is annulled. Rejoice, you through whom Paradise is open.

Rejoice, Key of the Kingdom of Christ. Rejoice, Hope of eternal blessings.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride

Kontakion 9

All angel-kind was amazed by the great deed of Your Incarnation; for they saw the inaccessible God as Man accessible to all, dwelling among us and hearing from all:

Alleluia.

Eikos 9

Orators most eloquent do we behold mute as fish before you, O Theotokos; for they are at loss to explain how you could remain a virgin and yet give birth. But as for us, marveling at this mystery, we cry with faith:

Rejoice, Vessel of the Wisdom of God. Rejoice, Treasury of His providence.

Rejoice, you who prove the philosophers fools. Rejoice, you who prove the logicians illogical.

Rejoice, for the subtle debaters are confounded. Rejoice, for the inventors of myths are faded away.

Rejoice, you who break the webs of the Athenians. Rejoice, you who fill the nets of the Fishermen.

Rejoice, you who draw us from the depths of ignorance. Rejoice, you who enlighten many with knowledge.

Rejoice, Raft for those who desire to be saved. Rejoice, Haven for those who fare on the sea of life.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 10

Wishing to save the world, to this end did the Ruler of all come of His own will; and though as God He is the Shepherd, for us He appeared as a Man like us; for by this likeness He called those of like kind, yet as God He hears:

Alleluia

Eikos 10

You are a fortress protecting all virgins, O Theotokos and Virgin; for the Master of heaven and earth prepared you, O Immaculate One, and dwelt in your womb, and taught all to cry out to you:

Rejoice, Pillar of virginity. Rejoice, Gate of salvation.

Rejoice, Leader of spiritual restoration. Rejoice, Bestower of divine goodness.

Rejoice, for you regenerated those conceived in shame. Rejoice, for you gave guidance to the thoughtless.

Rejoice, you who abolished the corrupter of hearts. Rejoice, you who gave birth to the Sower of chastity.

Rejoice, bridal Chamber of a seedless marriage. Rejoice, you who joined the faithful to the Lord.

Rejoice, fair Nursing-mother of virgins. Rejoice, bridal Escort of holy souls.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 11

Defeated is every hymn that strives to pay homage to the multitude of Your many compassions; for even should we offer You, O holy King, odes of praise numberless as the sands, we should still have done nothing worthy of what You have given to us who cry to You:

Alleluia.

Eikos 11

As a brilliant beacon-light shining to those in darkness do we behold the holy Virgin; for she kindles the celestial Light and leads all to divine knowledge; she illuminates our minds with radiance and is honoured by these our cries:

Rejoice, Ray of the spiritual Sun. Rejoice, Beam of the innermost Splendour.

Rejoice, Lightning, enlightening our souls. Rejoice, Thunder, striking down the enemy.

Rejoice, for you caused the many-starred Light to dawn. Rejoice, for you caused the ever-flowing River to gush forth.

Rejoice, you who depict the image of the Font. Rejoice, you who wash away the stain of sin.

Rejoice, Laver purifying conscience. Rejoice, Wine-bowl over-filled with joy.

Rejoice, sweet-scented Fragrance of Christ. Rejoice, Life of mystic festival.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride

Kontakion 12

Wishing to bestow His grace, He that forgives the ancient debts of all mankind came of His own will to dwell among those who departed from His favour; and tearing up writ of indebtedness, He hears from all:

Alleluia.

Eikos 12

Whilst praising your Offspring, we all praise you, O Theotokos, as a living temple; for the Lord, Who holds all things in His hand, dwelt in your womb, and He sanctified and glorified you, and taught all to cry to you:

Rejoice, Tabernacle of God the Word. Rejoice, Holy one, holier than the Holies.

Rejoice, Ark made golden by the Spirit. Rejoice, inexhaustible Treasury of Life.

Rejoice, precious Diadem of godly kings. Rejoice, venerable Boast of faithful priests.

Rejoice, unshakeable Tower of the Church. Rejoice, impregnable fortress of the Kingdom.

Rejoice, you through whom trophies are raised up. Rejoice, you whom enemies are cast down.

Rejoice, Healing of my flesh. Rejoice, Salvation of my soul.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.

Kontakion 13 [3 times]

O all-hymned Mother, worthy of all praise, who brought forth the Word, the Holiest of all Saints, as you receive this our offering, rescue us all from every calamity, and deliver from future torment those who cry with one voice:

Alleluia.

Eikos 1 Repeated

The Archangel was sent from Heaven to cry: Rejoice! to the Theotokos. And beholding You, O Lord, taking bodily form, he stood in awe, and with his bodiless voice he cried aloud to her such things as these:

Rejoice, you through whom joy shall shine. Rejoice, you the Redemption of the tears of Eve.

Rejoice, Height hard to climb for human thought. Rejoice, Depth hard to explore even for the eyes of Angels.

Rejoice, for you are the Throne of the King. Rejoice, for you sustained the Sustainer of all.

Rejoice, Star that causes the Sun to appear. Rejoice, Womb of the divine Incarnation.

Rejoice, you through whom creation is renewed. Rejoice, you whom the Creator is born a Babe.

Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride

Kontakion 1 Repeated

Unto you, O Theotokos, invincible Champion, your City, in thanksgiving ascribes the victory for the deliverance from sufferings. And having your might unassailable, free us from all dangers, so that we may cry unto you: Rejoice, O Unwedded Bride.