

**THE OFFICE OF LITTLE COMPLINE WITH  
THE AKATHIST CANON AND HYMN  
\*\*AS SERVED ON THE FIFTH FRIDAY OF GREAT LENT\*\***

**\*\*INSTRUCTIONS\*\***

*An icon of the Theotokos (preferably the one described in the Synaxarion below) is placed on a stand in the middle of the solea. The candles are lit and the church is semi-illuminated. The censer is used only for the stases of the Akathist Hymn. The curtain and Holy Doors are closed until the priest begins the first stasis of the Akathist Hymn. The priest wears a blue epitachelion over his exorasson and starts Little Compline in front of the icon.*

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

Choir: Amen.

Priest: Glory to Thee, O God, glory to Thee.

O heavenly King, the Comforter, Spirit of Truth, Who art in all places, and fillest all things, Treasury of good things, and Giver of life, come, and dwell in us, and cleanse us from every stain; and save our souls, O gracious Lord.

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)

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

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

Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

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

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: 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.

Choir: Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (*Twelve Times*)

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

- *A metania is made after each verse below.*

Choir: Come, let us worship and fall down before 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.

- *The Priest goes to stand at the chanters stand.*

### PSALM 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness. O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built up. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

### PSALM 69

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

### PSALM 142

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

### THE LITTLE DOXOLOGY (Plain Reading)

- + 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 unto 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, Who takest away the sin of the world, have mercy on us; O Thou Who takest away the sins of the world.
- + Receive our prayer, O Thou Who sittest at the right hand of the Father, and have mercy on us.
- + For Thou only art holy, Thou only art the Lord, O Jesus Christ, to the Glory of God the Father. Amen.
- + Every day will I bless Thee, and I will praise Thy Name forever; yea, forever and ever.
- + Lord, Thou hast been our refuge in all generations. I said: Be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee.
- + Lord, I have fled unto Thee: teach me to do Thy will, for Thou art my God.
- + For with Thee is the fountain of life: in Thy light shall we see light.
- + O continue Thy loving-kindness unto them that know Thee.
- + Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Lord God of our Fathers, and praised and glorified be Thy Name forever. Amen.
- + Let Thy mercy, O Lord: be upon us, as we do put our hope in Thee.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Lord: teach me Thy statutes.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Master; make me to understand Thy statutes.
- + Blessed art Thou, O Holy One; enlighten me with Thy statutes.
- + Thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever. O despise not the works of Thy hands. To Thee belongeth worship, to Thee belongeth praise, to Thee belongeth glory: to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

### THE NICENE-CONSTANTINOPOLITAN CREED

People: I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Only-begotten, Begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made; of one essence with the Father, by Whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried. And on the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures. And ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father. And He shall come again with glory to judge the living and the dead, Whose Kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. I look for the Resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

### THEOTOKION (Plain Reading)

It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos, who art ever-blessed and all-blameless, and the mother of our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than

the Seraphim. Thou who without corruption bearest God the Word; and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

- *As the apolytikion below is sung, the Priest dons his phelonion and comes to stand before the icon of the Theotokos in the center of the solea. The censer is kept near at hand.*

#### APOLYTIKION (ORIGINAL KONTAKION) OF AKATHIST SATURDAY IN TONE EIGHT

With mystic apprehension of the divine commandment, the bodiless angel quickly appeared in the dwelling-place of Joseph and said to the unwed Virgin: Lo, He Who in His Descent did bow the Heavens is housed unchanged and whole in thee; as I behold Him in thy womb taking on the form of a servant, I marvel and I cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (THRICE)

- *When the Priest comes to the words “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom!” and “Alleluia,” he censures the Icon nine times, with reverence. The people repeat the refrain while the Priest censures. At the end of each stasis (except the last), the Priest returns to the chanters stand.*

### **FIRST STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN**

#### 1. OIKOS

Priest: An angel chieftain was sent from heaven to say “Hail!” unto the Theotokos. (THRICE) ... And beholding Thee, O Lord, taking bodily form, he stood rapt in wonder, and with bodiless voice cried aloud to her in this wise:

- + Hail, thou, through whom joy shall shine forth; Hail, thou, through whom the curse shall be destroyed.
- + Hail, thou restoration of fallen Adam; Hail, thou, redemption of the tears of Eve.
- + Hail, thou height untrodden by human minds; Hail, thou depth hard to scan, even for angels’ eyes.
- + Hail, thou that art a kingly throne; Hail, thou that holdest the Upholder of all.
- + Hail, thou star that showed the Sun; Hail, womb of the Divine Incarnation.
- + Hail, thou through whom Creation is renewed; Hail, thou through whom the Creator becomes a babe.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censures the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

#### 2. KONTAKION

Priest: Boldly spake the holy maiden unto Gabriel, conscious of her chastity: To my soul thy strange message seems hard to grasp; how speakest thou of a virgin conception, crying aloud: Alleluia! (*The priest censures the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

#### 3. OIKOS

Priest: Craving to know knowledge unknowable, the Virgin cried out unto him who ministered unto her: From a maiden body, how may a Son be born; tell thou me! To her he spake in fear, and thus only cried aloud:

- + Hail, thou initiate of the ineffable counsel; Hail, O faith of those who pray in silence.

- + Hail, thou beginning of the miracles of Christ; Hail, thou crown of His decrees.
- + Hail, heavenly ladder, by which God came down; Hail, Bridge that leadest us from earth to Heaven.
- + Hail, thou much-talked of wonder of angels; Hail, thou much-lamented damager of demons.
- + Hail, thou who ineffably didst bear the Light; Hail, thou who told none how it was done.
- + Hail thou, who over-soarest the knowledge of the wise; Hail, thou who enlightenest the minds of the faithful.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

#### 4. KONTAKION

Priest: Divine power from on high then overshadowed the maiden, that she might conceive, and showed forth her fruitful womb as a fertile field to all who desire to reap salvation, as they sing: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

#### 5. OIKOS

Priest: Enshrining God in her womb, the Virgin hastened unto Elizabeth; whose unborn babe at once perceived her Salutation, and rejoiced; and with stirrings as if with voices cried out to the Theotokos:

- + Hail, Branch of unfading growth; Hail, Possessor of untouched fruit.
- + Hail, thou who laborest for Him Whose labor is love; Hail, thou who tendest Him Who tendeth our life.
- + Hail, Field with compassions harvest rich; Hail, Table with abundance of mercies spread.
- + Hail, thou who revivest the green meadows of joy; Hail, thou who makest ready a safe haven for souls.
- + Hail, thou accepted incense offering of intercessions; Hail, thou oblation of all the world.
- + Hail, Good-will of God towards men; Hail, Access of mortals to God.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

#### 6. KONTAKION

Priest: Floods of doubtful thoughts troubled the wise Joseph within, and he feared a furtive love as he beheld thee unwed, O Blameless One; but when he learned that thy conception was of the Holy Spirit, he said: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

## **THE CANON OF THE AKATHIST, CHANTED IN TONE FOUR**

### ODE ONE

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

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

When the great Archangel saw thee, O Immaculate One, thou living book of Christ, sealed by the Spirit, he cried unto thee: Hail, vessel of gladness, through whom the curse of our first-mother is loosed.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, virgin bride of God, thou uplifter of Adam and death-knell of Hades; Hail, O all-blameless one, thou palace of the only King; Hail, thou fiery throne of the Almighty.

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

Hail, thou from whom alone didst blossom the Unwithering Rose; Hail, thou who didst bear the fragrant Apple; Hail, immaculate maiden, fragrance of the King of All and salvation of the world.

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

Hail, thou treasure-house of purity, through which we rose up from our fall; Hail, Lady, sweet-scented lily perfuming the faithful, thou fragrant incense and most precious myrrh.

### ODE THREE

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

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

As a clear and untilled field, thou didst make the Divine Ear of Grain to sprout; Hail, thou living table that held the Bread of Life; Hail, thou unfailing fountain of Living Water.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, O mystic heifer that didst bear the Spotless Calf; Hail, ewe-lamb who didst conceive the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the whole world; Hail, thou Fervent Intercessor.

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

Hail, O radiant dawn, which alone dost bear Christ the Sun, the dwelling-place of Light; Hail, thou who didst dispel the darkness and reduce to naught the demons of gloom.

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

Hail, thou only gate, through which the Word alone didst pass; Hail, Lady, for by thy birthing the bars and gates of Hades were burst asunder; Hail, thou most worthy of all praise, divine entry for the saved.

- *As the Kontakion is sung, the Priest comes to stand before the icon of the Theotokos in the center of the solea. The censer is kept near at hand.*

### KONTAKION FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT

To thee, the Champion Leader, do I offer thanks of victory, O Theotokos, thou who hast delivered me from terror; but as thou that hast that power invincible, O Theotokos, thou alone

can set me free: from all forms of danger free me and deliver me, that I may cry unto thee: “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom.”

- *When the Priest comes to the words “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom!” and “Alleluia,” he censes the Icon nine times, with reverence. The people repeat the refrain while the Priest censes.*

## **SECOND STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN**

### 7. OIKOS

Priest: Gloriously the Angels hymned the incarnate Presence of Christ, and the shepherds heard; and running as to a Shepherd, they beheld Him as an unspotted Lamb, being nurtured at Mary’s breast, and her they hymned and said:

- + Hail, Mother of the Lamb and of the Shepherd; Hail, fold of reason-endowed sheep.
- + Hail, bulwark against foes invisible; Hail, Opener of the Gates of Paradise.
- + Hail, for that which all the Heavens and earth Hail; Hail, for all the earth doth dance its joy together with the Heavens.
- + Hail, never-silent Voice of the Apostles; Hail, invincible courage of those who strive.
- + Hail, thou firm foundation of the faith; Hail, thou shining token of grace.
- + Hail, thou through whom Hades was laid bare; Hail, thou through whom we are clothed with glory.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

### 8. KONTAKION

Priest: High in the heavens the Magi beheld the Godward-pointing star, and they followed its rays; using it as a beacon, they sought the mighty King, and as they approached the Unapproachable, they rejoiced and cried out unto Him: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

### 9. OIKOS

Priest: In the Virgin’s hand the sons of the Chaldees saw Him Whose hand had made man; and knowing Him as Master, even though He had taken on Himself the form of a servant, they hastened with their gifts to worship, and cried out to her who is blessed:

- + Hail, Mother of the unsetting Star; Hail, terror of the mystic Day.
- + Hail, thou who quenchest the fiery furnace of error; Hail, thou who enlightenest the initiates of the Trinity.
- + Hail, thou who cast out the inhuman tyrant of old; Hail, thou who showest forth Christ the Lord Who loveth mankind.
- + Hail, thou who redeemest from barbarous superstitions; Hail, thou who rescuest us from works unclean.
- + Hail, thou who causeth the worship of fire to cease; Hail, thou who allayest the flame of suffering.

- + Hail, guide of the wisdom of the faithful; Hail, joy of all generations.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

#### 10. KONTAKION

Priest: King's messengers did the Magi become, when they returned to Babylon; they fulfilled Thy bidding and preached Thee to all as the Christ, and they left Herod as a trifler who knew not how to sing: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

#### 11. OIKOS

Priest: Lighting in Egypt the lamp of truth, Thou didst cast out the darkness of untruth; for their idols, O Savior, could not bear Thy strength, and fell down; and those of them who were set free cried out to the Theotokos:

- + Hail, thou uplifter of mankind; Hail, thou downfall of demons.
- + Hail, thou who tramplest upon the wanderings of error; Hail, thou who refutest the frauds of idols.
- + Hail, thou sea which drowned the mystic Pharaoh; Hail, Rock which refreshed those athirst for Life.
- + Hail, fiery Pillar, guiding those in darkness; Hail, Shelter of the world, broader than a cloud.
- + Hail, thou Sustenance in place of manna; Hail, minister of holy joy.
- + Hail, thou land of promise; Hail, thou from whom flow honey and milk.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

#### 12. KONTAKION

Priest: Most near his transit from this deceitful world was Simeon when Thou wast presented to him as a newborn babe, but Thou wast discerned by him as perfect God; wherefore overcome by Thine ineffable wisdom he cried out: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

## **THE CANON OF THE AKATHIST, CHANTED IN TONE FOUR**

### ODE FOUR

He Who sits in clouds of glory upon the throne of the Godhead, Jesus the Most High God, came with mighty hand and saved those who cried out unto Him: Glory to Thy Power, O Christ!

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

In hymns of faith, O all-praised one, we cry out unto thee: Hail, thou mountain fertile with the fullness of the Spirit; Hail, thou lamp of light and vase of manna, to the senses of the reverent most sweet.



*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, immaculate Lady, mercy-seat of the world; Hail, thou ladder which raised all from earth to grace; Hail, thou bridge which truly leads from death to life all who sing thy praises.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, O Immaculate One, higher than the heavens, thou who didst without pain carry within thee the Foundation of the Earth. Hail, O seashell that didst dip in thy blood the divine purple for the King of the Powers of Heaven.

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

Hail, Lady, who didst truly bear the Lawgiver that freely blotted out the transgressions of all; O Unimaginable Depth, O Height Ineffable, O Maiden Unwedded, through whom we are become divine.

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

With hymns we praise thee, O thou who didst weave for the world a crown not woven by hands, and we cry aloud: Hail, O Virgin, fortress of all mankind, and rampart, and strength, and refuge divine.

#### ODE FIVE

All creation was amazed at thy divine glory, for thou, O Unwedded Virgin, didst hold within thee the God of All, and didst bear the Eternal Son, Who rewards with salvation all who hymn thy praises.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, O all-blameless one, who didst bear the Way of Life and save the world from the deluge of sin; Hail, bride of God, thou of great report and mighty fame; Hail, thou dwelling-place of the Master of Creation.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, O Immaculate One, stronghold and fortress of mankind, and place of hallowed glory, death-knell of Hades, bridal-chamber full of light; Hail, joy of the angels; Hail, help of those who faithfully pray unto thee.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, O Lady, fiery chariot of the Word; living paradise having the Lord, the Tree of Life, in thy midst; His sweetness gives to those who partake in faith, even though they be subject to corruption.

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

Strengthened by thy might, faithfully we cry unto thee: Hail, city of the King of All, great in glory and repute, of whom all these were clearly spoken; O mount unhewn and depth beyond all measure.

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

Thou spacious tabernacle of the Word, Hail! O Immaculate One, Thou seashell which didst proffer the Divine Pearl, Hail! O All-wondrous One, Thou art the reconciliation to God, O Theotokos, of all who forever bless thee.

## ODE SIX

As we, the Godly-minded, celebrate this sacred and all-honorable feast of the Mother of God; come, let us clap our hands together and glorify the God Whom she bore.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Immaculate bridal-chamber of the Word, and aid to the sanctification of us all, Hail! O All-pure Maiden, whom the Prophets did proclaim; Hail, thou ornament of the Apostles!

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

From thee the dew distilled that quenched the flame of polytheism, wherefore we cry out unto thee, O Virgin: Hail, O Dewy Fleece which Gideon did foresee.

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

Behold, we cry out unto thee: Hail! Be thou our haven and our port when we voyage on the sea of tribulations and through the snares of the adversary.

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

O Cause of Joy, favor us with reason to cry out unto thee: Hail, thou bush that burns yet unconsumed, thou light-filled cloud which unceasingly shelters the faithful.

- *As the Kontakion is sung, the Priest comes to stand before the icon of the Theotokos in the center of the solea. The censer is kept near at hand.*

## KONTAKION FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT

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

- *When the Priest comes to the words “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom!” and “Alleluia,” he censers the Icon nine times, with reverence. The people repeat the refrain while the Priest censures.*

## **THIRD STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN**

### 13. OIKOS

Priest: New was the Creation which the Creator showed to us His creatures, when He appeared blossoming from a virgin womb; and He preserved her just as she was, in purity, so that we, beholding this marvel, might cry aloud and sing:

- + Hail, Flower of incorruption; Hail, Crown of chastity.
- + Hail, thou who flashest out the type of the Resurrection; Hail, thou who mirrorest the life of the Angels.
- + Hail, Tree of goodly fruit, from which the faithful are nourished; Hail, goodly shade-tree, beneath which many are sheltered.
- + Hail, thou who bearest the Guide of those who stray abroad; Hail, thou who engenderest the Redeemer of captives.
- + Hail, thou intercession before the Righteous Judge; Hail, thou forgiveness for many who stumble.

- + Hail, Robe of the naked of liberty; Hail, selfless love that vanquisheth all mean desires.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

#### 14. KONTAKION

Priest: Our minds are brought over into heaven when we behold this strange birth-giving, so let us be estranged from the world; for this cause indeed did the most high God appear on earth as humble man, that He might raise on high those who cry out unto Him: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

#### 15. OIKOS

Priest: Present and complete with those below, and in no wise absent from those above was the Uncircumscribed Word; for there took place indeed a divine Descent and not a simple change of place; and the Birth was from a God-chosen Virgin, who heard such words as these:

- + Hail, Resting-place of the uncontained God; Hail, Door of hallowed Mystery.
- + Hail, doubtful Rumor of the faithless; Hail, undoubted Boast of the faithful.
- + Hail, all-holy Chariot of Him Who rideth upon the Cherubim; Hail, all-excellent Chair of Him Who sitteth upon the Seraphim.
- + Hail, thou who makest things that differ to agree; Hail, thou who joinest together virginity and motherhood.
- + Hail, thou whom through transgression is annulled; Hail, thou whom through Paradise was opened.
- + Hail, Key of the Kingdom of Christ; Hail, Hope of eternal good things.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

#### 16. KONTAKION

Priest: Quires of Angels were amazed at Thy great work of Incarnation; for they saw the inaccessible God as man accessible to all, dwelling among us and hearing from us all: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

#### 17. OIKOS

Priest: Ready-voiced orators we see become voiceless as fish before thee, O Theotokos, and unable to say how thou couldst give birth and yet remain virgin; but we, marveling at this Mystery, cry out in faith:

- + Hail, Vessel of the Wisdom of God; Hail, Treasury of His foreknowledge.
- + Hail, thou who showest the learned to be fools; Hail, thou who provest logicians illogical.
- + Hail, for the subtle disputants are made fools; Hail, for the makers of myths are made to fade away.

- + Hail, thou who didst disperse the word-webs of the Athenians; Hail, thou who didst fill the nets of the fishermen.
- + Hail, thou who drawest us up from the depths of ignorance; Hail, thou who enlightenest many with knowledge.
- + Hail, Raft for those who wish to be saved; Hail, haven for those who swim in the sea of life.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

### 18. KONTAKION

Priest: Salvation for the world the Architect of all desired, and to this end by His own will He came; as God from everlasting He is our shepherd, yet as man He appeared among us for our sake, and although called like by like, still as God He hears: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

## **THE CANON OF THE AKATHIST, CHANTED IN TONE FOUR**

### ODE SEVEN

The Godly-minded children worshiped not the creature rather than the Creator, but trampling upon the threat of fire in manly fashion, they rejoiced and sang: O All-Praised Lord and God of our Fathers, blessed art Thou.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

To thee we sing a hymn and cry: Hail! Chariot of the mystic sun, true vine that did produce the ripe cluster of grapes, dripping wine to gladden the souls of those who with faith do glorify thee.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Hail, thou Bride of God, who didst bear the Healer of Mankind; the mystic staff from which blossomed the Unfading Flower; Hail, O Sovereign Lady, through whom we are filled with joy, and inherit life.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

The tongue of eloquence has not power to sing thy praises, O Sovereign Lady, for thou wast exalted above the Seraphim when thou didst bear Christ the King; do thou now implore Him to deliver from all harm those who faithfully reverence thee.

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

The ends of the earth do praise and bless thee, and cry out unto thee: Hail, pure Maiden, scroll on which the finger of God did inscribe His Word; do thou now implore Him, O Theotokos, to write down thy servants in the Book of Life.

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

We thy servants bend the knee of our hearts and implore thee, O Pure Maiden: incline thine ear and save us, who are engulfed in tribulations; and guard thy city, O Theotokos, from every assault of her enemies.

### ODE EIGHT

The three holy children in the furnace the Child of the Theotokos saved; then was the type, now is its fulfillment, and the whole world gathers to sing: All ye works, praise the Lord, and magnify Him unto all ages.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Thou didst receive the Word within thee, O Pure Maiden, and didst bear Him Who beareth all things; thou didst nourish Him with milk, Who by His nod dost sustain all the universe; to Him we sing: All ye works, praise the Lord, and magnify Him unto all ages.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Moses perceived in the burning bush the great mystery of thy birth-giving, O Chaste and Holy Virgin; the children prefigured this most clearly when they stood in the midst of the flame and were unburned; wherefore we praise thee unto all ages.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

We, who of old were made naked by deceit, have been clothed in a garment of incorruption by thy conception; and we who were sitting in the darkness of transgressions have come to see the light, O Maiden who art the dwelling-place of Light: wherefore we praise thee unto all ages.

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

Through thee the dead are made to live, for thou didst bear the Life Essential; those who before were speechless now find useful eloquence, lepers are cleansed, diseases are driven away, and the multitude of aerial spirits are vanquished, O Virgin, salvation of mortals.

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

We Hail thee, O all-blessed one, who didst bring forth Salvation for the world, through which we have been raised from earth to heights above; O Pure Maiden, thou art shelter and stronghold, bulwark and fortress of all who sing: All ye works, praise the Lord, and magnify Him unto all ages.

### ODE NINE

Let all earth-born mortals rejoice in spirit, bearing their lamps, and let the nature of bodiless minds celebrate with honor the holy festival of the Mother of God, and cry out: Hail, all-blessed, pure and ever-virgin Theotokos!

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Through thee, O Maiden, have we faithful become partakers of joy, so that we may further cry out unto thee: Hail! Do thou deliver us from perpetual temptation, from barbaric attack, and from all the multitude of evils which we mortals suffer for the number of our sins.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Thou hast appeared to enlighten us and be our confirmation, wherefore we cry aloud to thee: Hail, O unsetting star which didst introduce into the world the mighty Sun; Hail, pure maiden, who didst open up fast-closed Eden; Hail, fiery pillar, which doth lead man's nature to the life above.

*Most Holy Theotokos, save us!*

Let us stand with reverence in the house of our God, and let us cry aloud: Hail, mistress of the world; Hail, Mary, Lady of us all; Hail, thou who alone art blameless among women, and beautiful; Hail, O Vessel, which didst receive into thyself the myrrh which was never before outpoured.

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

Hail, O Ever-virgin, thou Dove who didst bring forth Him Who is merciful. Hail, boast of all the righteous saints and crown of those who strive. Hail, Ornament Divine of all the just, and of us the faithful, our salvation as well.

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

Spare, O God, Thine inheritance, and overlook now all our sins. For as intercessor in Thy sight, O Christ, there stands before Thee she that on earth conceived Thee without seed, when in Thy Great Mercy Thou hast willed to be shaped in a form that was not Thine own.

- *As the Kontakion is sung, the Priest comes to stand before an icon of the Theotokos, placed on a support of suitable height in the center of the solea. The censer is kept near at hand.*

#### KONTAKION FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT

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

- *When the Priest comes to the words “Hail, O Bride without Bridegroom!” and “Alleluia,” he censures the Icon nine times, with reverence. The people repeat the refrain while the Priest censures.*

### **FOURTH STASIS OF THE AKATHIST HYMN**

#### 19. OIKOS

Priest: Thou, O Virgin Theotokos, art a protecting wall to virgins and to all who run to thee; for the Maker of Heaven and earth prepared thee, O Pure Maiden, and dwelt in thy womb, and taught all to sing out unto thee:

- + Hail, pillar of virginity; Hail, gate of salvation.
- + Hail, source of spiritual reformation; Hail, leader of divine goodness.
- + Hail, for thou didst regenerate those conceived in sin; Hail, for thou didst remind those who were mindless.
- + Hail, thou who didst annul the corruption of hearts; Hail, thou who didst bear the Sower of Chastity.
- + Hail, bridal chamber of a virgin marriage; Hail, thou who joinest the faithful to the Lord.
- + Hail, fair nursing-mother of virgins; Hail, bridesmaid of holy souls.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censures the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

## 20. KONTAKION

Priest: Unworthy is every hymn that seeks to encompass the multitude of Thy many mercies; for if we should offer to Thee hymns of praise as numberless as the sands, O Holy King, we should still have done nothing worthy of that which Thou hast given to us who cry out unto Thee: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

## 21. OIKOS

Priest: Verily we behold the holy Virgin as a light-giving beacon, shining for those in darkness: for by kindling the supernal Light, she guides us all to divine knowledge; illumining our minds with radiance, she is honored by this our cry:

- + Hail, ray of the living Sun; Hail, flash of unfading splendor.
- + Hail, lightning-flash, shining upon our souls; Hail, thou who dost as thunder strike down our enemies.
- + Hail, for thou didst cause the many-starred light to dawn; Hail, for thou didst cause the richly-flowing river to gush forth.
- + Hail, thou who didst from life describe the type of the baptismal font; Hail, thou who didst take away the stain of sin.
- + Hail, laver that dost purify conscience; Hail, mixing bowl for the mingling of joy.
- + Hail, fragrance of the sweetness of Christ; Hail, life of mystic festival.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

## 22. KONTAKION

Priest: When He Who pays the ancient debts of all men was minded to give grace, He came of His own will to dwell among those who had departed from His grace; and when He tore asunder the written charge against them. He heard from all in this wise: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

## 23. OIKOS

Priest: Yet while we sing to Him Whom thou didst bear, we all hymn thee, O Theotokos, as a living temple; for the Lord, Who holds all things in His hand, by dwelling within thee, hallowed and glorified thee, and taught all to cry out unto thee:

- + Hail, tabernacle of God, and of the Word; Hail, holiest of all the holy ones.
- + Hail, ark made golden by the Spirit; Hail, inexhaustible treasury of life.
- + Hail, precious diadem of pious rulers; Hail, venerable boast of reverent priests.
- + Hail, steady tower of the Church; Hail, impregnable wall of the realm.
- + Hail, thou through whom trophies are set up; Hail, thou through whom enemies are cast down.
- + Hail, healing of my body; Hail, salvation of my soul.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom.

## 24. KONTAKION

Priest: Zealously art thou praised, O Mother who didst bear the most holy Word of all the Saints; when thou receivest this present offering, deliver us from every calamity, and deliver from all wrath to come those who cry out unto thee: Alleluia! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Alleluia.

### 1. OIKOS

Priest: An angel chieftain was sent from heaven to say “Hail!” unto the Theotokos. (THRICE) ... And beholding Thee, O Lord, taking bodily form, he stood rapt in wonder, and with bodiless voice cried aloud to her in this wise:

- + Hail, thou, through whom joy shall shine forth; Hail, thou, through whom the curse shall be destroyed.
- + Hail, thou restoration of fallen Adam; Hail, thou, redemption of the tears of Eve.
- + Hail, thou height untrodden by human minds; Hail, thou depth hard to scan, even for angels’ eyes.
- + Hail, thou that art a kingly throne; Hail, thou that holdest the Upholder of all.
- + Hail, thou star that showed the Sun; Hail, womb of the Divine Incarnation.
- + Hail, thou through whom Creation is renewed; Hail, thou through whom the Creator becomes a babe.
- + Hail, O Bride without bridegroom! (*The priest censes the icon.*)

Choir: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

### KONTAKION FOR THE ANNUNCIATION IN TONE EIGHT

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

- *The Priest stands before the Holy Doors, facing east.*

### THE TRISAGION PRAYERS

People: Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. (THRICE)  
*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

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

Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

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

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.



Priest: 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.

Choir: Amen.

APOLYTIKION (ORIGINAL KONTAKION) OF AKATHIST SATURDAY (Plain Reading)

With mystic apprehension of the divine commandment, the bodiless angel quickly appeared in the dwelling-place of Joseph and said to the unwed Virgin: Lo, He Who in His Descent did bow the Heavens is housed unchanged and whole in thee; as I behold Him in thy womb taking on the form of a servant, I marvel and I cry unto thee: Hail, O Bride without bridegroom!

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (40 times)

Reader: O Christ our God, Who art worshipped and glorified at all times at every hour both in heaven and on earth; Who art long-suffering and plenteous in mercy and compassion; Who lovest the just man and showest mercy upon the sinner; and Who callest all men to repentance through the promise of blessings to come; receive, O Lord, at this very hour our supplications, and direct our lives in the way of Thy commandments: sanctify our souls, purify our bodies, set our minds aright, cleanse our thoughts; deliver us from all affliction, trouble, and distress; compass us about with Thy holy angels, that, guided and guarded by them, we may attain unto the unity of the Faith, and to the knowledge of Thine unapproachable glory; for Thou art blessed unto ages of ages. Amen.

Choir: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)  
*Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.*

Choir: More honorable than the Cherubim, and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim. Thou who without corruption bearest God the Word; and art truly Theotokos: we magnify thee.

Choir: Bless, Father, in the Name of the Lord.

Priest: May God be merciful unto us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, and be merciful unto us.

Choir: Amen.  
Lord, have mercy. (*Twelve Times*)  
Most-holy Theotokos, save us.

PRAYER OF PAUL THE CENOBIOTE TO THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS

• *This can be read by the Priest or Reader in front of the icon of the Virgin on the Iconostasis.*  
O Lady, Bride of God, spotless, blameless, pure and immaculate Virgin, thou who without corruption, by thy glorious birth-giving, has united God the Word to man and joined the fallen nature of our race to heavenly things; who alone art the hope of the hopeless, the help of those who do battle; the ready help of those who flee unto thee and the refuge of all Christians: Despise me not, an accursed sinner, though I have rendered myself unworthy by my shameful thoughts, words and deeds, and through indolence have become a slave to the pleasures of life;

but as the Mother of God, who lovest mankind, mercifully have compassion upon me, a sinner and a prodigal, and receive my prayer, though it be offered unto thee by unworthy lips; and using Thy boldness as a mother, importune Thy Son, our Lord and Master, that He may open to me also the tender compassions of His goodness so as to overlook my numberless transgressions and turn me to repentance and show me forth as a zealous doer of His commandments. And because thou art merciful, compassionate and benevolent, be thou ever near me in this present life as an ardent help and protection, defending me from the assaults of adversaries and leading me to salvation. And at the time of my departure from this life, care for my miserable soul, and drive far from it the dark visions of evil demons; and in the fearful Day of Judgment, deliver me from eternal punishment, and present me as an inheritor of the ineffable glory of Thy Son, our God. May this be my lot, O Lady, most holy Theotokos, through thy mediation and help, through the grace and love toward mankind of thine only-begotten Son, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, Jesus Christ, to Whom are due all glory, honor and worship, with his unoriginate Father, and His All-Holy, and good, and life-giving Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

#### PRAYER OF THE MONK ANTIOCHUS TO OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

- *This can be read by the Priest or Reader in front of the icon of Christ on the Iconostasis.*  
And grant unto us, O Master, when we depart to sleep, repose of body and soul; and protect us from the murky sleep of sin and from all the dark pleasures of the night. Calm the impulses of passions, and quench the fiery darts of evil which are craftily thrown against us; check the turbulence of our flesh, and still all earthly and material thoughts. And grant us, O God, a prudent reason, a vigilant heart, a tranquil sleep free from all the fantasies of Satan. Raise us up again at the time of prayer strengthened in Thy commandments, holding steadfastly within us the remembrance of Thy judgments. Grant us grace to glorify Thee all through the night that we may praise, and bless, and glorify Thine all-honorable and majestic Name, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages.

Reader: Amen.

- *The first person then says:*  
O most glorious, ever-virgin and blessed Theotokos, present our prayer to thy Son our God, and intercede with Him that through thee he may save our souls.

- *The second person then says:*  
The Father is my Hope; the Son is my Refuge; the Holy Spirit is my Protection. O Holy Trinity: Glory to Thee.

- *The first person then says:*  
In thee, O Mother of God, I place all my hope; keep me under thy protection.

#### PRAYER TO OUR GUARDIAN ANGEL

Priest: O holy Angel who accompanieth my wretched soul and lowly life, forsake me not, and depart not from me because of my extravagance and wickedness. Give not access to the evil demon to rule with his might this mortal body of mine, but hold me by my wretched, feeble

hand; lead me in the path of salvation. Yea, O holy Angel of God, guardian and protector of my wretched soul and body, forgive me all wherewith I have heretofore saddened thee all the days of my life. And though this day I have sinned, be thou my shelter this night. Keep me from all the wiles of the enemy, that I may not anger God with any sin. Intercede with the Lord for me, that He may confirm me in His fear and show me forth as a worthy servant of His goodness.

Reader: Amen.

- *Standing on the solea, and facing the icon of Christ on the iconostasis, the Priest says:*

#### THE DISMISSAL

Priest: Glory to Thee, O Christ our God and our hope, glory to Thee.

Choir: Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen. Lord, have mercy (*thrice*). Father, bless.

- *Facing the congregation, the Priest says:*

Priest: May Christ our true God, through the intercessions of His all-immaculate and all-blameless holy Mother; at the supplication of the holy, glorious and right-victorious Martyrs; of our venerable and God-bearing Fathers; *of Saint N., the patron and protector of this holy community*; of the holy and righteous ancestors of God, Joachim and Anna; and of all the saints: have mercy on us and save us, forasmuch as He is good and loveth mankind.

Choir: Amen.

- *Standing before the Holy Doors, facing east, the priest makes three metanias, saying each time.*

Priest: O God, be gracious unto me, a sinner, and have mercy on me.

- *The priest turns west and bows to the people, saying:*

Priest: Forgive me, a sinner.

People: God forgive thee, holy father.

Priest: Let us pray for the peace of the world.

Reader: Lord, have mercy. (*after each petition until noted*)

Priest: And for pious and Orthodox Christians.

Priest: And for our Father and Metropolitan N., (for our Archbishop N. or Bishop N.), and for all our Brotherhood in Christ.

Priest: And for the civil authorities of this land.

Priest: And for the welfare of our armed forces.

Priest: And for our fathers and brethren absent from among us.

Priest: And for those who hate us, and those who love us.

Priest: And for those who are kind to us and minister unto us.

Priest: And for those who have requested our prayers, unworthy though we be.

Priest: And for the deliverance of captives.  
Priest: And for travelers by land, sea and air.  
Priest: And for those who lie in sickness.  
Priest: And let us pray also for the abundance of the fruits of the earth.  
Priest: And for the soul of every Orthodox Christian.  
Priest: Let us bless God-fearing leaders, Orthodox bishops, the founders of this holy church and our parents and teachers, and all our fathers and brethren gone before us, the Orthodox who here and everywhere lie asleep in the Lord.  
Priest: And let us say also for ourselves.  
Reader: Lord, have mercy. (THRICE)

- *The faithful now come forward to venerate the icon of the Theotokos and receive a blessing from the priest. The choir sings the following Troparion and the reader may also recite the Synaxarion.*

#### TROPARION IN TONE THREE

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

#### THE SYNAXARION (Plain Reading)

On the fifth Saturday of the Great Fast, we celebrate the praise of our Most-holy Lady, the Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary, during which “it is not permitted to sit.”

#### *Verses*

The city in thanksgiving and watchfulness doth praise  
Her who upholdeth and constantly watcheth in wartime, giving the victory.

In 626, when the Emperor Heraclius of Constantinople was away with the majority of his army fighting the Persians, the Khan sent forces to attack the Imperial City by land and by sea. Patriarch Sergius urged the people not to lose heart, but to trust in God. They made a procession around the city with the Cross of the Lord, the robe of the Virgin, the Icon of the Savior “not made by hands,” and the Hodigitria (“She who shows the Way”) Icon of the Mother of God. The Patriarch dipped the Virgin’s robe in the sea, and the city’s defenders beat back the Khan’s forces. The sea became very rough and many boats sank. The invaders retreated and the people of Constantinople gave thanks to God and to His Most-pure Mother. On two other occasions, in 673 and on the eve of the Annunciation in 718, the Theotokos saved the city and destroyed the Saracen invaders. On the latter occasion, the hymn “To thee, the Champion Leader” was composed, most likely by Saint Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople. A feast day dedicated to the Laudation of the Virgin was established to commemorate these victories, although the Akathist Service to the Mother of God was already in use for the Feast of the Annunciation,

together with the hymn “With mystic apprehension.” Use of this Akathist has spread from Constantinople to other Orthodox lands where it holds prominence and honor.

The icon before which this Akathist was sung was given to the Dionysiou Monastery on Mount Athos by Emperor Alexius Comnenos. There, it began to flow with myrrh. This icon shows the Mother of God seated on a throne, surrounded by the Prophets, holding scrolls, who foretold of the Annunciation and the Incarnation of our Lord. Most authorities agree that this Akathist Hymn is the work of Saint Romanos the Melodist (Oct. 1) in the sixth century. He was born in Homs, Syria and served as a deacon in Beirut, Lebanon before going to Constantinople. Scholars consider this Akathist one of the greatest achievements in ecclesiastical poetry. Orthodox Christians cherish it as one of the most beloved hymns of praise to the Theotokos.

Wherefore, through the intercessions of thy combating Mother who combateth not, O Christ God, deliver us from all afflictions that encompass us, and have mercy upon us, for Thou alone art the Lover of mankind. Amen.

• *After all have passed, the Priest faces the icon of Christ and says:*

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

Choir: Amen.

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