

The Akathist Hymn to the Most-holy Theotokos

Among the thousands of hymns attributed to St. Romanus, the Melodist of Constantinople, the AKATHIST was without doubt the most successful. Composed for liturgical use, c. 530, it must have entered at once into the life of monasteries and convents; at least of some of them.

On August 7, 626, after the great liberation of Constantinople, Patriarch Sergius chose it as a Hymn of Thanksgiving to the Mother of God, the Theotokos, adding the prelude in which is an allusion to Mary's part in the remarkable victory. This fact indicates that Romanus's Hymn was already considered the most beautiful of all hymns existing in the Greek Liturgy in honor of the Blessed Virgin, the Mother of God. It was moreover precisely on this occasion that Romanus's Hymn, composed for the feast of the Annunciation, became the AKATHIST, it was sung "standing" by the clergy and the faithful.

After a second miraculous liberation of Constantinople in 717-718, Romanus's Hymn, already the AKATHIST, was again chosen by the Patriarch St. Germanus of Constantinople, the founder of the Feast of the AKATHIST, on the Saturday of the 5th week in Lent.

In the eighth century a beautiful "Canon" composed of nine odes was added to Romanus's Hymn.

According to the Orthodox Liturgical practice, the service is often served partially the Friday evenings of Great Lent. On the Fifth Friday of Great Lent, it is served in its entirety.

Akathist Hymn – Ikos 1

An archangel was sent from Heaven to say to the Theotokos: Rejoice! And beholding Thee, O Lord, taking bodily form, he was amazed and with his bodiless voice he stood crying to Her such things as these:

Rejoice, Thou through whom joy will shine forth:

Rejoice, Thou through whom the curse will cease!

Rejoice, recall of fallen Adam: Rejoice, redemption of the tears of Eve!

Rejoice, height inaccessible to human thoughts:

Rejoice, depth undiscernible even for the eyes of angels!

Rejoice, for Thou art the throne of the King:

Rejoice, for Thou bearest Him Who beareth all!

Rejoice, star that causeth the Sun to appear:

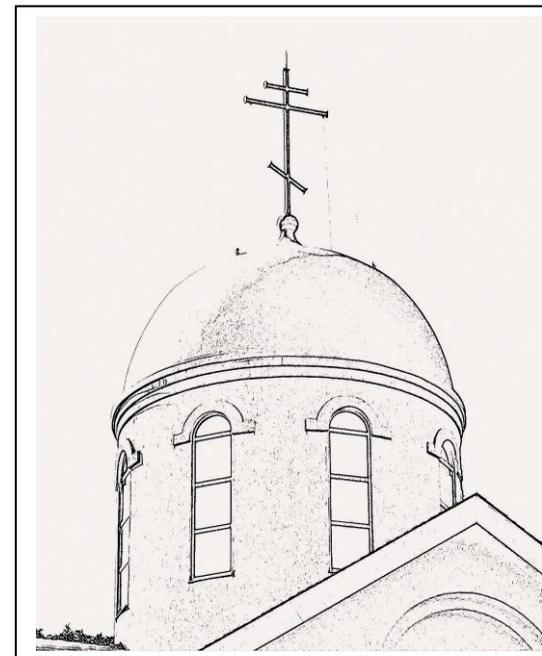
Rejoice, womb of the Divine Incarnation!

Rejoice, Thou through whom creation is renewed:

Rejoice, Thou through whom we worship the Creator!

Rejoice, O Bride Unwedded!

WEEKLY



BULLETIN

Today is the beginning of our salvation, the revelation of the eternal mystery. The Son of God becomes the Son of the Virgin as Gabriel announces the coming of Grace. Together with him let us cry to the Theotokos: Rejoice O Full of Grace, the Lord is with you!

Troparion of the Annunciation to the Theotokos

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

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Matthew Petrides, *Senior Warden*

Matushka Mary Buletza-Breton, *Choir Director*

April 3, 2022
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
St. John Climacus (of The Ladder)

Tone 8. Ven. Nikētas the Confessor, Abbot of Medikion (824). Virgin Martyr Theodosia of Tyre, and Martyr Irene (307-308). St. Illyricus of Mt. Myrsinon in the Peloponnesus. Martyrs Elpidiphorus, Dius, Bithonius, and Galycus. "Unfading Flower" Icon of the Mother of God.

Today's Readings:

Epistle: Hebrews 6:13-20 and Ephesians 5:9-19

Gospel: Mark 9:17-31 and Matthew 4:25-5:12

Upcoming Service Schedule:

Today – **9:00am Divine Liturgy**

Wednesday – **6:00pm Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**

Thursday – **6:00pm Great Canon & Life of St. Mary of Egypt**

Friday – **6:00pm Akathist to the Most-holy Theotokos**

Saturday – **6:00pm Great Vespers**

Sunday – **9:00am Divine Liturgy**

Next Sunday's Readings:

Epistle: Hebrews 9:11-14 and Galatians 3:23-29

Gospel: Mark 10:32-45 and Luke 7:36-50



*The Ladder of
Divine Ascent*

The Distinguished Diocesan Benefactors program is an essential vehicle for funding the activities and programs of our diocese. Please consider participating in the program. For more information, please visit the diocesan website at www.nynjoca.org.

Special Prayers

We pray for **all** our parish family members, but we pray especially for those who are ill and afflicted. Among them are **Fr. Sergius Kuharsky, Zoran Pejovic, Lidia Zemlanicky, Ingrid Kopec, Betty James, Manya Shark, Deryl Tczap, George Stavrou, Rdr. John Economou, Linda Washenko, Margaret Makara, Eileen Zamerovsky, and Dorothy Studier.**

We are happy that you have joined us for worship today and hope that you will join us for coffee hour after the service. Please note that **reception of the Holy Eucharist** is only for baptized members of the Orthodox Church who have prepared with prayer, fasting, and periodic confession. You are encouraged to receive the blessed bread that is **offered at the end of the service** and which may also be offered to you by **one of your neighbors during Communion.**

Annunciations

TODAY – Following the Divine Liturgy, an **Agape Coffee Hour** will be served in the Parish Hall. **Team #3** is in charge of today's Coffee Hour.

TODAY – The parish youth are again **collecting food** for distribution to our neighbors in need. Grocery bags with lists of requested items will be available for anyone to pick up, fill, and return to the narthex over the next several Sundays.

THIS WEEK – Please check the **schedule of church services** for this week. Remember that this is Great Lent and as Orthodox Christians, we are expected to at least consider increasing our prayer and worship during this time.

THIS WEDNESDAY – We celebrate the evening **Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts**. If you plan to **receive the Eucharist** at this service, please prepare by **fasting to the best of your ability**. If possible, eat and drink nothing from midnight. At the very least, try to abstain from eating and drinking after an early lunch. As it is whenever we receive the Eucharist, we should contemplate that it is **the very Body and Blood of Christ** that we are receiving. Please prepare with this firmly in mind.

THIS WEDNESDAY – After the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, a **pot-luck agape meal** will be held in the parish hall. All are invited to attend and bring along a dish to share.

Next Sunday – **Team #1** will oversee the Coffee Hour. All Coffee Hours during Great Lent will include only foods appropriate for the Fast.

We continue the **Lenten discipline of fasting** from meat and dairy until the Great Feast of Holy Pascha. All fasting should be undertaken with regard to each person's ability to tolerate its physical demands. If you have questions about the Lenten discipline, please contact Father Gary for further clarification.

SS. Peter & Paul Church in South River is once again selling **babkas for Pascha**. This year's variety includes cheese, chocolate, cinnamon crumb, prune, poppy, raspberry, apricot and raisin for \$12 each and raspberry cheese, chocolate cheese and apricot cheese for \$13.50 apiece. If you haven't already been contacted, you can still place an order with **Jim Kornafel** via phone/text (732-740-1308) or E-mail (jimmyk@optonline.net). **The deadline is TODAY**; delivery will be next Sunday, April 10. Thanks in advance for your support of this yummy fundraiser.

MANY YEARS

Birthdays:

Thursday – Debbie Alpaugh

Saturday – Cynthia Stavrou

Saturday – Nicholas Christos

Please pray for vocations to the Holy Priesthood!

We continue to pray for peace in Ukraine, for the withdrawal of Russian troops from that land, and for the wellbeing of the Ukrainian people. Lord, have mercy!