



AKATHIST
TO THE MOTHER OF GOD:
JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW

THE IKON OF THE MOTHER OF GOD: JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW

“Seeing that we have no boldness because of the multitude of our sins, do thou, O Virgin Theotokos, fervently entreat Him who was born of thee: for the prayer of a mother availeth much to the goodwill of the Lord.” (from the Sixth Hour)

In many different ways our lives are full of sorrows such as sickness, poverty and bereavement as well, of course, as an awareness of our own failings and inadequacies. All the worldly things to which we turn for comfort can never fully take away all these sorrows, but the joy that God wishes to give us far outweighs them. Why do sorrowful souls find a special joy when they bring their sorrows to the Virgin Mary?

In the Lity, in the Vigil Service for Christmas Day, we sing: “Today the Virgin gives birth to the Maker of all”. And in another hymn, in a reference to the evil one, “but now he sees a woman become Mother of the Creator”. As Mother of God, Who is Creator of heaven and earth, the Holy Virgin is indeed the mother of us all. Thus she has a place of special honour in our devotions and in our hearts.

Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose) wrote,

This life has been given to us for trial, and in trial there is inevitably tribulation and sorrow; but the goal of human life is the joy that awaits those who pass the trial. This joy we know already even in the small tribulations of our life, if we face them with Christian faith and with the aid of the Divine grace bestowed in the sacraments and through the intercession of the Mother of God and the saints; and this is for us a foretaste of the never ending joy that awaits us in the next life. The very Lord of life was crucified and buried; but He rose from the dead and opened to all the door of eternal life. “In the world you shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

In the Resurrection of our Saviour is the guarantee of our eternal joy; and in the intercession of His Most Holy Mother is the surest means of approach, outside the sacraments themselves, to this eternal joy. She is an ever-ready recourse in our tribulations, a merciful bestower of blessings and joy even when there seems to be no hope.

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The origin of the ancient *Joy of All Who Sorrow* Ikon is unknown; at least it is undocumented. The first recorded miracle related to this Ikon happened in 1688. At the time, the Russian Orthodox Church was ruled by Patriarch Joachim. His sister, the lady Euphemia, was sick and had suffered for a long time with an abdominal abscess,

which was an open sore. It seems that it was so serious that Euphemia's internal organs could be seen and there were very real fears for her life. Her ardent prayer to the Mother of God was answered in that she understood that she must have a moleben (service of intercession) sung before the *Joy of All Who Sorrow* Ikon that was kept in the Transfiguration Church in Ordynka. The priest was summoned. He brought the Ikon, served the moleben, with the great blessing of water, and blessed the ailing woman with the holy water. Euphemia's life was spared and she recovered from her malady. Giving thanks to the Mother of God, Euphemia made public the news of her miraculous healing and so this Ikon came to prominence. The Church established a commemorative festival, on 24 October, in honour of the miracle.

In the Ikon the Mother of God is shown in glory in the centre surrounded by supplicants, the sick, the suffering, the poor, the bereaved and people who are in need or sorrow. On either side of the Mother of God are angels who are directing the petitions to her. The petitions are represented by small scrolls. The original Ikon (the Moscow one), shows the Holy Virgin holding the Christ Child but there is a second *Joy of all who sorrow* Ikon, in St Petersburg. This one is known as the Ikon "with coins".

This copy of the *Joy of All Who Sorrow* Ikon, showing the Mother of God not holding the Christ Child, was found washed up on the bank of the Neva River and was kept in a chapel in the village of Klochka. It was dark and obscure. In 1888, in a violent thunderstorm, the building was struck by lightning causing considerable damage. The walls were charred and the alms box was broken scattering the contents on the floor. When the people inspected the damage, they found the Ikon face down on the floor. When it was lifted, not only had it become bright and clear, but the coins were adhering to the surface. The *renewal* of this Ikon was seen as a sign from heaven and it is commemorated annually on 23 July.

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A Note of Explanation concerning the word *Theotokos*:

This word is a very ancient devotional title for the Virgin Mary from whom, according to the Creed, God the Son became incarnate. It derives from two Greek words, *tokos* (birth) and *Theos* (God). Hence a literal translation would be "the one who gave birth to God", but the term has no direct English equivalent. Because it is so ancient, and was affirmed at the General Council of the Church in Ephesus in AD431, we have left the term as it is without trying to translate it.

**AKATHIST TO THE MOTHER OF GOD:
JOY OF ALL WHO SORROW**

Kontakion 1

To thee, the champion leader, do we thy servants dedicate a hymn of victory and thanksgiving, as ones who have been delivered from eternal death by the grace of Christ our God, Who was born of thee, and by thy maternal mediation before Him. As thou dost have invincible might, free us from all sorrow and misfortune who cry aloud: Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of Grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Ikos 1

The Archangel Gabriel was sent from Heaven to declare unto thee: "Rejoice", and to announce the Divine Incarnation of Christ, Who desired to be born of thee, the joy of the whole world that was languishing in sorrow. Wherefore, heavy laden with sins, but having obtained the hope of salvation in thee, we cry out to thee with compunction:

Rejoice, goodwill of God toward sinners!

Rejoice, strong help for those who repent before the Lord God!

Rejoice, restoration of fallen Adam!

Rejoice, redemption of the tears of Eve!

Rejoice, thou who dost remove the stain of sin!

Rejoice, laver in which the conscience is washed clean!

Rejoice, thou who didst bear the Redeemer Who freely cleanses us of our transgressions!

Rejoice, wondrous reconciliation of all mankind with God!

Rejoice, bridge that truly leads us from death to life!

Rejoice, thou who saves the world from the flood of sin!

Rejoice, heavenly ladder by which the Lord descended for us!

Rejoice, cause of sanctification for all!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 2

Beholding the streams of wonders that pour forth from thy holy ikon, O most blessed Mother of God, good helper of those who pray, support of the oppressed, hope of the hopeless, consolation of those who grieve, nourishment for the hungry, garment for the

naked, chastity of virgins, guide for strangers, assistance of those who labour, restorer of sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf and healing to the sick, through thee do we thankfully chant unto God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 2

Seeking to understand the incomprehensible reasons for the bitter sorrows that assail us, and in need of consolation, we flee to thee O Mother and Virgin. In that thou art good, teach us to see in them the merciful providence of thy good Son for the salvation of our souls and the cleansing of our many transgressions, that we may joyfully cry to thee:

Rejoice, calm haven of the tempest-tossed!

Rejoice, sure confirmation of those in doubt!

Rejoice, gracious mother of loving-kindness!

Rejoice, ready helper of all in misfortunes and temptations!

Rejoice, thou who doth soothe away the sorrows of our sins!

Rejoice, thou who doth heal the grief of our spiritual infirmity!

Rejoice, thou who doth teach us to disdain the vain pleasures of this world!

Rejoice, thou who doth lead our minds from this world to the one which transcends it!

Rejoice, thou who doth draw us from the desire for earthly things to the heavenly love of God!

Rejoice, thou who grantest us consolation and a life of Grace amidst our very sorrows!

Rejoice, pledge of eternal blessings!

Rejoice, promise of everlasting joy!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 3

With power from on high strengthen us, afflicted as we are, in body and soul, O good Lady, and vouchsafe unto us thy visitation and motherly care, dispelling the gloom of despondency that entraps us, so that being held in thine embrace, we may unceasingly cry out to God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 3

O thou who hast an ineffable wealth of loving-kindness, stretch forth the hand of thine assistance unto all who sorrow, curing infirmities and healing the passions, and

disdain not even me, O Blessed Lady, as I lie upon the bed of mine affliction and cry unto thee:

Rejoice, priceless treasury of mercy!

Rejoice, hope of all who are in despair!

Rejoice, healer of my body!

Rejoice, salvation of my soul!

Rejoice, unfailing strengthener of the infirm!

Rejoice, aid and support of the disabled!

Rejoice, thou who speedily quenches the wrath of God by thy supplication!

Rejoice, thou who tamest our passions by the power of thy prayers!

Rejoice, sight for the blind and hearing for the deaf!

Rejoice, feet for the lame, speech for the dumb!

Rejoice, visitation of good cheer for the sick!

Rejoice, for through thee Grace-filled healings are granted to all, according to the measure of their faith!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 4

A tempest of misfortunes and temptations besets me, and no longer can I endure its raging. But as thou art the merciful mother of my Saviour and God, lift up thy hands to thy Son, beseeching Him to regard the bitter sorrow of my heart and to raise me up from the abyss of despair, who cry to Him: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 4

O most holy Virgin and Mother, hearing the prophecy of the righteous Simeon: "*A sword shall pierce through thine own soul*", thou didst keep all these sayings in thy heart, understanding that the joy of a mother's heart over her children can be accompanied with much grief in this world. Wherefore, as one tried and tested in everything and able to commiserate with a mother's sorrows, we cry to thee:

Rejoice, thou who didst bear the Christ Child, the Saviour of the world!

Rejoice, thou who deliverest the world from sorrows!

Rejoice, thou who didst endure hearing the blasphemies and slanders hurled at thy Son!

Rejoice, thou who didst suffer together with Him through His passion!

Rejoice, consolation of the sorrows of mothers!
Rejoice, gracious protector of their children!
Rejoice, speedy helper amid misfortunes!
Rejoice, corrector of those who go astray!
Rejoice, nurse of infants!
Rejoice, teacher of the young!
Rejoice, mother of the orphaned!
Rejoice, help of widows!
Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 5

Beholding the Divinely-flowing Blood of thy Son poured forth upon the Cross of our salvation, as the handmaiden of the Lord, thou didst humbly subject thyself to the will of our Father in heaven, giving us an example of endurance and patience, that amid the raging of temptations and misfortunes we may cry aloud to God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 5

Seeing thee crucified with Him in thy heart, and standing with His beloved disciple by the Cross, thy Son and God uttered: "*Woman, behold thy son*", and to His disciple: "*Behold thy mother*", thereby giving thee as sons all who believe in Him. Thus having in thee a good mother and placing all our hope in thee, despite grieving as partakers of the sorrows and sufferings of thy Son, we cry to thee:

Rejoice, mother of the Christian race!
Rejoice, thou who didst adopt us at the Cross of thy Son!
Rejoice, thou who didst unite God with mankind!
Rejoice, thou who didst join the faithful to the Lord!
Rejoice, mother who didst bear the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world!
Rejoice, cup that draws joy for us from the Fountain of Immortality!
Rejoice, surety of the salvation of sinners!
Rejoice, search for the perishing!
Rejoice, unexpected joy of sinners!
Rejoice, raising up of all the fallen!
Rejoice, healer of all infirmities!
Rejoice, alleviation of every sorrow!
Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 6

O Mother of God, all the ends of the earth proclaim thy mercies, for by thy sacred protection thou dost shelter the whole Christian race for whom thou dost supplicate Christ our Saviour and doth deliver from all misfortune thy pious and God-fearing servants who faithfully cry out to God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 6

Beholding the radiant grace that shines forth from thy most wondrous ikon, O Mother of God, and falling down before it with tears, we beseech thee; disperse the clouds of temptations that have come upon us, so that we may cry out to thee with joy:

Rejoice, thou who dost carry the supplications of the faithful unto thy Son and God!

Rejoice, thou who dost pray for us all at the throne of thy Son!

Rejoice, intercessor before God, who dost save the world from calamities!

Rejoice, help of the Christian race, given to us by God!

Rejoice, tree of goodly shade, whereby many are sheltered!

Rejoice, tree bearing heavenly fruit, whereby the faithful are nourished!

Rejoice, shelter of the world, more spacious than a cloud!

Rejoice, land of promise, from whence flows milk and honey!

Rejoice, celestial radiance, unceasingly illuminating the faithful!

Rejoice, pillar of fire, guiding the elect to their heavenly inheritance!

Rejoice, field yielding an abundance of compassion!

Rejoice, bestower of every blessing!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 7

Thou, O Lady Theotokos, didst command the ailing Euphemia to have a moleben served before thy most sacred image, the *Joy of All Who Sorrow*, and having received healing, she was commanded to proclaim, to all, the mercies bestowed through this wondrous ikon, so that the source of gracious healings be not hidden from those in need. Wherefore O Lady, we hide not thy good deeds, and thankfully glorifying God, we cry to Him: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 7

Thy temple, in which we bow down before thy wonder-working ikon, is shown to be a

new pool of Siloam, surpassing the one of old, O Most Pure Theotokos; for health of body is given not once a year and only to the first-come, but thou dost always heal every ailment and every disease of soul and body of those who hasten to thee with faith and love. Wherefore we cry to thee:

Rejoice, spring wherein our sorrows are washed away!

Rejoice, cup whereby we partake of joy and salvation!

Rejoice, rock giving drink to those who thirst for life!

Rejoice, nectar sweetening the salty waters of the sea of life!

Rejoice, inexhaustible fountain of life-giving waters!

Rejoice, vessel for washing away the stain of sin!

Rejoice, release of our burdens!

Rejoice, relief of our weariness and pain!

Rejoice, healing of our afflictions!

Rejoice, deliverance from disasters!

Rejoice, trampling down of demons!

Rejoice, humiliation of enemies!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of Grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 8

Strangers and pilgrims are we upon this earth, according to the words of the Apostle: enduring perils at the hands of enemies, perils at the hands of relatives, perils at the hands of false brethren, and in much want and sorrow. And in that thou art our teacher, guide and guardian O Lady, do thou bring us to the calm haven and pray that thy Son will grant us remission of our transgressions before the end, that we may unceasingly cry to God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 8

Our whole life on earth is painful and filled with grief because of false accusations, reproaches, insults, and various other misfortunes and temptations, for the flesh is weak and our spirit is failing. Therefore, to thee do we flee, O Mother of God, falling down before thine all-pure ikon. Fill our sorrowful hearts with joy and gladness, that we may cry to thee:

Rejoice, guide directing us to our heavenly homeland!

Rejoice, Queen of Heaven, who dost open for us the gates of Paradise!

Rejoice, loving one who hast mercy upon us!
Rejoice, thou who dost order our life well!
Rejoice, fleece bedewed, that Gideon foresaw!
Rejoice, blessed womb that contained the uncontainable God of all!
Rejoice, bush that burned and yet remained unconsumed!
Rejoice, unassailable wall!
Rejoice, life-giving fountain!
Rejoice, never-fading bloom!
Rejoice, softening of the hearts of the wicked!
Rejoice, conscience of believers!
Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 9

Every manifestation of life in this world partakes of sorrow: glory does not endure, wealth and power crumble, beauty and health fade away, and friends and neighbours leave us or are taken away by death. Wherefore we implore thee, sweeten our sorrows, thou channel of blessings, bestowing incorruptible joy upon us who cry out to God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 9

The most eloquent orators are lost for words to console the sorrowful; but through thy love and mercy, O Lady Theotokos, speak consolation to our hearts, dispersing the clouds of our sorrows and the gloom of our despair with the radiance of thy glory, that we may cry out to thee:

Rejoice, thou who hast made glad all the Christians who have confidence in thee!
Rejoice, joy and tranquillity of the world!
Rejoice, channel of divine goodness!
Rejoice, hope of eternal blessings!
Rejoice, rescuer of those who seek salvation!
Rejoice, harbour for the voyages of life!
Rejoice, faithful preserver of those who, after God, put their trust in thee!
Rejoice, vesture for all who are stripped of pride and arrogance!
Rejoice, preserver and confirmation for all!
Rejoice, fortification and sacred refuge of all the faithful!
Rejoice, help of those who faithfully pray to thee!

Rejoice, radiant knowledge of Grace!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 10

Desiring to save the human race from eternal torment and unending sorrow, the Lord God Who loves mankind dwelt in thine Ever Virgin womb, and appointed thee, His own mother, to be the helper, protector, and defender of all who are in danger of perishing, so that thou mightest be the consolation of the grieving, the joy of the sorrowful and the hope of the despairing, releasing them from eternal torment by the power of thine intercession, and leading to heavenly glory all who faithfully cry to thy Son and our God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 10

Thou art the bulwark of virgins, O Lady Theotokos, and of all who flee to thy protection. Wherefore we beseech thee: help, protect, and preserve from temptations, afflictions, and misfortunes all of us, orphans and helpless ones, who cry out to thee with faith and love:

Rejoice, pillar of virginity!

Rejoice, chosen vessel of purity and chastity!

Rejoice, crown of those who, by chastity, make war upon the flesh!

Rejoice, bestower of eternal rejoicing upon those who labour profitably in the monastic life!

Rejoice, thou who dost quench the flame of the passions!

Rejoice, thou who dost dispel the darkness of temptations!

Rejoice, guide to chastity!

Rejoice, rampart of purity!

Rejoice, reformation of mankind!

Rejoice, thou by whom we are raised up from the fall!

Rejoice, steadfast affirmation of the Faith!

Rejoice, pleasing incense of prayer!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 11

We, thy servants, offer to thee a hymn of contrition, O Lady Theotokos, for thou art the

all-powerful helper of our race. Soothe the pains of those who flee to thee; appease the wrath of God that has been justly aroused against us because of our sins; deliver us from every bitter pain and sorrow, who cry to God, through thee: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 11

O Lady Theotokos, thy most honoured ikon, a light-bearing lamp lit by the ember of the grace of God, has appeared unto us for our sanctification and consolation. Now, honouring this sacred image with our hymns and, with faith, bowing down in veneration following the example of our holy father and hierarch John, we cry out to thee:

Rejoice, thou who by thy mighty assistance doth deliver us from all calamities!

Rejoice, thou who dost protect us from power of earthquakes and floods!

Rejoice, thou who doth provide for us against hunger of body and soul!

Rejoice, thou who dost quench the fire of passions by the dew of thy prayers!

Rejoice, thou who dost save us from the ravages of pestilence!

Rejoice, mighty helper in battles!

Rejoice, defender from the invasions of enemies!

Rejoice, thou who dost preserve us from civil strife!

Rejoice, easy passage of all who sail upon the sea!

Rejoice, good guide of those who travel!

Rejoice, liberation of captives!

Rejoice, speedy deliverer from the righteous wrath of God that threatens us!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 12

Wishing to give a pledge of grace to mankind, thou didst reveal thy healing ikon to us, O Mother of God, from whom streams of wonders are poured forth for those who approach with faith and whose infirmities and sorrows are healed. Therefore we joyfully cry through thee to God: *Alleluia!*

Ikos 12

Lauding thy mercies and wonders, O Theotokos, we all praise thee as our steadfast intercessor, and bowing down with compunction before thee who doth pray for us, we implore thee to lift up thy hands to thy Son, that always in this life, and after our death,

His mercy may continually be upon us who cry out to thee:

Rejoice, our unashamed hope in life and after our repose!

Rejoice, thou who doth grant a peaceful end of this life to those who honour thee!

Rejoice, our hope and defence on the Day of Judgment!

Rejoice, supplication of the just Judge!

Rejoice, deliverance from everlasting torment!

Rejoice, hope of eternal salvation!

Rejoice, key to the Kingdom of Christ!

Rejoice, portal of Paradise!

Rejoice, bridge leading to the heavens!

Rejoice, refuge and good intercessor for all repentant sinners!

Rejoice, joy of the angels!

Rejoice, glory and consolation of all the righteous!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 13

O all-hymned, divinely favoured Mother, thou who didst bear Christ the King, our Lord and God, to the joy of heaven and earth: hearken unto the voice of thy sorrowing servants and having received this our small supplication, deliver us from every affliction, sorrow, and temptation; heal our infirmities, destroy vicious slanders, drive far from us every evil and enemy, and deliver from future torment those who, in faith, cry to thee: *Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!*

Ikos 1 (repeated)

The Archangel Gabriel was sent from Heaven to declare unto thee: "*Rejoice*", and to announce the divine Incarnation of Christ, Who desired to be born of thee, the joy of the whole world that was languishing in sorrow. Wherefore, heavy laden with sins, but having obtained the hope of salvation in thee, we cry out to thee with compunction:

Rejoice, goodwill of God toward sinners!

Rejoice, strong help for those who repent before the Lord God!

Rejoice, restoration of fallen Adam!

Rejoice, redemption of the tears of Eve!

Rejoice, thou who dost remove the stain of sin!

Rejoice, laver in which the conscience is washed clean!

Rejoice, thou who didst bear the Redeemer Who freely cleanses us of our transgressions!

Rejoice, wondrous reconciliation of all mankind with God!

Rejoice, bridge that truly leads us from death to life!

Rejoice, thou who saves the world from the flood of sin!

Rejoice, heavenly ladder by which the Lord descended to us!

Rejoice, cause of sanctification for all!

Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

Kontakion 1 (*repeated*)

To thee, the champion leader, do we thy servants dedicate a hymn of victory and thanksgiving, as ones who have been delivered from eternal death by the grace of Christ our God, Who was born of thee, and by thy maternal mediation before Him. As thou dost have invincible might, free us from all sorrows and misfortune who cry aloud: Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, full of grace, *joy of all who sorrow!*

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First Prayer

O Lady Most Holy and Theotokos, thou art more honourable than the Cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the Seraphim, O divinely-chosen maiden, joy of all who sorrow; grant consolation even unto us who are sunk in sorrow, for apart from thee, we have no refuge or assistance. Thou alone art the mediatrix of our joy and, in that thou art the Mother of God and Mother of mercy, standing at the throne of the All-Holy Trinity, thou art able to help us, for no-one who flees to thee departs ashamed. Therefore, hearken now, in the day of our sorrow, unto us who bow down before thine ikon and implore thee with tears: drive away from us the sorrows and grief that assail us in this temporal life, and by thy powerful intercession may we not be deprived of eternal joy in the Kingdom of thy Son and our God. Amen.

Second Prayer

Most Blessed Queen, O Theotokos my hope, guardian of orphans and intercessor for strangers, joy of the sorrowful, protectress of the oppressed; beholding my misfortune, thou dost see my sorrow. Help me, for I am infirm; feed me, for I am a stranger. Thou knowest mine offences: do thou loose them, as thou dost will, for I have none other

help but thee, nor any other intercessor save thee, O Mother of God. Do thou preserve and protect me unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Third Prayer

O Most Holy Virgin, Mother of the Lord of the hosts on high, Queen of heaven and earth, almighty intercessor of our country: receive this hymn of praise and thanksgiving from us, thine unworthy servants, and carry our prayers to the throne of Christ our God, thy Son, that He may be merciful towards our unrighteousness and extend His grace to those who honour thine all-honourable name and bow down before thy wonder-working ikon with faith and love. For we are not worthy to be pitied by Him. Therefore we beg thee as our undoubted and speedy intercessor: hearken thou unto us thy supplicants. Overshadow us with thine almighty protection, and request of God thy Son: zeal and vigilance, concerning souls, for our pastors; wisdom and strength for civil authorities; justice and equity for judges; knowledge and humility for those who teach; love and concord between husbands and wives; obedience for children; patience for the oppressed; fear of God for the oppressors; strength of spirit for the sorrowful; restraint for the wayward; and for all of us, the spirit of understanding and piety, the spirit of mercy and meekness, the spirit of purity and righteousness. Yea, O Most Holy Lady, take pity on thine afflicted people: gather the dispersed, guide to the right path those who have gone astray, support the aged, teach the young sobriety, nourish the infants, and look down with the gaze of thy merciful assistance upon us all. Raise us up from the abyss of sin and open the eyes of our hearts to the vision of salvation. Take pity on us here and now, both in the land of our earthly sojourn and at the dread judgment of thy Son. Cause our fathers and brethren who have passed from this life in faith and repentance to abide in eternal life with the angels and all the saints, for thou, O Lady, art the glory of all in heaven and the hope of us upon the earth. After God, thou art our hope and the helper of all who turn to thee with faith. Therefore, to thee do we pray, and as to an all-powerful helper, to thee do we entrust ourselves and (*here can be inserted the names of our family, our friends and anyone who has asked us to pray for them*) and all our life, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



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