

**Akathist Hymn
To The Righteous Joseph,
The Betrothed of the All-holy Virgin Mary¹**

Commemorated on the Sunday following the Nativity of Christ

Kontakion I

O righteous Joseph, chosen protector of the most holy Virgin Mary, instructor and nurturer of the God-man! Glorifying thy service to the ineffable mystery of the incarnation of God the Word, we dedicate hymns of praise to thee. Standing now before the throne of Christ our God, and possessed of great boldness before Him, pray for us who cry out thee:

Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!

Ikos I

Preserving the mystery of the birth of God the Word by the all-immaculate Virgin, which is incomprehensible even to the angels, from the slander of men and the wiles of the devil, God chose thee, O righteous Joseph, a lowly carpenter, to be protector and witness to the virginity of the all-holy Mary. Wherefore, glorifying thee as a chosen initiate of the mysteries of God, we cry to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, honored scion of the root of Jesse!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast adorned within with royal majesty!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who by lack of earthly things didst acquire spiritual wealth!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who through obscurity didst obtain everlasting glory!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who art far more glorious than kings!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who art more righteous than the patriarchs and forefathers!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion II

Beholding the Virgin Mary, who had grown to maturity in the Temple, Zachariah the High Priest cried out to the Lord: "Show forth a man worthy to be betrothed to the Virgin, O Lord!" And when the rod of Joseph blossomed forth, committing the Virgin to him, he cried aloud to God: Alleluia!

¹ *Translated from the Church Slavonic by the reader Isaac E. Lambertsen, from **Akathist Hymn to the Holy & Righteous Joseph, the Betrothed of the All-holy Virgin Mary** (St. Petersburg: Synodal Press, 1871), pp. 3-38. Revised translation copyright © 2013. All rights reserved by the translator.*

Ikos II

Thy righteousness is known to all the ends of the earth, O holy Joseph, for thou wast vouchsafed the incomparable honor to be the betrothed of the most blessed Virgin, from whom Christ God came forth without the aid of man; for thou wast chosen for this because of thy steadfast faith, purity, humility and excellence in all the virtues. Wherefore, we cry to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, O righteous one, betrothed of the most pure one!
- ❖ Rejoice, O man of faith, who didst take under thy roof the holy Virgin Mary who, through faith, was made the throne of God!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast humble of spirit!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast simple of heart!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast adorned exceedingly with the virtues!
- ❖ Rejoice, O holy one who didst minister unto the most holy!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion III

At that time the power of the Most High overshadowed her who knew not wedlock, so that she conceived; but Joseph knew not the wondrous mystery, that when he was instructed by God Himself, he would cry out to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos III

Beholding the Virgin whose womb contained God, Joseph was troubled, knowing that she was not wed and suspecting that she had indulged in illicit love. And as he was a just man, he wished to put her away secretly, leaving the judgment unto Him Who knoweth all things and Who hath taught us to cry to Him:

- ❖ Rejoice, zealot of chastity!
- ❖ Rejoice, O Israelite, in whom there is no guile!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who art good of heart!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who art meek of demeanor!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst place all thy trust in God!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who dost entrust thyself and others to His providence!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion IV

Stilling the tempest of the chaste Joseph's doubting thoughts, the angel disclosed to him the mystery of the birth of the Son of God, the Savior of the world, from the unwed Mary; for he said: "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." And to Him do we all cry: Alleluia!

Ikos IV

Having heard in the Scriptures of the Lord Who said: "Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, Emmanuel," thou didst believe what was told thee by the angel, O righteous Joseph; and thou didst take Mary into thine own house like a sealed book, wherein the Word was inscribed by the finger of the Father, and like a servant didst wait upon her with awe and zeal. Wherefore, we cry to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, for thou didst set thy heart to understand the law of God!
- ❖ Rejoice, for thou didst open thy mind to receive the mysteries of God!
- ❖ Rejoice, for ahead of all men thou wast vouchsafed to know the great mystery of piety: that God hath appeared upon earth!
- ❖ Rejoice, for thou didst perceive His coming to be for the salvation of men from their sins!
- ❖ Rejoice, for without doubting thou didst believe what was revealed to thee!
- ❖ Rejoice, for thy faith was accounted unto thee as righteousness!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion V

Taking the divinely chosen maiden into thy home, O blessed Joseph, thou didst love her as thy betrothed, didst honor her as the most holy Virgin and Mother of the Savior of the world, and didst minister unto her with awe and reverence, striving with all thy soul to keep all that was written in the Law and the prophets; and with Mary thou didst cry out to God: Alleluia!

Ikos V

Beholding in the manger of Bethlehem the Star that shone forth from Jacob, thou wast first to adore the Newborn; and when heaven offered Him a star, the angels hymnody, the shepherds their witness and the Magi worship and gifts, thou, O righteous Joseph didst offer thy whole self as a gift to the Lord, dedicating thy life, care and labors to His service. Wherefore, we cry to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, thou who before all others didst behold the descent to earth of the never-setting Sun of righteousness!
- ❖ Rejoice, first witness and servant on earth of the incarnate Son of God, Who was begotten of the Father before the ages!
- ❖ Rejoice, earthly carpenter who wast vouchsafed to be called the father of the heavenly Architect!
- ❖ Rejoice, protector and guardian of the Infant Whom the ranks of angels serve with fear!
- ❖ Rejoice, reverent servant of the Mother of God the Word!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion VI

Him Who was foretold by the law and the prophets didst thou circumcise as a male child on the eighth day; and thou gavest Him the name Jesus, which was preserved in the Counsel of the Trinity, like a precious pearl brought forth from the treasuries of heaven for revelation to all peoples, O Joseph; whereby having astonished the angels, gladdened men, terrified the demons and rendered the whole world fragrant as with sweet-smelling myrrh, thou didst cry out to God: Alleluia!

Ikos VI

He Who in the Infant Jesus shone forth upon thee, as prophesied by Symeon, the light of revelation to the gentiles and the glory of the people Israel, was straightway covered by a cloud of tribulation, O righteous Joseph; for the nation was in turmoil, Herod raged, seeking the life of the Infant, and it was foretold that a sword would pierce the heart of His Mother, that thy faith and patience might be revealed to all. Wherefore, we cry to thee as to one steadfast in patience and unshaken in faith:

- ❖ Rejoice, for like gold in the crucible wast thou continually purified by trials!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast humble in joy and forbearing amid sorrows!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast ever faithful to the mysteries entrusted to thee!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast guided by faith as by a star in the dark ways of life!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst trust in God as an anchor amid the tempest of life's voyage!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion VII

Desiring to save from the malice of Herod Him Who had come to save the world, O wondrous Joseph, thou didst not question the angel who commanded thee to flee into Egypt, saying: "Could He Who saveth others not save Himself?" But being a man of faith, like a new Abraham, ever ready for obedience, giving no thought to the rigors of the journey, nor considering the time of return, thou didst straightway betake thyself to Egypt with Mary and the Babe, joyously crying out to God: Alleluia!

Ikos VII

In Egypt thou wast shown to be a new Joseph, greater than the patriarch of old who saved the people of Egypt from famine; for thou didst save from death the Savior of the world, and didst offer unto the people of Egypt, who were starving

amid the famine of godlessness, the Bread of Life; and thou didst sow the seed of eternal life, whence a wondrous harvest sprang forth in the deserts of Egypt. Therefore, we cry to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, thou who with joy didst endure sorrows and labors for Christ's sake along the way!
- ❖ Rejoice, guardian of the Infant Jesus, Who once guided Israel in the wilderness with a pillar of fire and of cloud!
- ❖ Rejoice, nourisher of Him Who fed His people with manna!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst bear in thine arms the Creator and Sustainer of all creation!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou that didst save from the malice of Herod Him Who once saved the people of God from bitter bondage to Pharaoh!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst show forth for Egypt the grace of adoption instead of slavery!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion VIII

Having beheld the awesome wonder: that in Jesus, God was born in the flesh, as was foretold, and laid in a manger as a babe; the Virgin Mother; the angels giving glory and the circumcision; the coming of the Magi from the East to worship Him with gifts; the flight from Herod's madness into Egypt; the salvation of all men and the Light of the gentiles; and the sword that pierced the heart of her who gave Him birth, as Symeon said, thou didst recognize Him as true God and true man, and didst therefore cry to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos VIII

Having dedicated thyself entirely to God Who called forth His Son out of Egypt by His angel, thou didst follow His command and madest thine abode with Jesus and His Mother in Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophet concerning Him might be fulfilled: "He shall be called a Nazarene." Wherefore, we cry out to thee as a faithful servant of God:

- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst work in harmony with the will of God!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst take part in the divine economy!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who dost ever converse with the angels!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who on earth wast dedicated to the profundity of the mysteries of heaven!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst hearken to the prophets' prophecies concerning Jesus!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst reverently keep all these in the depths of thine heart!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion IX

Every generation of heaven, earth and the nethermost parts of the earth, doth bow down at the name of Jesus; and to thee, O wondrous Joseph, was the Child Jesus obedient as to His father. Wherefore, marveling at the Lord's great condescension toward thee, we cry out to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos IX

The most eloquent of orators are at a loss how to praise thee fittingly, O righteous Joseph. The Mother of God, the Queen of Heaven and earth, called thee her lord; the incarnate Son of God called thee father, and thy home on earth was a habitation of heavenly sanctity, for therein dwelt the King of heaven and earth. Wherefore, we humbly cry out to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, chosen of God, who preserved the tabernacle of heavenly sanctity!
- ❖ Rejoice, wondrous carpenter, in whose home the Creator of heaven and earth made His abode!
- ❖ Rejoice, nourisher and guardian of the Child Jesus, Who, as God, doth bestow existence upon all creatures and taketh thought for all the world, visible and invisible!
- ❖ Rejoice, for on earth thou wast vouchsafed to behold the Son of God face to face, to hold Him in thine arms, and to kiss Him!
- ❖ Rejoice, for even after thy departure unto the heavenly mansions thou dost continually bless the King of glory and glorify Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in the light of His countenance!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion X

Thou art able save all who have recourse to thine intercession and aid, O blessed Joseph. For how can He Who was subject to thee in all things on earth not hearken to thee in all things as thou now standest before Him in heaven, crying aloud with the angelic choirs: Alleluia?

Ikos X

Thou art a mighty rampart for all who have recourse to thine intercession, O righteous Joseph; wherefore, disdain us not who flee to thine assistance, and who, amid storms of the temptations, misfortunes and the sorrows of life, cry aloud to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, our ready helper amid perils and want!
- ❖ Rejoice, mighty intercessor for us before God!
- ❖ Rejoice, our steadfast hope amid the tempest of turmoil and doubt!

- ❖ Rejoice, speedy deliverance from the slanders of men!
- ❖ Rejoice, nourisher of Him Who sustaineth all by the word of His power!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who dost deliver us from spiritual famine and from every tribulation!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion XI

A most compunctionate hymn do we offer unto thee, O divinely wise Joseph; and we entreat thee: as thou didst keep the Lord Christ Himself from all harm and affliction, so by thy mediation before Him do thou preserve His Holy Orthodox Church from every assault by enemies, visible and invisible, and protect our native land from all sedition, that, leading a peaceful and tranquil life, we may cry out to God: Alleluia!

Ikos XI

In the Temple thou didst behold the twelve-year old Child Jesus, the light-bestowing Lamp that hath appeared to those in the darkness of ignorance, granting the light of true knowledge unto the teachers of the law of God, and revealing the mystery of His great ministry in accordance with the design of the heavenly Father. Wherefore, we cry to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, faithful keeper of the law of thy fathers!
- ❖ Rejoice, for, being zealous in keeping the law, thou didst also lead the Child Jesus to the house of the heavenly Father!
- ❖ Rejoice, for when the Child Jesus remained in Jerusalem, like father thou didst grieve with His Mother, thinking that He was with friends!
- ❖ Rejoice, for thou didst seek Him amongst friends and relatives and, not finding Him, didst return to Jerusalem where, after three days, thou didst discover Him in the temple, sitting amongst the teachers, listening to them and questioning them!
- ❖ Rejoice, for thou didst hear the revelation of mysteries when the Child Jesus said: "Knew ye not that I must be about My Father's business?"
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst behold and wast witness that Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion XII

Seeing the Child Jesus increase in favor with God and man, and in stature of body and wisdom, thou didst lay up all these things in thy heart, like a faithful servant keeping secret the Treasure entrusted to him, until the day when all believers began to cry to Him as God and Savior of the world: Alleluia!

Ikos XII

Hymning thy labors and struggles, we also glorify thy blessed repose; for in the arms of God the Word and His Mother thou didst sweetly rest from thy labors, O righteous Joseph, having undoubting belief in blessed eternity. Wherefore, we cry out to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast faithful in a great task!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast therefore accounted worthy of the greatest honor by God!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who on earth wast wed to the glory and adornment of Heaven!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast permitted to depart in peace unto the age to come by the Father of the age to come!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst proclaim the great joy to David!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who didst bear to all in hades the tidings that Christ was come to free and save the human race!
- ❖ **Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!**

Kontakion XIII

O holy and righteous Joseph! Accept this, our meager supplication, and through thy mighty mediation before Christ God entreat Him to make us by His grace firm and steadfast in the Orthodox Faith, zealous and undaunted in the keeping of His commandments, and that He grant all that is profitable for our temporal and eternal life to us who cry to Him: Alleluia!

This Kontakion is recited thrice, whereupon Ikos I and Kontakion I are repeated.

Ikos I

Preserving the mystery of the birth of God the Word by the all-immaculate Virgin, which is incomprehensible even to the angels, from the slander of men and the wiles of the devil, God chose thee, O righteous Joseph, a lowly carpenter, to be protector and witness to the virginity of the all-holy Mary. Wherefore, glorifying thee as a chosen initiate of the mysteries of God, we cry to thee:

- ❖ Rejoice, honored scion of the root of Jesse!
- ❖ Rejoice, thou who wast adorned within with royal majesty!
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Kontakion I

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Rejoice, O righteous Joseph, ready helper and intercessor for our souls!

Prayer to the Holy and Righteous Joseph, The Betrothed of the All-holy Theotokos

O holy and righteous Joseph! While yet on earth thou didst have boldness before the Son of God Who was well pleased to call thee His father, in that thou wast the betrothed of His Mother, and to be obedient unto thee. We believe that as thou dwellest now in the heavenly mansions with the choirs of the righteous, thou art hearkened to in all that thou dost request of our God and Savior. Wherefore, fleeing to thy protection and defense, we beg and humbly entreat thee: as thou thyself wast delivered from a storm of doubting thoughts, so also deliver us who are tempest-tossed by the waves of confusion and passions; as thou didst shield the all-immaculate Virgin from the slanders of men, so shield us from all virulent calumny; as thou didst keep the incarnate Lord from all harm and affliction, so also with thy defense preserve His Orthodox Church and all of us from all tribulation and harm. Thou knowest, O saint of God, that even the Son of God had bodily needs in the days of His incarnation, and thou didst attend unto them; wherefore, we beseech thee: tend thou to our temporal needs through thine intercession, granting us every good thing which is needful in this life. Especially do we entreat thee to intercede that we may receive remission of our sins from Him Who was called thy Son, the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we may be worthy to inherit the kingdom of heaven, that, abiding with thee in the heavenly mansions, we may ever glorify the One God in three Persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit—now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.