

The Salutations to the Theotokos

Katavasia (Canon): “My Mouth I Shall Open Up”
from the Akathist Service

Translated so that it will work with any Greek version melodies.

English Translation by N. Takis

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Ode One

1. 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.
2. 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 hath confirmed thee, who takest away the curse wrought by the Mother, Eve.
3. Rejoice, Virgin Bride of God, the restoration of Adam’s fall. To Hades thou bringest death, all-blameless Maiden. Rejoice, for our only God hath made of thee his palace. Rejoice, the Almighty One maketh thee His fiery Throne.
4. 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 hath found thee to be pleasing. Rejoice, never-wedded Bride, Ransom of all the world.
5. 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 Three

1. 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 worthy of glory's crowns.

2. From thee, who art untilled Land, hath 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.

3. 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.

4. O Daybreak most radiant, rejoice! Thou alone gavest birth to Christ the Sun! Rejoice, for in thee dwells the Light that hath dispelled the gloom of night, and banished to oblivion the darkened ranks of demonic hosts.

5. Rejoice, for thou art the only Gate through which none but the Word of God hath passed. Rejoice, thou art the Holy Entrance of the Saved, and ever-praised, for thou hast by thy giving birth torn down the gates and the bars of hell.

Ode Four

1. Jesus, God above all others, hath appeared on a cloud of light in His holy glory, seated on a throne of divinity. And He hath given salvation by His spotless hands to those crying to Him: Glory, O Christ, to thy mighty pow'r!
2. 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 hath delight for all righteous men.
3. Mercy-Seat of all creation, Purest Maiden, art thou: Rejoice! Ladder, which hath raised up everything on earth by thy grace: Rejoice! Thou art the Bridge that hath truly led the way from death into Life for all who sing thy praises in hymns. Rejoice!
4. 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 colored in thy virgin blood the divine crimson robe worn by the King of angelic pow'rs.
5. 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.
6. 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 Five

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. Rejoice, Maiden, for the fiery chariot of the Word art thou! In thee hath 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, tho' corruption has held them fast.
5. 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.
6. Rejoice, Purest Maiden, spacious Tabernacle of the Word; Seashell that hath brought forth the Divine Pearl! O Theotokos, most wondrous miracle who truly hast reconciled with God all of those who call thee blest at all times and in ev'ry age.

Ode Six

1. Ye godly minded, come clap your hands, and join in celebration of this most honored, sacred festival, and let the Mother of God be praised, and let us sing the glory of God who is her Son.
2. 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.
3. From thee hath 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.
4. We cry Rejoice, calling out to thee to be a port and haven for all who sail upon the stormy sea, engulfed by sorrows and stumbling blocks and by deceits unnumbered the enemy hath set.
5. 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.

Ode Seven

1. 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."

2. 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 beareth fruit: clusters of ripened grapes flowing sweet with wine and making glad the souls of those who in faith sing out thy glory.

3. From thee, Bride of God, the Healer of mankind is born. Rejoice, O mystic Rod: from thee the never-fading Rose hath 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."

4. All the tongues of men cannot acclaim thee worthily, Our 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.

5. 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.

6. 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, Theotokos, guard thy City from all foes that assault her.

Ode Eight

1. 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 hath 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.

2. 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 doth feed 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.

3. 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 exalt thee greatly from ages to all ages.

4. 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.

5. Through thee, are the dead brought back to life, for from thee hath 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!

6. 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.

Ode Nine

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

2. 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.

3. 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 hath given forth the greatest Sun of all. Fiery Pillar leading us to life above, who reopened the Gates into Paradise.

4. 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 hath been emptied into thee, and so we cry out Rejoice! Our Lady, Purest and most beautiful among women art thou who hath known no sin.

5. Gentle Dove, rejoice, for God the Compassionate hath 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!

6. Overlook our sins! Forgive thine inheritance, O God, and heed the prayer of her who hath without seed on earth conceived Thee. She hath 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.