

The Salutations to THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS (AKATHIST HYMN)

When the bodiless one learned the secret command in haste he came and stood before Joseph's dwelling, and spoke unto the Maiden who knew not wedlock: The One who hath bowed the Heavens by His decent 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 Thou Bride unwedded.

To thee the Champion Leader, we thy flock dedicate a feast of victory and of thanks-giving, as ones rescued out of sufferings, O Theotokos. But as thou art thou 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.

An Angel, and the chiefest among them, was sent from heaven to cry: Rejoice! To the Mother of God. And beholding Thee, O Lord, taking bodily form, he stood in awe, and with his bodiless voice he cried aloud to her such things as these:
Rejoice, thou through whom joy shall shine forth. Rejoice, thou through whom the curse shall be blotted out.
Rejoice, thou Restoration of fallen Adam. Rejoice, thou 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 thou art the Throne of a King. Rejoice for thou sustainest the Sustainer of all.
Rejoice, Star that causeth the Sun to appear. Rejoice, womb of the divine Incarnation.
Rejoice, thou through whom creation is renewed. Rejoice, thou through whom the Creator becometh a babe.

Rejoice Thou Bride unwedded.

Beholding herself in chastity, the holy one spoke boldly unto Gabriel: The strangeness of thy words seemeth hard to my soul to receive, for how speakest thou of a seedless conception? Crying aloud:

Alleluia.

Seeking to know knowledge unknown, the Virgin cried to him who ministered unto her: From a chaste womb how can a Son be born? Tell Thou me! Then he spoke unto her in fear, yet crying aloud thus:
Rejoice, thou Initiate of the ineffable counsel.
Rejoice, thou Faith in that which demandeth silence.
Rejoice, Prelude of the miracles of Christ.
Rejoice, Pinnacle of His doctrines.

Rejoice, heavenly Ladder whereby God came down. Rejoice, Bridge leading those of earth to Heaven.
Rejoice, Marvel far-famed of Angels. Rejoice, Wounding much-bewailed of demons. Rejoice, thou who ineffably gavest birth to the
Light. Rejoice, thou who didst reveal the mystery to none.
Rejoice, thou who oversorest the knowledge of the wise. Rejoice, thou who enlightenest the minds of the faithful.

Rejoice, Thou Bride unwedded.

The power of the most High then overshadowed her who knew not wedlock, that she might conceive, and showed forth her fruitful
womb as a sweet meadow to all those who desire to reap salvation, whilst chanting:

Alleluia.

Carrying God in her womb, the Virgin hastened to Elizabeth, whose unborn babe straightway perceiving her salutation rejoiced, and
with leaps as it were with songs, he cried out to the Theotokos:
Rejoice, vine bearing the unfading bloom. Rejoice, land yielding the untainted Fruit. Rejoice, thou who dost tend the caring
Husbandman. Rejoice, thou who dost blossom forth the Sower of our life.
Rejoice, Field bearing a bounty of compassion.
Rejoice, Table laden with an abundance of mercies.
Rejoice, for thou revivest the mea-dow of delight. Rejoice, for thou preparest a heaven for souls.
Rejoice, acceptable Incense of inter-cession.
Rejoice, Oblation for all the world.
Rejoice, Favour of god to mortals. Rejoice, Access of mortals to God.

Rejoice, Thou Bride unwedded.

Having a tempest of doubting thoughts within,
the chaste Joseph was troubled, for he suspected a secret union as he beheld thee unwed, O blameless one, but when he learned
of thy conception through the Holy Spirit, he cried:

Alleluia.

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, Protector against invisible foes.
Rejoice, Opener of the gates of Paradise.

Rejoice, for the things of Heaven rejoice with the earth. Rejoice, for 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, thou through whom Hades was laid bare. Rejoice, thou through whom we are clothed with glory.

Rejoice, Thou Bride unwedded.

Beholding the Godward-pointing star, the Wisemen followed in its splendour, and holding it as a lantern, they sought thereby the mighty King. And as they approached the unapproachable, they rejoiced and cried to Him:

Alleluia.

The sons of the Chaldees beheld in the hands of the Virgin Him who by His hands fashioned man, and perceiving Him as Master, 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, thou who Quenches the fiery furnace of error. Rejoice thou who enlightenest the initiates of the Trinity.

Rejoice, thou who didst cast down from power the inhuman tyrant. Rejoice, thou who didst show forth Christ, the man-befriending Lord.

Rejoice, thou who redeemest from the creeds of barbarism. Rejoice, thou who dost rescue from the works of mire.

Rejoice, thou who makest the worship of fire to cease. Rejoice, thou who makest the flame of passions to be allayed.

Rejoice, Guide of the faithful to chastity.

Rejoice, Rejoicing of every generation.

Rejoice thou Bride unwedded.

God-Bearing heralds did the Wise Men become, when they returned to Babylon, and fulfilling Thy prophecy, they preached Thee to all as the Christ, and they left herod as a trifler, who knew not how to chant:

Alleluia.

Shining in Egypt the illumination of truth, thou didst dispel the darkness of falsehood, and unable to bear Thy strength, O Saviour, her idols fell, and they that were set free therefrom cried to the Theotokos:

Rejoice, Uplifting of men. Rejoice, Downfall of demons. Rejoice, thou who hast trampled upon the delusions of error. Rejoice, thou who hast censured the deceit of idols.

Rejoice, Sea which drowned the noetic pharaoh. Rejoice, Rock which refreshed those athirst for Life.

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

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

Rejoice, Land of promise. Rejoice, thou from whence flow milk and honey.

Rejoice, thou Bride unwedded.

When Symeon was near unto departing from this age of deception, thou wast presented to him as a newborn Babe, but thou wast recognized by him as perfect God. Wherefore, he marveled at thine ineffable wisdom, cried out:

Alleluia.

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 marvel, may praise her as we cry out:

Rejoice, Flower of incorruption. Rejoice, Crown of continence.

Rejoice, thou who flashest forth the type of the Resurrection. Rejoice, thou who showest forth the life of the Angels.

Rejoice, Tree of goodly Fruit whereby the faithful are nourished. Rejoice, Wood of leafy branches whereby many are sheltered.

Rejoice, thou who bearest the Guide of those astray. Rejoice, thou who engenderest the Redeemer of captives.

Rejoice, Supplication before the righteous Judge. Rejoice, Forgiveness for many transgressors. Rejoice, Robe of confidence for the naked. Rejoice, Tenderness vanquishing all desire.

Rejoice, thou Bride unwedded.

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 heights those who cry to Him:

Alleluia

Wholly present with those below was the Uncircumscribed Word, yet in no way absent from those above, 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, Closure of the Uncontained God.

Rejoice, Portal of the solemn mystery.

Rejoice, doubtful Rumour of the faithless.

Rejoice, undoubted Boast of the faithful.

Rejoice, all holy Chariot of Him who rideth upon the Cherubim. Rejoice, choicest Dwelling-place of Him who sitteth upon the Seraphim.

Rejoice, thou who makest things that differ to agree. Rejoice, thou who yokest together motherhood and virginity.

Rejoice, thou through whom transgression is annulled. Rejoice, thou through whom Paradise is opened.

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

Rejoice, thou bride unwedded.

All Angelkind was amazed by the great deed of Thine Incarnation, for they saw the inaccessible God accessible to all, dwelling among us and hearing from us all:

Alleluia.

Orators most eloquent do we behold as fish before thee, O Theotokos, for they are at a loss to explain how thou couldst 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, thou who showest forth philosophers fools. Rejoice, thou who provest logicians illogical. Rejoice, for the subtle disputants are confounded. Rejoice, For the inventors of myths are faded away.

Rejoice, thou who dost draw us from the depths of ignorance. Rejoice, thou who dost 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, thou Bride unwedded.

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 by this likeness He called those of like kind, yet as God He doth hear:

Alleluia.

A Rampart art thou for virgins and all that have recourse to thee, O Theotokos and Virgin, for the Maker of heaven and earth prepared thee, O Immaculate One, and dwelt in thy womb, and taught all to cry out to thee:

Rejoice, Pillar of virginity. Rejoice, gate of salvation.

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

Rejoice, for thou didst regenerate those conceived in shame. Rejoice, for thou didst admonish those despoiled in mind.

Rejoice, thou who dost bring to naught the corrupter of hearts. Rejoice, thou who dost give birth to the Sower of chastity.

Rejoice, bridal Chamber of a seedless marriage. Rejoice, thou who dost join the faithful to the Lord.

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

Rejoice, thou Bride unwedded.

A defeated is every hymn that striveth to pay homage to the multitude of Thy many compassions, for even should we offer Thee, O holy King, odes of praise numberless as the sands, we should still have done nothing worthy of what Thou hast given unto us who cry to Thee:

Alleluia.

As a brilliant beacon-light shining to those in darkness do we behold the holy Virgin, for she kindeth the supernal Light and leadeth all to divine knowledge, she illuminate 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 thou dost cause the many starred Light to dawn. Rejoice, for thou dost cause the ever-flowing River to gush forth.
Rejoice, thou who dost depict the image of the font. Rejoice, thou who dost wash away the stain of sin.
Rejoice, Laver purifying conscience. Rejoice, Wine bowl pouring forth joy.
Rejoice, sweet-scented Fragrance of Christ. Rejoice, Life of mystic festival.

Rejoice, thou Bride unwedded.

Wishing to bestow His grace, He that forgiveth the ancient debts of all men came of His own will to dwell among those who had departed for His favour, and having rent asunder the handwriting against them, He heareth from all:

Alleluia.

Whilst hymning Thine Offspring, we all praise thee, O Theotokos as a living temple, for the Lord, who holdeth all things in His hand, dwelt in thy womb, and He hallowed and glorified thee, and taught all to cry to thee:
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, unshakable Tower of the Church. Rejoice, impregnable Bulwark of the Kingdom. Rejoice, thou through whom trophies are raised up. Rejoice, thou through whom enemies are cast down. Rejoice, Healing of my flesh. Rejoice, salvation of my soul.

Rejoice, thou Bride unwedded.

O All-Hymned Mother, who didst bear the Word (3 times). Who is more holy than all the Saints, as thou recievest this our offering, rescue us all from ever calamity, and deliver from future torments those who cry with one voice:

Alleluia.

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