



**Akathist Hymn to the Walsingham Ikon of the Mother-of-God**

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## **Kontakion One**

O Sovereign Lady, Mother-of-God and Ever-Virgin Mary, thine honoured ikon is set up in the village of Walsingham, granting unto us comfort in times of trouble and as a well-spring of joy, so that with faith we may ever cry out unto thee :-

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

## **Ikos One**

In the time when Edward, son of Ethelred, ruled over the English people, the lady Richeld, a devout widow, desired to honour the most holy Mother-of-God with some godly work, and with deep fervour she prayed that her petition might be granted, and prompted by her ardent yearning, we cry out and say :-

Rejoice, gracious Lady, thou wonder of Walsingham.

Rejoice, holy mother, glory of Jerusalem.

Rejoice, sacred cypress of Sion.

Rejoice, resplendent joy of Israel.

Rejoice, thou purest rose of Jericho.

Rejoice, thou blazing star of Bethlehem.

Rejoice, golden ark containing the Master of the Law.

Rejoice, holy vessel that holds the sacred myrrh.

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

## **Kontakion Two**

In spirit the most holy Mother-of-God led the widow Richeld unto Nazareth and showed her the house, where she had received the salutation of the Archangel Gabriel, and she said to her “Behold this place, my daughter, and measure it carefully with thine eye, that thou mayest build its like in Walsingham : and thus shall all people cry out unto my Son : Alleluia.”

## **Ikos Two**

The virtuous widow marked in her mind the length and breadth and height of the holy house and resolved to set up its like near her home unto the singular honour of the holy Annunciation, so that all people, seeking the Mother-of-God as a strong helper, might say :-

Rejoice, thou who didst receive the message of the Archangel.

Rejoice, thou root from which grew up mankind’s gracious redemption.

Rejoice, thou who didst become a mother through humility.

Rejoice, thou who hast conceived in virginity.

Rejoice, thou who didst give birth in Bethlehem, the House of Bread.

Rejoice, Mother of the Bread, which comes down from heaven.  
Rejoice, thou who feedest the hungry with good things.  
Rejoice, thou who givest wholesome water to the sick.

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Three**

Three times the Mother-of-God visited the lady Richeld in the same way, confirming her promise that she would be present amongst the English people and amongst all the peoples of the world, desiring all to glorify God and to sing : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Three**

At once the lady Richeld sought to build the holy house with all speed. She summoned her skilled craftsmen so that they might cut and shape the timbers for the building, as the Mother-of-God had desired, and together they sang :-

Rejoice, mother of the Creator of heaven and earth.  
Rejoice, maiden who didst house God in her womb.  
Rejoice, safe harbour for all sea-faring peoples.  
Rejoice, protecting haven for the people of England.

Rejoice, faithful guardian of the holy dwellings of monks.  
Rejoice, thou chief solace against all tribulation.  
Rejoice, pathway leading to Him, Who is the Way.  
Rejoice, gateway in which the Prince doth sit and eat.

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Four**

The lady Richeld looked out upon a fair meadow, strewn with flowers and wet with drops of rain and dew from on high, yet in two places, chosen beforehand by the Mother-of-God, neither moisture nor dew was to be found : and, seeing this sign, she sang : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Four**

Perceiving the sign of divine blessing, the widow saw that in this beautiful meadow she must establish a new Nazareth to stand, like the first one of old, as a signal of mankind's reconciliation with God, and so she cried aloud unto the Mother-of-God :-

Rejoice, thou golden candlestick of the Light.  
Rejoice, gilded censer encompassing the divine Fire.  
Rejoice, thou ladder, by which God came down from heaven  
Rejoice, golden vessel enfolding the sacred Lamb

Rejoice, root from Jesse that restorest Adam who had fallen  
Rejoice, well-spring that washest away the tears that Eve shed  
Rejoice, steadfast protection for the peoples of these northern islands  
Rejoice, glorious adornment of the holy churches

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Five**

The lady Richeld instructed her carpenters to shape the beams and rafters for the holy house, so that all the wood might fit together precisely : and, as they worked, with one voice they sang aloud : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Five**

When all the timber had been made ready, the widow began to doubt where the holy house was to be, for there were two places which, like Gideon's woollen fleece, remained dry amidst all the wetness that encircled them, and yet with faith she started to sing :-

Rejoice, radiant fleece that Gideon saw of old  
Rejoice, vine that putteth forth a branch that cannot wither  
Rejoice, tree of radiant fruit unblemished  
Rejoice, land that flowest with milk and honey

Rejoice, uncut mountain that containest the unshakeable Rock  
Rejoice, deep bowl that holdest the everlasting Manna  
Rejoice, cup that surroundest the sweet wine of eternal life  
Rejoice, dwelling-place of Him, Who renews creation.

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Six**

The noble lady Richeld decided to build on the first of the two plots of equal size, where the chapel of the holy martyr Lawrence later stood, close by two wells of water, and seeing her intention all the people chanted : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Six**

The workmen began the footings, as a firm foundation for the heavenly house, and they laboured with all their skill and strength, but gradually the work became troublesome, for they found that no piece of timber seemed to agree with another : yet even in their frustration and sad perplexity, they raised their voices and sang, saying :-

Rejoice, solace for those in anxiety.  
Rejoice, sure security for those in bewilderment  
Rejoice, thou who dost ever put forth a helping hand  
Rejoice, thou who dost pour out grace from thy holy ikons

Rejoice, ewe that gavest birth to the Lamb Who is the Shepherd  
Rejoice, chosen dwelling of God the All-Holy Spirit  
Rejoice, thou who dost arouse the sleeping conscience  
Rejoice, thou who dost calm the troubled heart

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Seven**

The carpenters were perplexed because they were unable join together their own distinctive handiwork, and therefore at the command of the lady Richeld they laid every thing aside for the time being and went to their rest, gently singing to the Lord : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Seven**

Knowing that it was the intention of the Mother-of-God herself to anchor the holy house amid the surging troubles of the world, the noble lady Richeld prayed all that night that a further sign might be given by the Mother-of-God, and she said :-

Rejoice, our hope in life and when we come to die  
Rejoice, thou who givest a peaceful end to our life  
Rejoice, our defender in the dread day of judgment  
Rejoice, our deliverance from the fire that knows no end

Rejoice, habitation of the God, Whom no man can approach  
Rejoice, gentle hearer of all our petitions  
Rejoice, life-giving well-spring of healings  
Rejoice, wide sea that consumest all our passions

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Eight**

The most holy Mother-of-God, the chief builder of her own dwelling, with the assistance of the hands of holy angels, planted the holy house firmly in the second plot of land, two hundred feet distant from the first, and when they saw this, the angels, archangels and all the bodiless powers of heaven cried out in awe : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Eight**

As dawn broke the next day, the carpenters came to take up their tools and with amazement they saw that every timber was firmly joined, floor and window, walls and door, and above the rafters a neat thatch of reeds covered the roof, all better than they had originally had in mind, and with rejoicing each man stood still in amazement and with thanksgiving sang :-

Rejoice, Queen and mighty Empress of heaven and earth  
Rejoice, guide that showest us all the way to heaven  
Rejoice, steadfast confirmation of the faith  
Rejoice, sweet-smelling incense of prayer

Rejoice, thou gateway that ledest to Paradise  
Rejoice, thou bridge that carriest us over into the Kingdom  
Rejoice, refuge of all despairing sinners  
Rejoice, joy of the angels and of all mankind

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Nine**

Giving thanks to the most holy Mother-of-God for her gracious sign, disclosed in the completion of

the holy house, the lady Richeld gazed in wonder at the perfection of the skilled handiwork accomplished by both men and angels, and she praised the Lord and cried out : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Nine**

Since that time our Sovereign Lady, the most holy Mother-of-God and Ever-Virgin Mary, has made manifest many miraculous signs and wonders unto those who have visited her holy house and who call out to her, standing before her ikon in their distress :-

Rejoice, treasure-house of mercy beyond price  
Rejoice, assurance of salvation for sinners  
Rejoice, consolation of sorrowing parents  
Rejoice, nourishment and guide unto their children

Rejoice, thou who dost search for those who have gone astray  
Rejoice, thou who dost raise up those that have fallen  
Rejoice, spreading oak under whose canopy many take shelter  
Rejoice, mighty olive-tree that healest the sick through its oil

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Ten**

Hastening by land and water, those who are sick and suffering, press onwards with faith and expectation, guided by the milk white glow of the stars towards the habitation of the Star of the Sea, singing without ceasing unto God : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Ten**

Through the ages many have been cured of grievous illnesses : those, half-dead with sufferings, have revived : the lame have been made whole : the blind have received their sight and the crab of cancer has been made to walk straight, so that all cry out with thankfulness and praise :-

Rejoice, maiden who givest sight to the blind  
Rejoice, mother who grantest healing to the deaf  
Rejoice, thou who dost strengthen the feet of the lame  
Rejoice, thou who entrest the Word to give speech to the dumb

Rejoice, ever-present strength for the sick  
Rejoice, helper and defender of those who are injured  
Rejoice, thou who dost grant health to our bodies  
Rejoice, thou who by thy Son hast brought salvation to us all

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Eleven**

Though hindered by wind and storm, the deaf, the wounded and those disturbed in mind have landed safely in this harbour, provided by the Mother-of-God : and the lepers have recovered from their infirmity : so that all, washed clean and made whole, cry out with us : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Eleven**

Those, possessed by wicked and unclean spirits, have found healing and rest : and souls, deeply perturbed by spiritual temptations and deluded imaginings, have found solace against all tribulation, and we cry out with them :

Rejoice, thou whom the dark and wicked spirits fear  
Rejoice, helper of Christian people, given us by God  
Rejoice, fountain that drownest the sorrows of our hearts  
Rejoice, deliverance from all false imaginings

Rejoice, thou who dost relieve our pains and afflictions  
Rejoice, thou who dost soothe our suffering minds  
Rejoice, thou container of Him, Who cannot be contained  
Rejoice, burning bush that yet remained unscorched

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Twelve**

All those, who seek the Mother-of-God with humble affection, recalling the solemn joy of her Annunciation, join together with the angelic hosts at this new Nazareth and sing unto the Holy Trinity : Alleluia.

### **Ikos Twelve**

All the people, that travel to Walsingham, rejoice to see the celebrated holy house, built in honour of the heavenly Empress and of the joyous salutation of the Archangel and, standing before her holy ikon, they cry aloud, as did Gabriel at the first Nazareth in ancient times :-

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace  
Rejoice, for the Lord truly dwells in thee  
Rejoice, thou who art the throne of the King of all  
Rejoice, thou through whom the Creator becomes a child

Rejoice, mother of the Dayspring that has no evening  
Rejoice, mother of the Star that never sets  
Rejoice, thou who art blessed amongst women  
Rejoice, thou who bringest joy to all generations

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

### **Kontakion Thirteen**

We have offered unto thee, O most holy Lady, Mother-of-God, this meagre song of praise and thanksgiving, and we entreat thee to deliver us from all danger and distress, for thou hast great boldness of speech towards thy Son, even our God Himself : therefore, beseech Him to set us free from every misfortune and constraint, that we may cry aloud : Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

[then we sing again Ikos One and Kontakion One]

### **Ikos One**

In the time when Edward, son of Ethelred, ruled over the English people, the lady Richeld, a devout

widow, desired to honour the most holy Mother-of-God with some godly work, and with deep fervour she prayed that her petition might be granted, and prompted by her ardent yearning, we cry out and say :-

Rejoice, gracious Lady, thou wonder of Walsingham.  
Rejoice, holy mother, glory of Jerusalem.  
Rejoice, sacred cypress of Sion.  
Rejoice, resplendent joy of Israel.

Rejoice, thou purest rose of Jericho.  
Rejoice, thou blazing star of Bethlehem.  
Rejoice, golden ark containing the Master of the Law.  
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### **Kontakion One**

O Sovereign Lady, Mother-of-God and Ever-Virgin Mary, thine honoured ikon is set up in the village of Walsingham, granting unto us comfort in times of trouble and as a well-spring of joy, so that with faith we may ever cry out unto thee :-

Rejoice, thou who art full of grace.

Prayer to the most holy Mother-of-God

O Sovereign Lady, Mother-of-God most high, who didst inspire the lady Richeld to stablish the holy house at Walsingham for the veneration of thy holy Annunciation, entreat thy Son, even our God, to send down grace upon us for the healing of soul and body, that, as we approach and kiss thy holy ikon and drink the wholesome water drawn up from thy spring, we may ever praise and glorify the Holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and to the ages of ages.  
Amen.

Troparion for the Walsingham Ikon of the most holy Mother-of-God [Tone Two]

In ancient times thou didst bestow thy heavenly protection  
upon the island of Britain, most holy Mother-of-God,  
by planting in Walsingham thy holy house,  
which suffered destruction at the hands of hostile men.  
But now, having been restored, it is radiant with glory  
and in faith thy holy ikon is venerated by thy devoted servants.  
We magnify thee and, singing thy praises, we cry out unto thee :  
Rejoice, most holy Lady, who didst give birth unto Christ our God.