

AKATHIST TO ST BRIDGET OF KILDARE

Kontakion 1

O Holy maiden Brigid, font of divine truth, daughter of slave and king, warrior for Christ, who through the grace of God attained the summit of virtue. You now bestow blessings upon those who come to you with faith. O holy virgin of Kildare, intercede with Christ our God, that He may have mercy on our souls, and hear us as we cry aloud:

Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Eikos 1

Sold as a servant, raised by a pagan, you were born unfree, yet while you served men you sought only your true master. Known by God and foreordained for greatness, you walked in the forests of your homeland with Christ always in your heart. Among the people, slave and free, you were always free in spirit. At your birth it was said, 'as the sun shines among stars, so will shine this woman's deeds and merits.' So it came to be, and so they shine today, as we cry out to you:

Rejoice, sun among stars!
Rejoice, purest of virgins!
Rejoice, vanquisher of pagans!
Rejoice, friend of the poor!
Rejoice, wonderworker of Ireland!
Rejoice, friend of Patrick!
Rejoice, healer of lepers!
Rejoice, looser of captives!
Rejoice, banisher of demons!
Rejoice, teacher of sinners!
Rejoice, breaker of chains!
Rejoice, Mary of the Gael!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 2

Worker of the land, friend to the labourer, daughter of the soil; inflamed as you were with the Holy Spirit, from childhood you could not bear to see want, or to own a thing that could be given freely. When the hungry asked for food, you gave them all you had. When the poor asked for alms, you emptied the treasuries of the rich. To a leper, you gave your father's sword. To a hungry dog you gave meat meant for guests. To a beggar, you gave a cow. To a woman falsely accused, you miraculously provided justice. Never could you see suffering without giving aid. And so, through prayer and obedience, you deepened your love for the people, crying with them: alleluia!

Eikos 2

Follower of the spotless Lamb, even as a child you knew that chastity was a virtue of both body and mind. Those you came close to saw your holiness; the pagans knew you to be a light in the darkness. As a girl, you were raised by a wizard, who foretold your greatness. Great was the honour

in which God held you, and great was your love for all his children. Once, sent to churn butter, you gave all that you made to the hungry. In fear of returning with nothing, you opened your heart in prayer, and your faith was rewarded with more than you had made. Even the druids rejoiced at this miracle, as we rejoice at your holiness now:

Rejoice, builder of churches!
Rejoice, hope for poor sinners!
Rejoice, teacher of repentance!
Rejoice, healer of lepers!
Rejoice, branch of the great tree!
Rejoice, queen among women!
Rejoice, beloved by angels!
Rejoice, pure vessel of Christ!
Rejoice, throne for the Spirit!
Rejoice, salvation for the needy!
Rejoice, healer of the blind!
Rejoice, Queen of the South!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 3

Your father sought to sell you to a king, for you had given his wealth to the poor. 'What then would you do with mine?' the king asked you. 'If I had your kingdom, and all of your wealth,' you replied, 'I would give it all to the Lord of the Elements. For the true kingdom is not of this world, and the poorest amongst us are the richest in that kingdom' When the king saw your holiness, he said to your father, 'her merit is higher before God than before men.' Then you were freed for the service of Christ, that we might call to Him with you: alleluia!

Eikos 3

Freed from your family, and from the grip of pagan kingdoms, you fled from suitors who praised your beauty, towards the most favoured suitor of all. Through your love for Christ you sought to take the veil, and with fellow virgins approached the Bishop for blessing. As you came to him a fiery pillar arose from your head to the roof of the church, and all saw the mark of your sanctity in the eyes of God. Then, through the grace of the Spirit, the order of Bishop was conferred upon you and your line, who now we honour by crying:

Rejoice, sweetness of Eire!
Rejoice, pillar of prayer!
Rejoice, meek imitator of Christ!
Rejoice, leader of monastics!
Rejoice, destroyer of bonds!
Rejoice, founder of Kildare!
Rejoice, vessel of virtue!
Rejoice, tiller of hearts in Christ's harvest!
Rejoice, protection of the sorrowful!
Rejoice, hope of the outcast!
Rejoice, honoured woman!
Rejoice, denier of falsehoods!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 4

The power of the Most High gave you strength to bear your cross with love. In this world of vanity and fading wealth, among worshippers of the false and feared, you stood strong and true in His name. Through your ways you showed us the Way. At Pascha you washed the feet of lepers, the blind, the sick and the troubled of mind, and all at your touch were healed. Healer of Christ, who as He promised worked miracles through your faith in His name, hear us as we cry now: alleluia!

Eikos 4

Possessed of a heart which had pity for the world, you taught that freedom in Christ is freedom for all. Overflowing with grace-filled love, you were saddened by any hardness of heart. When a king refused to loose a captive taken without justice, you broke his chains through prayer, and he was freed. In this way, Brigid of Ireland, pray for us to the Lord who broke the chains of sin and death, that he may free our souls and we may cry out:

Rejoice, tamer of wolves!
Rejoice, daughter of Eire!
Rejoice, teacher of faith!
Rejoice, grace-filled lady!
Rejoice, breaker of chains!
Rejoice, intercessor with Christ!
Rejoice, speedy helper!
Rejoice, protector of your flock!
Rejoice, shelterer of children!
Rejoice, heart full of joy!
Rejoice, steadfast in love!
Rejoice, temple of the Holy Spirit!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 5

Miracle worker, you were acclaimed by all, for you opened cracks in the dark world and His light shone through. In green Kildare you worked to build your church. To make a home for God on Earth, you sought wood from a waggoner who carried a load. When he refused, your prayers stilled his horses, and the Spirit beheld him, dumbfounded, asking your blessing and offering his wares for your holy work. Beholding such miracles, we cry aloud now: alleluia!

Eikos 5

Living in Christ, purified by holiness, you were a friend to all creation. When hounds were starving, you fed them; when called, the wild ducks came to you; rivers rose and raged at your command; bees made honey at the movement of your hand. Even the sun itself performed for you; you hung your clothes on its beams while you praised God for all His works. And so, perceiving your unity with creation and creator, we cry:

Rejoice, tamer of beasts!
Rejoice, mistress of bees!
Rejoice, steward of nature!
Rejoice, dove among birds!
Rejoice, vine among trees!
Rejoice, protector of creatures!

Rejoice, blesser of birds!
Rejoice, steadier of doubts!
Rejoice, rainbow of joy!
Rejoice, gentle protection!
Rejoice, mistress of sunbeams!
Rejoice, friend to creation!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 6

All who confessed to you were purified of sin; all who sought the path from you were guided on it; all who asked for help from you were aided; all who stood against your work were foiled. Fighter against the dark swarms, warrior with a sword of fire, you stood tall in a pagan land. With charity, humility and love you did the work of Christ, so that soul after soul saw in you His salvation. Seeing this today, we who are unworthy are strengthened, and we cry with joy: alleluia!

Eikos 6

Like Job, you could never see the poor go empty-handed. Like David, you prayed for justice. Like the women at the tomb you waited in faith for the promised restoration. Once you met a beggar in need of clothes, and you gave him the Bishop's grand robes. You received in return even greater vestments, for the beggar was Christ, and you had clothed him as he taught us, and received His riches in return. Now help us, holy Brigid, to follow Him as you did; teach us to surrender this world as you learned to; hear us as we cry to you:

Rejoice, friend to all beggars!
Rejoice, clother of the naked!
Rejoice, sister to Christ!
Rejoice, patient in faith!
Rejoice, glorifier of Christians!
Rejoice, sister among the saints!
Rejoice, first woman of Ireland!
Rejoice, dispeller of sorrows!
Rejoice, repeller of the ungodly!
Rejoice, seeker of the one truth!
Rejoice, blessing of the people!
Rejoice, new star of righteousness!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 7

So often did you heal the sick, feed the poor, abate the plagues, bless God's creatures and even raise the dead. Yet always you lived humbly, raising yourself above none, hiding from praise, seeking God, not Man. And so we call you, as your people did: sun among stars and dove among birds, lover of Christ, the Mary of the Gael. And we chant with thanksgiving: alleluia!

Eikos 7

Though you hid your glory from the world, your fame spread, and many came to seek you. In green Kildare your church rose and your monastery grew. Holy women of Ireland, holy women of the Christian world: all came to seek you, to pray with you, to join you. All took up your mantle to

guard the flame of Christ, filled in their hearts with the fire of divine love. To you and to them now we cry:

Rejoice, friend to kings!
Rejoice, weaver of winds!
Rejoice, pure ascetic!
Rejoice, warrior for Christ!
Rejoice, lover of the Saviour!
Rejoice, mother of the poor!
Rejoice, ladder for pagans!
Rejoice, spurner of treasures!
Rejoice, lover of wisdom!
Rejoice, giver to all!
Rejoice, who loved not the world!
Rejoice, pillar of the Kingdom!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 8

In this earthly world you were stranger and sojourner, seeking the kingdom beyond. Escaping from pagan servitude, you placed yourself in service to the one Most High, and in humbling your spirit, won the greatest crown. In your abstinence, innocence, patience and strength, you made your heart and mind a throne for the Holy Spirit, and so we cry: alleluia!

Eikos 8

Across this green isle, you were a lamp to pagans and a leader to Christians. Friend of Patrick, pillar of the Gaels, with Christ you were in one mind and one heart. Towards God you were simple; towards the wretched compassionate; in miracle splendid; in judgement stern; on this Earth an angel in the flesh, and so we call to you:

Rejoice, blesser of cattle!
Rejoice, obedient sister!
Rejoice, leader of women!
Rejoice, lamp to the pagans!
Rejoice, salvation of brigands!
Rejoice, saint beneath the oak!
Rejoice, abbess of Kildare!
Rejoice, miracle-worker!
Rejoice, sword of fire!
Rejoice, battler of the Enemy!
Rejoice, protection for Christians!
Rejoice, greatest of nuns!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 9

To repel every hardship, to be gentle in every misery, to be joyous in God's commandments, steadfast and forgiving: these were your works. In a time of war and darkness, your strong love shone, and your house grew larger, stronger and more famed. Queen of the South, holy warrior of Ireland, enflamed by you and your sisters in Kildare, all turn now and cry as one: alleluia!

Eikos 9

Seeking rest, you were brought instead the lame, the sick, the poor and the miserable, and never did you leave them wanting. To the ends of the world you would go to aid the smallest of His flock. Speaking with faith and knowledge, speaking cheerfully of salvation, you cured a young girl of dumbness, that her tongue might sing with us:

Rejoice, quiet in wisdom!
Rejoice, friend to the dumb!
Rejoice, healer of children!
Rejoice, defender of faith!
Rejoice, shepherd of His flock!
Rejoice, scourer of heresies!
Rejoice, speedy helper of the weakest!
Rejoice, moisture of salvation!
Rejoice, abundant outpouring of virtues!
Rejoice, gentle ascetic!
Rejoice, spiritual athlete!
Rejoice, radiant lamp of love!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 10

Through the will of God and the labour of your hands there arose in Eire a city of Christ. Redoubt for Christians, refuge for saints and treasure house of the Spirit, the fame of your work there spread throughout the world, and a great metropolis was made in His name. Branch with blossoms, pillar of the kingdom, you were sought wherever there was hunger, lack or thirst for truth. And so to you and the women of Kildare, shining in the light of Christ, we cry out: alleluia!

Eikos 10

The angelic choirs were astonished at your work, for before your birth God knew you, and from your youth you were a vessel for the Spirit. Divinely wise, you gave refuge to all who sought you out. Worker of miracles, you brought joy to the weeping in a weeping time. Now we too in this earthly life sing of our joy, calling:

Rejoice, upheld by angels!
Rejoice, vessel of the Spirit!
Rejoice, woman of wisdom!
Rejoice, joy for the joyless!
Rejoice, pillar of faith!
Rejoice, defender of the wronged!
Rejoice, lofty praise of the martyrs!
Rejoice, loved by all beings!
Rejoice, zealot of the mysteries!
Rejoice, divine adornment of your island!
Rejoice, great saint of Christ!
Rejoice, queen among Men!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 11

Needing a priest for your foundation you called upon a holy hermit, St Conleth, a blessed soldier of the Lord. Though he had left behind the world's cares, dwelling alone in a green hut in a green shade, at your calling he returned to the world to serve at Kildare. And so with his episcopal labour and your blessed powers, your holy and feminine see, like a fertile vine, grew across Ireland so that even today we praise you, singing: alleluia!

Eikos 11

No lover of the world, you were captive then saint; slave then free; daughter then sister. Wonderful your congregation, strong your spirit, many your miracles, you healed land and people through Christ's love, and so we cry:

Rejoice, victorious athlete!
Rejoice, exalter of poverty!
Rejoice, defender of the chaste!
Rejoice, model for Christian women!
Rejoice, fragrant incense of prayer!
Rejoice, receptacle of Grace!
Rejoice, lamp of divine radiance!
Rejoice, light in the darkness!
Rejoice, fulfiller of prophecies!
Rejoice, shield against sharpness!
Rejoice, protection to our company!
Rejoice, holy freer of souls!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 12

Though greatly sanctified by the holy light, you did ever humble yourself as a wretched sinner, receiving in the Holy Mysteries the means of your salvation. And so when your long life ended, you departed this world, commending your spirit to the Lord, among the weeping and joy of your sisters in Christ. Then for your relics were built a great tomb, to which people from all Ireland and beyond would come, seeking your prayers, asking for your healing, crying with one heart: alleluia!

Eikos 12

O holy Saint Brigid, who turned water to ale, poverty to fullness, misery to joy, sickness to health. Sainted woman of Ireland, zealous warrior in prayer, sister and daughter and lover of God. You who freed the wild fox and the convict in chains; you who turned outlaws to Christ; you to whom the very land sung its praises at your passing; hear us as we turn to you now and cry:

Rejoice, zealous daughter of Christ!
Rejoice, for whom the land weeps!
Rejoice, warrior in prayer!
Rejoice, enlightener of druids!
Rejoice, downfall of demons!
Rejoice, true rule of faith!
Rejoice, robed with the sun!
Rejoice, intercessor for all souls!
Rejoice, unfading glory!

Rejoice, bright morning of our hearts!
Rejoice, sweet spring of our souls!
Rejoice, friend to all Christians!
Rejoice, Brigid, joy of all Ireland!

Kontakion 13

O merciful and pure Brigid, sun among stars, first among Christian women! With love accept these praises, and beseech our saviour that he might grant us salvation. Queen of the South, Abbess of Kildare, chief woman of Ireland, we join with those who called you 'Mary of the Gael.' To the Trinity in love, we cry: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

This Kontakion is repeated three times, after which Eikos I and Kontakion I are repeated.