

courtesy of [Archdiocese of Canada - OCA](#)

Akathist to the Most Holy Theotokos

The Port Arthur Mother of God

Tropar (Tone 4)

Today, O Mother of God / the city of Vladivostok rejoices / and with it all the reaches of the earth / in beholding your Icon, / which bears the historic name of Port Arthur / for blessed and glorious provision / was offered to the devout forces of the far Russian realm / and is offered to us today/ as we gaze on Thy holy image and cry / O God-fearing ones of Canada [\[1\]](#) / preserve the Orthodox faith / for this faith is your firm foundation.

Kontakion I

Our Lady, we Thy servants in Canada [\[1\]](#) raise a hymn of thanksgiving to Thee, our Intercessor and Queen, chosen from all generations, Who dost defend us by the veil of Thy grace. We beseech Thee, O most Merciful Lady, to deliver us from all calamity and torment, as we bring Thee this glad song: Rejoice, O Queen, from ages praised, whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Ikos I

The Creator of angels hath chosen Thee, Our Lady, for the gracious salvation of the nations, and hath granted Thee to us, the Mediator for Orthodox people, Who dost deliver us from invasions, famine and all misfortune, and Who dost bestow all piety and devotion upon our lives. Therefore we, in remembrance of Thy lovingkindness, chant to Thee with joyful hearts: Rejoice, O Queen, from ages praised, whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Rejoice [\[2\]](#), abode of the unapproachable Divinity
Rejoice, constant wonder for the people;
Rejoice, help and intercession for Thy inheritance;
Rejoice, solicitor for our salvation;
Rejoice, gracious deliverance from troubles;
Rejoice, indestructible shield of our warriors;
Rejoice, their sword and invulnerable armor;
Rejoice, defeat and terror of enemies;
Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised
Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 2

Having seen the heartache, torment of soul, and sincere repentance of Thy people, O Theotokos, Thou wast pleased to give Thine icon as a blessing and a sign of triumph of the Christ-loving warriors of far-flung Russia and those in present need. Venerating Thine icon with faith and contrite hearts, we cry out to God from the depths of our souls and sing to the Lord: Alleluia.

Ikos 2

The wisdom of heaven touched the believing ones of the city of Kiev, requesting that an icon of the Most Holy Theotokos be prepared, and that it should be called the "Port Arthur Mother of God" to be the Protectress and Defender of the devout warriors of the Russian Far East, and a comfort and help to Orthodox people. Therefore we chant these praises with tenderness of heart to Thee:

Rejoice, Thou Who didst come from the city of Kiev as our Intercessor.
Rejoice, confirmation of the Orthodox faith;
Rejoice, Thou Who blessest the veneration of holy icons.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost expose every heresy;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost cast down its pride.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost transform our sorrow into joy;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost gladden us with manifest hope.
Rejoice, for Thou didst also gladden the people of North America by Thy coming.
Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 3

The power of God and the grace of Our Lady strengthened an aged sailor's belief in his marvelous vision and inspired him to gather all that was needed for the writing of Thy pure image. With faith bestowed on him by the Lord, he undertook the work and at the request of the Holy Theotokos he commissioned the icon and prayed to the Lord: Alleluia.

Ikos 3

Having a blessed concern for the wellbeing of those who love your Son and having revealed Thy will in a vision, O Our Lady, "let my Holy image go before the Christ-loving armies of Port Arthur and its assistance will scatter the hordes that bear ill," the triumphal message comes forth to us as well, and upon hearing it we chant to Thee:

Rejoice, constant intercessor to Christ the Lord, Who inclinest Him to grant His mercy upon us;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost manifest the glory of Thy miracles to the sinful through pious men.

Rejoice, Thou Who dost remove the wrath of God by Thy intercession;
Rejoice, Thou Who art powerful and quick to help in time of tribulation;
Rejoice, Thou who dost protect us from disasters by thy motherly veil;
Rejoice, Merciful One, Who sparest the hopeless from the chasm of death;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost cover Thy faithful children with the veil of Thy goodness.

Rejoice, Thou most merciful listener to our prayers in sorrow and temptations;

Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 4

The devout men of the city of Kiev, trying to stop the tempest of rebellion in Russia and the War in the Far East, fulfilled the will of the Theotokos and sent the icon to the besieged province of Quantoon as a shield and a sign of triumph over its enemies, and they prayed to the Lord: Alleluia.

Ikos 4

The Orthodox people learned that the icon of the Heavenly Queen was passing by their cities and provinces and they met it with deep veneration. Many a great multitude of believers and pilgrims prayed with tears in their eyes and asked for help in victory over their enemies, deliverance from famine and ruin, and peace for the world. In similar way, we turn to Thee Who art the most Blessed One and sing:

Rejoice, adornment of Heaven;

Rejoice, intercession for the earth.

Rejoice, blessed Daughter of the Heavenly Father;

Rejoice, virginal Bearer of the Pre-eternal Son.

Rejoice, giver of the Divine grace;

Rejoice, Healer of our bodies.

Rejoice, Guide for our souls to the Heavenly Kingdom;

Rejoice, our Deliverance from everlasting death.

Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 5

A star radiant in God is Thine Icon, O Theotokos, that illuminest all the earth, from the east to the west, from Russia to America, and enlightenest all those lost in the darkness of unbelief and leadest them to repentance, driving away a multitude of deep sorrows, and guiding to the way of salvation those who turn to Thee and cry out to God: Alleluia.

Ikos 5

In the day of swirling tribulation and temptation the Theotokos hath granted us great mercy, having manifested her icon of Port Arthur, so that those who turn to it with veneration and faith would receive healing and salvation for their souls. Now in great joy we praise your inexpressible lovingkindness, and chant to Thee with warm devotion:

Rejoice, unfading luminary, Who doth enlighten us by the light of the true knowledge of God;
Rejoice, defense that opens the gate of paradise to the faithful.
Rejoice, inexhaustible spring of holiness;
Rejoice, flowing river of God's grace.
Rejoice, cleansing of our sins;
Rejoice, reconciliation for repentant people with God.
Rejoice, Thou Who acceptest good vows.
Rejoice, Thou Who aidest our good beginnings.
Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 6

The holy Church of Thy Son speaks of Thy wonders, O Lady, and the ends of the earth cannot fathom the depth of God's strength, in the deliverance, salvation, enlightenment and healing of His people, for from Thy holy icons have come wonders, reflecting the unending mercy and generosity of the Lord to the impoverished human race. Therefore we glorify Thine icon and sing to Your Son and our Lord: Alleluia

Ikos 6

Shining forth as a radiant star from the True Son of Righteousness, Holy Virgin, Thy holy icon of Port Arthur was brought forth. It reached the shores of the Pacific Ocean enlightening hearts and allowed the Orthodox people to perceive the great mysteries of God. Today we, on the opposite shore of the same ocean, stand before that holy icon seeking mercy, and raise this song to Thee:

Rejoice, as the angelic host doth rejoice in Thee;
Rejoice, as mankind doth triumph in Thee.
Rejoice, as Thy glory surpasseth all the earthly and heavenly praises;
Rejoice, our joy that doth comfort hearts open to Thee.
Rejoice, good intercessor swift to help us;
Rejoice, Thou Who hast given us a pledge of salvation by Thy icon.
Rejoice, Thou Who by Thine appearing didst defend the Far Eastern lands from the enemy.
Rejoice, Thou didst promise victory if Thine icon were brought to Port Arthur.

Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 7

O Theotokos, a certain Russian officer desiring to fulfill the will of God bore the icon of Port Arthur to the fortress besieged by the enemy. But when he got to the city of Dalian he did not find that the military leaders had faith in the help of the Theotokos, and he cried out to the Lord with tears: Alleluia. [\[3\]](#)

Ikos 7

A new aspect of lovingkindness came to us in the form of the Port Arthur icon, after the Lord, who allows mankind the experience of fire, the sword, famine or disaster, allowed the defeat of the Russian warriors, so that godless people held captive the icon of Port Arthur, yet He did not allow His people to completely fall but caught them up with His merciful hand. With this example in mind, O Lady, falling down before Thee we beseech Thee: help us in Canada [\[1\]](#) to learn from this. Do not let us perish completely but open the doors of mercy to those who chant to Thee:

Rejoice, Thou Who hast borne the Savior of the World;
Rejoice, beginning of our salvation.
Rejoice, O Mother of God Who borest much suffering;
Rejoice, O Mother of Charity Who dost wipe away every tear of suffering people.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost give us the tears of tender feeling;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost deliver us from passions.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost save perishing sinners;
Rejoice, Lady of heaven and earth Who dost hearken to the prayers of Thy servants.
Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 8

Pilgrims and sojourners are we on the face of the earth, our life is vain and brief. We do not think upon our end, or upon the awesome Judgement Seat of Christ, when we will stand before Righteous Judge and give answer for our every deed and word. We call upon Thee, O Lady, raise us from the sleep of sin, and by Thy intercessions grant that we might find forgiveness of our transgressions, as we joyfully cry to Christ our God: Alleluia.

Ikos 8

All previous grief and sorrows dismiss from us by Thy prayers, O Holy Virgin, Who wast taken up into Heaven but Whose prayers remain for those on earth. Strengthen within the world the Orthodox understanding and give all that is useful

to your servants, establishing our lives in deep peace. In gratitude and magnifying Thee we cry:

Rejoice, Thou Who dost hold before our spiritual eyes the vision of the terrible hour of our death;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost teach us to treat each day as the last.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost forbid us to love the godless world;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost cleanse our hearts of every partiality for temporary riches;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost forbid us to search for earthly glory, a passing shadow;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost inspire us to unceasingly utter and keep in our mind the sweetest name of Our Lord Jesus Christ.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost keep us back from vain speaking and hypocrisy;
Rejoice, Thou, Whose intercession for us is strong before God lest we be cast into utter darkness.
Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 9

The ranks of angels marveled at the great work of mercy of God that does not allow His people to perish completely, whether in the worldly conflict when Thine Icon was revealed and or today in our age of strife, for He has given Thee to us as our Intercessor. O Lord, Thou art inconceivably close to us and doth hearken to those who chant to Thee: Alleluia

Ikos 9

The sages of this temporal world, not enlightened by the light of the true knowledge of God, worshipped a golden calf. The wrath of God came down upon the world for such an act. We, the sinful, seeing this pray Thee humbly, O Our Lady, petition the Creator to exchange His righteous wrath for mercy, and enlighten our hearts that we would worship none but the Lord in Holy Trinity. O Lady, have mercy upon us who chant to Thee:

Rejoice, Thou Who dost never deprive us of Thy help and intercession;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost enlighten our mind with Thy luminous protecting veil.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost anoint the wounds of our souls with healing chrisms;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost lift us from the depths of our iniquities by Thy helping hand.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost shake off the sinful dreams of the laziness of our soul;

Rejoice, Thou Who dost give birth to the tender emotion of our soul and contrition of our heart.

Rejoice, Thou Who dost provoke us to repentance and self-correction;

Rejoice, because Thou dost grant salvation to all the people who seek refuge under Thy protecting veil. [\[4\]](#)

Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 10

As Thou didst want to save the people of the Far East perishing in the darkness of unbelief and apostasy, Thou, O Theotokos, didst send pilgrims from Vladivostok to venerate the holy sites of Jerusalem. And there on the path Our Savior trod on the way to the Cross, close to the court of Lythostratos, Thou didst manifest Thy mercy when they found Thy holy icon of Port Arthur. And therefore we chant with them to God: Alleluia.

Ikos 10

But Thou, Our Lady, didst not immediately return Thy icon to the Far East, but first didst comfort the nuns at the Monastery of the Hills by paying a three month visit there—much as Thou didst remain in the house of thy relative Elizabeth. And now, O Theotokos, Thou hast manifested the fortress wall of Thy mercy and generosity for Christians by the restoration of Thy icon. Thou hast promised us Thy veil of grace for establishing the Orthodox Christian faith throughout the earth. Therefore we venerate the newly-found holy icon of Port Arthur, calling on Thee for the firm planting of the holy faith across the expanse of our land and chant to Thee with joy:

Rejoice, intercessor and protector of Christian nations, Who forgettest not Canada [\[1\]](#)

Rejoice, bestower of grace on Orthodox Christians of North America [\[5\]](#).

Rejoice, pillar and foundation of the Holy Orthodox Church

Rejoice, protection and veneration of holy objects across the land.

Rejoice, deliverance for those who are held captive;

Rejoice, courage of those who are persecuted for the truth.

Rejoice, patience of those who suffer for their faith;

Rejoice, salvation from famine and infirmities.

Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 11

Nations of the Far East welcome Thy icon again, O Theotokos, as a lovely dawn and our essential hope, by chanting praises and hymns of thanksgiving, and telling of Thy mercy to all the nations of the world. And we, having put all our trust in God by Thy prayers, in Canada [\[1\]](#) chant joyfully to Him: Alleluia.

Ikos 11

Thou, Our Lady, dost stretch Thy Son's holy image, Not Made By Hands, above all the earth as a luminous protection that drives away the moonless night of unbelief and shines as the dawn of eternity. Therefore we sing to Thee with joy:

Rejoice, Thou Who art truly arrayed in Sunlight;
Rejoice, Thou, Who art a crown adorned with stars.
Rejoice, Thou Who art arrayed in gold and a robe of many hues;
Rejoice, Thou Who art wondrous in beauty.
Rejoice, Thou Who art the most kind warmth of the sun.
Rejoice, Thou Who art the light of angels and of godly men;
Rejoice, Thou Who dost drive away many a multitude of demons.
Rejoice, Thou Who dost disperse the darkness of unbelief.
Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 12

Thine icon, O Theotokos, revealest Thy grace as a precious treasure of the Christian Church. Receiving it in Canada [\[1\]](#), Thou hast promised to be with us to the very end of the age, having said regarding Thy first icon: "My grace and power will be with this icon!" We believe that Thou also art with us here, where Thy people chant the song of prayer to Thy Son: Alleluia.

Ikos 12

We praise Thy miracles, Our Lady, both ones that were and the ones that are. We praise Thee and warmly venerate Thy icon of Port Arthur. By it we know that Thou art always with us. Look at us with eyes of mercy, O Mother of God, and as we behold Thee on the icon, permit us also to behold Thee at the awesome hour of our passing, being with us and guiding us to the Heavenly Kingdom by Thy loving, protective hand. In gratitude for all of Thy lovingkindness to us now and in the future we sing:

Rejoice, adornment of the heavenly and earthly Church;
Rejoice, Thou Who art, after God, our first refuge and consolation.
Rejoice, holy defense and intercession for virgins;
Rejoice, foundation of holy life to the faithful.
Rejoice, passage to the Heavenly Kingdom for those who love Thee;
Rejoice, deliverance from the power of the prince of this world for those who put their trust in Thee.
Rejoice, deliverance from the suffering of sinful souls after death for those who praise Thee.
Rejoice, opening of the gates of paradise to us.

Rejoice, O Queen from ages praised Whose prayers cover the breadth of our land with mercy.

Kontakion 13

O all-praised Mother Who didst bear the Word, praised by the angels in heaven and by all the people of the earth: turn Thy attention to our humble prayers before Thy most holy icon and grant everything that is good and beneficial to our souls, so that we, Thy servants being saved by Thy prayers, may chant to God: Alleluia. (This kontakion is read thrice and followed again by Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1)

Prayer to the Most Holy Theotokos

O most Holy Virgin Theotokos, Who art higher than the Cherubim and the Seraphim and art the holiest One of all the saints, venerating Thine icon we pray humbly: hearken to our prayers, Thou Who doth see our sorrows and woes, and as our deeply loving Mother be swift to assist us who are helpless. Entreat Thy Son and Our Lord lest He give the land of Canada [1] over to our enemies and deal with us according to all of our iniquities, but rather may He grant us His abundant mercy as we turn from our sins. Our Lady, ask Him in His goodness for health for our bodies and for the salvation of our souls, for a peaceful life and a bountiful prosperity, for fair and seasonable weather, and a blessing on our every good intention and undertaking. Thou hast mercifully given Thy icon of Port Arthur in days past for the protection of Orthodox people, but the icon was held captive by the godless world because of renunciation, unbelief, and rejection of that which is dear in Christ. And now we venerate Thy recovered image, which is precious to us and offer Thee our zealous hymns and to Thy Son, our sincere repentance.

O all-praised Queen, stretch forth Thy God-Bearing hands, with which Thou didst carry the Christ Child, and pray that He deliver us from unbelief and every evil. Show us, O Our Lady, the triumph of Thy mercy: strengthen the faithful, enlighten those who have gone astray, heal the sick, comfort the afflicted and help the poor. Protect the Canadian [6] land beneath Thy veil, gladden the people of North America [5], fill the holy churches with those hungry to draw of the Lord's goodness, enlighten the nations of all the world by the light of Thy Son and our God, permit us to fulfill our earthly life in all piety and devotion, to have a good Christian end, and to inherit the Heavenly Kingdom by Thy Motherly intercession to Christ Our Lord begotten of Thee.

To Him, with His eternal Father and Holy Spirit, be all glory, honour, and worship, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

^[1] Replace Canada with one's own country before printing out for group use, e.g. America, Russia, China, etc.

^[2] Replace "Rejoice" with "Hail" for accuracy before printing. Monk James comments: First and most importantly, it is just wrong to translate Greek *_khaire_* and/or Church Slavonic *_raduysya_* into English as 'rejoice'.

It's undeniable that these words are *etymologically* connected to the roots meaning 'joy' in those languages-- but that's not what they actually *mean* in contexts such as our liturgical hymns. As a perfect example of the issue, I'd adduce JN 19:3. Can anyone seriously think that the roman praetorians are suggesting that our beaten and bloodied Lord Jesus 'rejoice'?! Please look up the etymology of 'hello' in English or 'Heil' in German and see how this works.

We would do better to translate Greek *_khaire_* and/or Church Slavonic *_raduysya_* into English as 'Hail!'

This has an ancient pedigree in English; consider Luke 1:28. In spite of recent translations made from Church Slavonic which contort this verse into something like 'Rejoice, (O virgin Theotokos,) Mary full of grace....', the words of the gospel say here 'Hail, Mary! Highly favored Lady....'

^[3] Prot. Alexander Lebedeff comments "Alleluia" means "Glory to Thee, O God." It is proclaimed at the time that God shows His mercy on us—not in time of calamity. Monk James comments: Hebrew *_haleluYAH_* means 'praise (plural) YAH'. This is an abbreviation of the the divine Name which nets out to 'Praise the LORD', not 'Glory be to God'.

^[4] Fr Alexander comments: The Mother of God grants salvation to no one. Only Her Son, Our Lord and Saviours does that. People must remember that the often repeated appeal to the Mother of God: "O Most Holy Mother of God, save us!" does NOT mean "save our souls," but rather "save us from all sorrows and tribulations." Fr. William comments that we can speak of our Holy Mother as our salvation, deliverer etc. because she bore God in the flesh through Whom such things as salvation and deliverance comes. We are thus speaking of Christ's work made possible through her giving birth to Him.

^[5] Replace North America with one's own continent or region before printing out for group use, e.g. Europe, Asia, Africa, etc.

^[6] Replace Canadian with adjective name of one's country before printing out for group use, e.g. American, Russian, Chinese, etc.