

Akathist Hymn to the Virgin of Kazan

Kontakion 1

Our Lady of Kazan, most blessed and all-holy, we venerate your glorious icon which was brought to Russia from Constantinople in the thirteenth century. You are our treasure, Virgin Mary, and where our treasure is our heart is. Your wonderworking icon is a precious fortune, a wealth of intercession for the Godly-minded who bow before you – as we do today, amid the agonizing events of our own Time of Troubles. In humility we therefore declare:

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Ikos 1

We flee to you, Mother of God of Kazan, and beg you to save us from the Tatars of our time and from all enemies of the Holy Church. May their cruel yoke not be upon us, no matter the number of our sins which we now put behind us – for today we celebrate your icon and we turn to you in repentance. Receive us even as your Son, Jesus Christ, received the Penitent Woman who wept at His feet, that we may thrive in your fearlessness and bring you these praises:

Rejoice, imperishable wealth of the persecuted.

Rejoice, enduring prosperity that cannot be plundered.

Rejoice, unrivaled treasure of true believers.

Rejoice, unshakable courage that will not be silenced.

Rejoice, cause of gladness even in the Time of Troubles.

Rejoice, cause of cheerfulness for the clean of heart.

Rejoice, reason for hope even in the gloomiest hour.

Rejoice, reason for confidence in the course of salvation.

Rejoice, conqueror of the anguish of sinfulness.

Rejoice, vanquisher of the agony of time and place.

Rejoice, stronghold of truth.

Rejoice, guardian of righteousness.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 2

The centuries advance, holy Virgin of Kazan, yet your intercession is ageless and your blessings are perpetual. The city of Kazan was destroyed by fire in the sixteenth century, but your glorious icon was hidden and kept safe from the ravages of this world and from the corrosion of time's passing. Nothing and nobody can impede the intentions of the Mother of God, and we therefore implore you to preserve us from unfaithfulness during our Time of Troubles. In thanksgiving for your valor in spiritual battle, we say: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 2

Your hidden icon was located through the visionary dreams of Matrona, a 10-year old girl, who said the icon was buried beneath the ashes of calamity – safe from the Tatars and all atrocities committed under the guise of justice and morality. Matrona and her mother dug up the icon from beneath a burned-down house, and its original beauty had been miraculously preserved. Blessed Virgin of Kazan, we entreat you to honor us also with your immaculate presence, that we may bring rightful praises to you:

Rejoice, for your icon was planted in a fertile place.

Rejoice, for your image then produced new fruit.

Rejoice, for your purity remained unspoiled.

Rejoice, for your triumph then touched many lives.

Rejoice, bulwark against the destruction of faith.

Rejoice, holiness above the cinders of wrongdoers.

Rejoice, blessed Virgin not hidden from the virtuous.

Rejoice, heavenly face not consumed by horrible fire.

Rejoice, strength of sobriety.

Rejoice, splendor of sanctity.

Rejoice, eagle of liberation.

Rejoice, lioness of protection.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 3

When young Matrona told the archbishop that she had dreamed about your icon, blessed Theotokos, the archbishop disregarded her. He did not believe the words of a little girl, nor did he believe in your protection of Christians or your miraculous ways. Help us, holy Mother of God of Kazan, to emulate the simple faith of a child. In like manner, we beseech you to intercede for our country and our cities that we may overcome carelessness and complacency, and thereby we may continually say: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 3

After Matrona and her mother dug up the glorious icon, and the archbishop saw it with his own eyes, he then repented of his lack of faith. Christians, let us also repent as we look upon the icon of the Virgin of Kazan, and let us weep like the Penitent Woman who was forgiven much. Countrymen, let us again take upon ourselves the yoke of Christ, which many of us deserted under the weight of time and the struggles of the world, for Christ is gentle and meek. He has given us His own mother as an intercessor, and therefore it is fitting that we bring praises to her today:

Rejoice, trustworthy Protectress of the repentant.

Rejoice, assured Benefactress of the merciful.

Rejoice, heavenly Patroness of God-loving cities.

Rejoice, stable Mediatrix of spiritual warriors.

Rejoice, for you fear not, but the demons shudder.

Rejoice, for you err not, but the worldly plummet.

Rejoice, for you never sin, but the enemy burns.

Rejoice, for you never betray, but the ungodly divide.

Rejoice, for you uplift penitent men and women.

Rejoice, for you uphold faithful mothers and children.

Rejoice, for you inspire soldiers of Christ.

Rejoice, for you encourage bishops and priests.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 4

Your glorious icon was taken to the Church of Saint Nicholas – by the archbishop himself, for such was the fruit of his repentance and the consequence of your victory over sin, O holy Virgin of Kazan. When the icon was placed in the church, you immediately gave aid to a blind man. You opened his eyes and he beheld your pure beauty and your triumphant rescue, and he said: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 4

Blessed Mother of God of Kazan, your icon later journeyed to other people and churches, as well as copies of it which were also miraculous. Saint Sergius of Radonezh, who appeared in a vision to Saint Arsenius, encouraged the Muscovite people to pray to you in order to be saved from oppression and woes. We also pray to you, from our churches which still stand in this time of chaos and from the refuge of our homes, to be spared from conflict or to overcome all conflict with

your holy aid. We beg you to visit us in our distress, that we may unceasingly bring praises to you:

Rejoice, for you heal our sicknesses of soul.

Rejoice, for you cure our blindness to holiness.

Rejoice, for you beckon us to true spirituality.

Rejoice, for you call us to a life of prayer.

Rejoice, for you lead us to right worship.

Rejoice, for you show us the way to a sacramental life.

Rejoice, for you bless our homes with your icons.

Rejoice, for you hear our supplications in the night.

Rejoice, for you understand the troubles we encounter.

Rejoice, for you strengthen us to battle all evil.

Rejoice, for you bring us water in the desert.

Rejoice, for you give us shelter amid world wars.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 5

We see that you have always been a resolute support to those who walk on the straight path but inevitably incur the hardships of time and place. Most holy Theotokos, many of us are born into situations which are largely beyond our control and not to our advantage. Yet, you are attentive to our nakedness and you commiserate with our pain. You seek us out, even in our ignorance of your care, and you lead us to ultimate victory over all manifestations of misery. We flee to you now, for we recognize your radiance reaching out to us, and we say: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 5

Be to our advantage, O Virgin of Kazan, be a defender of those who are born into sorrow and cast into troubles. Be for us the sanctuary we always wished for, our fortification against invasion of the soul and sabotage of spirituality, a gateway into the life of prayer and to the imitation of Christ our Lord. See us, even if we do not see you. Find us, that we may find you beneath the ashes of our grief and beyond all desolation. For this cause, we humbly offer you praises:

Rejoice, knower of truth.

Rejoice, revealer of light.

Rejoice, giver of strength.

Rejoice, builder of holiness.

Rejoice, incorruptible richness.

Rejoice, indestructible glory.

Rejoice, untarnished purity.

Rejoice, unblemished beauty.

Rejoice, extinguisher of wickedness.

Rejoice, abolisher of worldliness.

Rejoice, uprooter of deceit.

Rejoice, exposor of treachery.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 6

In this Time of Troubles, people are fraught with a myriad of forces which pretend to be beneficial to mankind and civilization. Money is preferred over mercy, progress is valued more than prayer, fantasy is a substitute for faith, and egotism is more attractive than goodness. Human psychology is thereby discolored and distorted – such that unwholesome agitators are considered heroes, and upright

Christians are regarded as haters. All-holy Mother of God of Kazan, light our way forward through the tangled ropes of society, that we may always worship the True God and say: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 6

This should be a time of lamentation – for our own sins and for the crumbling of our country and cities, and for people all over the world who are crushed by ungodliness. Let us kneel like the Penitent Woman, filled with repentance, and then let us rise and confess Jesus Christ before the experts and authorities, the polished and cunning, the comfortable and gratified – and we shall be voices in the wilderness of the modern world. We begin now, by singing praises to the wonderful Virgin Mary who truly prospers those who love her:

Rejoice, for you convert our agony into a garden of fragrant flowers.

Rejoice, for you transform our misery into a meadow with sparkling brooks.

Rejoice, for you transfigure our woes into hope and charity.

Rejoice, for you change our distress into peace and prayer.

Rejoice, for we give thanks for your incomparable mediation.

Rejoice, for you unceasingly intercede though we know it not.

Rejoice, for the centuries pass by but you remain constant.

Rejoice, for worldly rulers fade away but you endure to the end.

Rejoice, that we may rejoice because of you.

Rejoice, that we may always behold you.

Rejoice, that every person may be subject to you.

Rejoice, that all the earth may bow before you.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 7

Our Lady of Kazan, undefiled and undefeated, we repent of our sins: pride, vanity, greed, arrogance, betrayal, entitlement, resentment, slander, and every unholy thought and act. At the root of our unhappiness are unbelief and lack of faith, for we silently consent to the false reasoning of the worldly. Most holy Theotokos, preserve us from these negative influences and direct our eyes to your glorious icon, that we may keep your purity before us in all that we say and do. With trust in your guidance, we say: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 7

Let us not succumb to the critics of Christianity, or to the promoters of false progress, but rather study the Scriptures and spurn every form of adultery and idolatry. Let us bow to God and not to the culprits of corruption. Blessed Virgin of Kazan, we implore you to heal our sicknesses and strengthen all Godly-minded relationships. May we be faithful to the Holy Church, as we offer grateful praises to you:

Rejoice, hope of the repentant.

Rejoice, stability of the merciful.

Rejoice, model of steadfastness.

Rejoice, restoration of faith.

Rejoice, glory of purpose.

Rejoice, renewal of commitment.

Rejoice, defender of the righteous.

Rejoice, helper of the prayerful.

Rejoice, gatherer of worshippers.

Rejoice, healer of Christians.

Rejoice, reward of seekers.

Rejoice, fortitude of believers.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 8

One of your icons was stolen in the twentieth century, by thieves who coveted the gold and jewels which embellished it. This is the way of the fallen – to take forbidden fruits and to hinder others from a vision of Heaven. Yet, your riches exceed earthly materialism and your presence overpowers every misfortune. In this way, holy Mother of God of Kazan, we realize true prosperity and noble victory. Every Christian may therefore confidently say: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 8

What became of the thieves? Did they live in worldly satisfaction? Did they repent like the good thief at the Cross of Christ? Let us concern ourselves with our own repentance, remembering the wise words of Saint Sergius, and beg for mercy upon ourselves and our country and cities. May we thrive on goodness and flee to Our Lady of Kazan with fitting praises:

Rejoice, for your worth is beyond silver and gold.

Rejoice, for you are bedecked in heavenly array.

Rejoice, for in spite of theft, you minister to the faithful to this day.

Rejoice, for regardless of loss, you continue to aid the righteous.

Rejoice, for we enter church not to steal, but to venerate your icons.

Rejoice, for we wish not to inflict sadness, but to spread goodwill.

Rejoice, fruitful replenishment.

Rejoice, ready nourishment.

Rejoice, firm alliance.

Rejoice, loyal companion.

Rejoice, constant prayer.

Rejoice, perfect wonderworker.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 9

In our Time of Troubles, we are surrounded by idolatry and besieged by ungodliness. We are afraid to wear a cross around our neck, afraid to pray over our food in public, afraid of being labeled intolerant or offensive, afraid of being accused of a hate crime. O holy Theotokos, please be quick — send us aid before we perish under the malevolent armies marching toward us. Many are against us, and some are themselves misguided victims of indoctrination. Hear us who call upon you, as we pray for the mistaken and the deceived, that everyone may bow to you and say: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 9

There can be no real tolerance without Godly-minded perception, and herein we see through the strange camouflaged net of cultural and political manipulation. Let us not surrender our soul to propaganda, or exchange the Cross for a false theory, or leave the Church for a current trend — but let us repent like the Penitent Woman who acknowledged her sinfulness and placed her hope of salvation only in Jesus Christ. We beseech you, Mother of our Lord, to erase our fears that we may rightfully bring praises to you:

Rejoice, for you soothe our anxiety.

Rejoice, for you teach us what is right.

Rejoice, for you ease our trepidation.

Rejoice, for you guide us to the light.

Rejoice, for righteousness withstands the passing of time.

Rejoice, for truth pierces every disguise of the wicked.

Rejoice, for you are resplendent with bravery.

Rejoice, for you do the will of the True God.

Rejoice, for you hasten to those who repent.

Rejoice, for you help those who love your Son.

Rejoice, for holiness sprouts from good roots.

Rejoice, for you sow to the glory of the Sovereign God.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 10

Our Lady of Kazan, courageous and valiant, you fill us with mercy toward all seekers and the needy. We live in an era of father against daughter, student against school, official against citizen, insider against outsider, first against last – and all are troubled and some are merciless. This is the weakness of our time and the agony of our country, for we see people who are tossed by ill winds and who then clutch at false rescue. We implore you to liberate us, most holy Theotokos, from chaos and charlatans, so that we may shine forth in righteousness and say to everyone around us: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 10

Your participation in life, O Virgin of Kazan, enters and transcends time and place – whether in a time of distress or a time of celebration, whether in a place of discord or a place of harmony – for the outward circumstances cannot obstruct the inward peace which you bestow upon Christians. In return for your gracious care, we offer you this humble gift of praise:

Rejoice, correction of confusion.

Rejoice, happiness of believers.

Rejoice, power of obedience.

Rejoice, increase of wonders.

Rejoice, preservation of honor.

Rejoice, fulfillment of duty.

Rejoice, interior of serenity.

Rejoice, place of miracles.

Rejoice, preparation of saints.

Rejoice, contemplation of Christians.

Rejoice, greatness of faith.

Rejoice, comfort of hope.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 11

Most blessed Virgin of Kazan, we do not force Christianity upon others, but there are some who would force other systems upon Christians. We are threatened by extremists and fanatics in the name of religion, and they lust after our conversion, captivity, or death. The Tatars of our time are relentless, but with faith in the Father Almighty and with your marvelous intercession, we continue to say:

Alleluia.

Ikos 11

Save us, holy Mother of God of Kazan, for the opponents of the Church have already crossed our borders and infiltrated our cities. Have mercy, Theotokos pure and powerful, upon the faithful and the penitent, and preserve us from unimaginable woes. We bow to you, and we beseech your compassion upon ourselves and also our countrymen, as we earnestly offer praises:

Rejoice, Lady Warrior who conquers with the light of truth.

Rejoice, Sovereign Queen who rules with the glory of purity.

Rejoice, capable Protectress who sees all who respect her holy icons.

Rejoice, worthy Mediatress who knows where the righteous dwell.

Rejoice, for our prayers rise to Heaven from our Time of Troubles.

Rejoice, for our repentance pours out from a well of sorrows.

Rejoice, that we may be a people of God.

Rejoice, that we may be a land of righteousness.

Rejoice, that your intercession might produce fruit in our nation.

Rejoice, that your vigilance might bring safety to our cities.

Rejoice, that we may give praise for each day of civilized relations.

Rejoice, that we may thank you for every effort on behalf of Christians.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 12

Where did we go astray? Who bewitched us? When did we lose our First Love?
How did we spiral downward into a morass of distraction, confusion, and neglect?
Countrymen, do you not see the signs of an approaching storm? Christians, have
you no understanding of the Penitent Woman? Oh, most blessed Virgin Mary,
awaken us from our stupor and direct us to the precepts of the Church, so that we
may say to one another: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 12

Holy Mother of God of Kazan, teach us to please God and only God. Lead us on
the path of righteousness, that our light may shine before others and that every land
might receive the True God – the God of love and mercy for all men and women.
Guide us to everlasting happiness, and to holiness which cannot be stolen or
destroyed. For this reason, we offer you praises today and always:

Rejoice, for nothing can prevail against the Church.

Rejoice, for nobody is able to usurp the Kingdom.

Rejoice, for we are not of this world.

Rejoice, for we are baptized into the Faith.

Rejoice, for your wondrous icons encourage us.

Rejoice, for your glorious beauty invigorates us.

Rejoice, for the gloom of ungodliness dissolves under the sun.

Rejoice, for the flowers of righteousness bloom across the land.

Rejoice, for we adore your Son and our King, Jesus Christ.

Rejoice, for we wish to do the will of the Sovereign God.

Rejoice, for your help is stronger than all misfortune.

Rejoice, for your aid upheld young Matrona and Saint Sergius.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Kontakion 13

May our lamentation be turned into joy, since the Theotokos herself intercedes for our victory. May our Time of Troubles motivate us to seek true spirituality and a life of prayer, so that our only aim is obedience to God and fulfillment of His Commandments. Praise be to the blessed Virgin of Kazan, and glory be to God in the Highest, today and forevermore. **Alleluia.**

(repeat Kontakion 13 and Alleluia three times)

Kontakion 1

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wonderworking icon is a precious fortune, a wealth of intercession for the Godly-minded who bow before you – as we do today, amid the agonizing events of our own Time of Troubles. In humility we therefore declare:

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Rejoice, conqueror of the anguish of sinfulness.

Rejoice, vanquisher of the agony of time and place.

Rejoice, stronghold of truth.

Rejoice, guardian of righteousness.

Rejoice, Virgin of Kazan, Protectress of the repentant and merciful.

Prayer

With heartfelt devotion, with deep repentance, and with mercy for one another, we pray to you, O Virgin of Kazan – our intercessor and a Protectress of Christians over centuries of war and crime. Save us from our own sins and from the sins of others, so that we may flourish because of you and become a grateful people of God.

Yet, if we must suffer – since our fallen condition is filled with suffering – then strengthen us in spiritual battle and make us worthy witnesses of the True Faith. We know that you watch over us, and that you will lead us to victory if only we heed your calling and the Commandments of God. Illuminate us, O Mother of God of Kazan, so that we may rejoice under all circumstances and praise you for your wondrous vigilance and unceasing mediation. Amen.