

AKATHIST
TO THE GREAT BAPTIST AND
FORERUNNER OF THE SAVIOR,
SAINT JOHN

Composed by Monk Gerasimos Mikragiannanites

Kontakion. Plagal of the Fourth Tone.
To thee, O Guardian Leader.

As the Baptist and Divine Forerunner of the Savior, greater than all the Saints and preëminent among them, do we extol thee, O Blessed John. Yea, as a loud-voiced herald of repentance do thou illumine with the light of repentance those who cry unto thee: Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

An Angel in the world, as greater than all mortals, didst thou prove to be, O John the Baptist (*3x with refrain: Baptist of Christ, intercede for us*), and thou bestowest upon us all thine abundant succor in all things; wherefore, marvelling at thy greatness, we exclaim:

Rejoice, thou through whom the mystery of the Trinity is disclosed;

rejoice, thou through whom Satan is driven away.

Rejoice, unearthly joy of Zacharias;

rejoice, God-given offspring of Elizabeth.

Rejoice, height hard to discern of preternatural virtues;

rejoice, much-proclaimed depth of Divine endowments.

Rejoice, for thou art the pinnacle of the Saints;

rejoice, for thou art the beauty of the Prophets.

Rejoice, Prophet and Forerunner of Christ;

rejoice, thou who art above all of the passions.

Rejoice, thou through whom Christ was baptized;

rejoice, thou through whom the enemy was despised.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Beholdings Gabriel, the Angel of God, while censuring
in the Temple of the Lord, Zacharias was mystically
informed by him of thy nativity, O Prophet John; but,
having at first disbelieved, he then spake and exclaimed:
Alleluia.

Born of a barren woman, the great John undid the
dumbness of his father and filled all the hill country
with joy as a harbinger of higher things; wherefore, together
with Zacharias all exclaimed:

Rejoice, undoing of dumbness;

rejoice, cessation of despondency.

Rejoice, herald of good things to come;

rejoice, thou who art replete with Divine charisms.

Rejoice, fruitful tree of Divine inspiration;

rejoice, lofty palm tree of Prophetic Grace.

Rejoice, for thou didst miraculously come forth from
a barren woman;

rejoice, for thou shinest forth the light of a holy life.

Rejoice, offspring of Divine benevolence;

rejoice, wine-bowl of God's goodness.

Rejoice, thou who heraldest the birth of Christ;
rejoice, thou who dispellest the gloom of passions.
Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Thou wast endued with power from on high in the wilderness, dwelling therein from thine infancy, for thou didst escape with thy mother from the heinous infanticide of Herod; wherefore, thou didst chant with love unto God as an Angel, O Prophet:

Alleluia.

Having dwelt in the wilderness from thine infancy, O Prophet, thou didst prove to be equal to the Angels in all things, the seal of the Law and the Prophets and the firstfruits of the new Grace of Christ; wherefore, we hymn thee with love as an Angel, crying:

Rejoice, nursling of the wilderness;
rejoice, friend of the Lord.

Rejoice, seal of the Prophets and the Law;
rejoice, treasury of God-given gifts.

Rejoice, Angel in the body as an emulator of the Angels;

rejoice, fleshless in struggles as a Godly-minded ascetic.

Rejoice, for thou preachest beforehand the Grace of the Lord;

rejoice, for thou lullest the tempest of perils.

Rejoice, most mighty star of Grace;

rejoice, radiant luminary of the Spirit.

Rejoice, beholder of the mysteries of God;

rejoice, renowned Baptist and God-seer.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Living a holy life in the wilderness, O Prophet, thou didst surpass the bounds of nature; for thou hadst shoots of bushes as thy food, and wild honey for the firmness of thy mind; for thou didst delight in the Divine sweetness, crying unto God:

Alleluia.

Clad in camel's hair, O Prophet, and with a girdle of skin around thy loins, thou didst preach unto all, crying: Repent ye, for the Messiah hath drawn nigh, granting life unto all; wherefore, we all cry out to thee:

Rejoice, herald of repentance;
rejoice, deliverer from madness.

Rejoice, thou who didst emulate the life of the Angels;

rejoice, thou who didst foreshadow knowledge of things to come.

Rejoice, loud-voiced orator of the Kingdom of Heaven;

rejoice, Divinely-moved tongue of ineffable good things.

Rejoice, thou who, while in the womb, didst worship Christ;

rejoice, thou who didst indicate Him to men.

Rejoice, Divinely-inspired instrument of Christ;

rejoice, thou that washest away the filth of souls.

Rejoice, thou who didst receive oracles from God;

rejoice, thou who protectest us from on high.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Receiving the Divine word from God in the wilderness, thou wentest forth, preaching unto all the Baptism

of repentance, O wise one, in the region round about Jordan; and all ran to thee and were baptized, crying:
Alleluia.

Thou didst indicate Jesus the Savior to the peoples in the wilderness, O Prophet, crying: Behold the Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sins of the world; wherefore, extolling thy surpassing dignity, we cry:

Rejoice, thou who art immaterial in a material body;
rejoice, thou who art fleshless in thine asceticism.

Rejoice, minister of Divine mysteries;
rejoice, teacher of holy repentance.

Rejoice, crystal-clear stream of Divine mercies;
rejoice, gold-inlaid vessel of ascetical virtues.

Rejoice, for thou preachest salvation to the peoples;
rejoice, for thou providest life-giving bounty.

Rejoice, thou who proclaimest the Incarnation of Christ;

rejoice, thou who expoundest remission to the peoples.

Rejoice, receptacle of celestial light;
rejoice, treasury of many charisms.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Thou wast sent in advance, as the Prophet saith, to preach to us the advent of the Savior; having baptized Him bodily in the Divine streams of the Jordan, O John, thou wast vouchsafed much Grace, crying:
Alleluia.

Resplendent in thy way of life, thou wast deemed worthy to baptize Christ in the Jordan, O Prophet, and

thou didst hear the voice of the Father and didst behold the Holy Spirit descending upon Him like a dove; wherefore, we all cry out to thee:

Rejoice, seer of things unseen;
rejoice, beholder of things extraordinary.

Rejoice, thou who didst baptize Christ in the waters;
rejoice, thou who didst enlighten us through the Divine streams.

Rejoice, for thou didst hear the voice of the Father from Heaven;

rejoice, for thou wast vouchsafed a vision of Divine origin.

Rejoice, thou who didst discern the All-Holy Spirit;
rejoice, thou who didst wash away the deluge of destruction.

Rejoice, thou who didst see things unseen by all others;

rejoice, thou who dost perceive things unattainable by mortals.

Rejoice, thou who art greater than all the Prophets;
rejoice, thou who dost curb the sufferings of mankind.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Thou wast shown to be great among the Saints as being superior to all mortals born of women—Oh, thy gifts of Grace! Yea, who else hath proved more blessed than thou, O all-wondrous one? For thou didst baptize Christ, crying:

Alleluia.

Braving danger for the sake of the Law, O John, thou didst censure the unlawful action of Herod; after being beheaded by him thou didst hasten to those in Hades as a herald and harbinger of Christ, proclaiming His coming to those who cry:

Rejoice, mouth endowed with boldness;
rejoice, eye endowed with compassion.

Rejoice, thou who didst rebuke the foolishness of Herod;

rejoice, thou who didst pluck out the thorns of the passions.

Rejoice, herald and harbinger of Christ to those in Hades;

rejoice, most fragrant flower of the ordinances of God.

Rejoice, for thou dost desiccate the slime of sin;
rejoice, for thou dost reveal the power of dispassion.

Rejoice, fountain that gushest forth healings;
rejoice, lamp that sheddest light upon us.

Rejoice, thou who didst behold and baptize Christ;
rejoice, thou who didst obliterate the deceit of the enemy.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Thou didst prove to be a stranger to worldly things, O Prophet, and wast seen to be truly above this world; who, indeed, is not amazed at thee? For thou didst touch the head of the King of all; wherefore, marvelling at thy radiance, we cry:

Alleluia.

Being wholly resplendent and wholly glorified as the great Baptist of the Savior, O wondrous John, thou astonishest all by thy mighty deeds and grantest abundant Grace to those who devoutly cry out to thee:

Rejoice, morning star filled with light;

rejoice, light-bearer from on high.

Rejoice, Divinely-engraved icon of abstinence;

rejoice, Divinely-planted meadow of dispassion;

Rejoice, most luminous sun shining with ascetic virtues;

rejoice, tilled land fruitful with soul-nourishing goods.

Rejoice, for thou wast beheaded by order of Herod;

rejoice, for thou bestowest an aura of tranquillity;

Rejoice, unshakable foundation of the faithful;

rejoice, our joy and support.

Rejoice, thou who dost check the vehemence of passions;

rejoice, thou who healest the corruption of souls.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Indulging in an unseemly drinking bout with his grandees on the occasion of his birthday, Herod had thy head cut off, not respecting thy holiness, O Forerunner; but we, extolling thee, cry with faith to the Trinity:

Alleluia.

The Church of Christ, dyeing her robe purple in the streams of thy blood, glorifieth Christ the Bridegroom and acclaimeth thee as the Divinely-honored bridal escort, O Divine Forerunner, and, as is meet, crieth out to thee:

Rejoice, abode of the Comforter;
rejoice, Forerunner of the Lord.
Rejoice, fragrant vessel of purity;
rejoice, ever-shining lamp of piety.
Rejoice, closest friend of Christ, the King of all;
rejoice, immovable pillar of the godly-minded people.
Rejoice, thou who didst hallow the region of the Jordan;
rejoice, thou who didst magnify the glory of the Incarnate One.
Rejoice, figure revered by Angels;
rejoice, staunch adversary of demons.
Rejoice, thou who revealest the goodness of Christ;
rejoice, thou who bringest us joy unending.
Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Enshrouding thy Divine and all-holy body, thy sacred disciples laid it in a sepulchre, hymning thy godly virtues, O greatly-renowned Forerunner, and they cried out to the Savior:
Alleluia.

Faithfully standing around thy holy head, which was revealed from the bowels of the earth as a Divine sanctuary and a holy shrine of the Spirit, we kiss it, receiving sanctification therefrom, and faithfully exclaim:
Rejoice, servant of the Lord;
rejoice, our mighty protector.
Rejoice, thou who art superior to all the Saints;
rejoice, foremost of the ascetic Fathers.
Rejoice, truest standard of pure virginity;

rejoice, Divinely-played lyre that gladdenest the faithful.

Rejoice, for thou guidest us to the path of repentance;

rejoice, for thou dryest up every miry stream.

Rejoice, holy exultation of the faithful;

rejoice, our Divine delight.

Rejoice, leader of venerable ascetics;

rejoice, guide of thy disciples.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Possessing a sublime life, as one sanctified from thy mother's womb, O John, thou dost astound by thy spiritual eminence those who behold thee living as an Angel in the body, and they all exclaim to God:

Alleluia.

The hordes of demons tremble at thine abundant Grace, O Prophet of great renown, while the faithful rejoice in thee, daily reaping the gifts of thy wondrous succor, and we cry out to thee reverently:

Rejoice, our great defender;

rejoice, deliverer of those in straits.

Rejoice, combination of rich charisms;

rejoice, effluence of Divine compassion.

Rejoice, loud-sounding clarion of God's tender mercies;

rejoice, waveless haven of souls in afflictions.

Rejoice, for thou gushest forth the sweetness of salvation;

rejoice, for thou dispellest the mist of indolence.

Rejoice, thou who art sweet and replete with Grace;

rejoice, our unsleeping guardian.
Rejoice, thou through whom Satan lamenteth;
rejoice, thou through whom the Savior saveth us.
Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

O John the Forerunner, herald of the new Grace, fill our hearts with Grace; for we have thee as a protector and helper, and as a most fervent intercessor before Christ, O all-holy one, and, drawing nigh unto thee, we cry:

Alleluia.

In chanting hymns to thee, O John the Forerunner, we extol thy great renown; for thou art great in the sight of the Lord, as the Angel said; wherefore, grant of thine immense Grace unto those who cry:

Rejoice, thou who art greater than all the Saints;
rejoice, thou who art in no wise inferior to the Angels.

Rejoice, venerable firstfruits of the Apostles;
rejoice, consolation of afflicted souls.

Rejoice, invincible rampart of the Church of Christ;
rejoice, sword that cuttest down all the madness of the enemy.

Rejoice, O John the Forerunner, Prophet and Martyr;

rejoice, herald of Christ by the power of the Spirit.

Rejoice, lantern and sweetness of my soul;

rejoice, delight and support of my mind.

Rejoice, thou through whom I hope for salvation;

rejoice, thou through whom I order my life.

Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

O Prophet of the Lord, herald of great renown, loftier and greater than the Saints (*3x with refrain: Baptist of Christ, intercede for us*), accept from my defiled lips this eulogy of mine as an offering and a sacrifice of sweet savor, and help me, that I may cry:

Alleluia.

And again, the Kontakion:

As the Baptist and Divine Forerunner of the Savior, greater than all the Saints and preëminent among them, do we extol thee, O Blessed John. Yea, as a loud-voiced herald of repentance do thou illumine with the light of repentance those who cry unto thee: Rejoice, O great Forerunner.

Couplet

Grant repentance, O Divine Forerunner,
Unto me, Gerasimos, who weave for thee these stanzas.

