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**AKATHIST TO SAINT JOHN, FORERUNNER
AND BAPTIST OF THE LORD**

St Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church

Hillsborough, NJ

Adult Education Series

(Begin with the usual introductory prayers: Heavenly King, Comforter.....Holy God, Holy Mighty (3x)...etc.)

Kontakion 1

Chosen from days of old to be the Forerunner and Baptist of Christ God, the Savior of the world, Divinely-praised John, while glorifying the Lord Who glorified You, we sing to You hymns of praise as to the greatest of those born of woman, as to an angel in the flesh and preacher of repentance. For as You have great boldness before the Lord, free us from dangers of all kinds and move us to repentance, as we cry to You with love:

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord!

Ikos 1

Archangel Gabriel, who stands before God, was sent to the priest Zachariah, when he, serving according to his rank, entered with incense into the Sanctuary of the Lord. Standing to the right of the Altar of Incense, the angel announced to him the good news of Your birth, great John, proclaiming to Zachariah joy and gladness, as many would rejoice at God's awesome good will concerning You, reverently crying out in praise of You:

Rejoice, ineffable confidant of the counsel of God!

Rejoice, fulfillment of His marvelous dispensation!

Rejoice, You who was revealed many years before by
the prophecy of Isaiah!

Rejoice, messenger before the face of the Lord,
prophesied of old!

Rejoice, You who was foreordained to be a great
prophet of the Most High!

Rejoice, You who was born according to the promise of
an angel!

Rejoice, You who was filled with the Holy Spirit even in
Your mother's womb!

Rejoice, You who was consecrated for a great ministry
before Your birth!

Rejoice, release of parents' barrenness!

Rejoice, joy and gladness of a priest of God!

Rejoice, offspring of a daughter of Aaron!

Rejoice, God-given fruit of prayer!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of
the Lord!

Kontakion 2

When Zachariah saw the angel appearing to him, he was disturbed and fear fell upon him, and he did not believe the words of his announcement concerning Your birth; but when he was stricken with dumbness for his disbelief, he marveled at this most glorious wonder, crying to God with all his heart: Alleluia!

Ikos 2

Seeking to understand the unfathomable Mind, the people awaited Zachariah, wondering at his tarrying in the Sanctuary; but when he came out and could not speak to them, but only made signs, they all understood that he had beheld a vision in the Sanctuary. And we, glorifying God, the marvelous Creator of miracles, cry out to You:

Rejoice, good source of Your father's silence!

Rejoice, change of Your mother's tears into joy!

Rejoice, removal of her reproach among the people!

Rejoice, great consolation for those who gave You birth!

Rejoice, for in the sixth month after Your conception, the Most Holy Virgin Mary was visited by an angel in Nazareth!

Rejoice, for many rejoiced over Your birth!

Rejoice, for You received a Grace-filled name, given by an angel!

Rejoice, for by Your name the silence of Your father Zachariah was ended!

Rejoice, for the name of God was blessed by Your father on account of You!

Rejoice, for fear and wonder over Your miraculous birth came upon those living round about!

Rejoice, for the news of Your miraculous birth spread over the entire land of Judea!

Rejoice, for by You salvation appeared to many in this world!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 3

The power of the Most High ended the barrenness of the righteous Elizabeth, who was beyond the natural age for bearing children, for she conceived You, the glorious Forerunner of the Lord, and keeping this secret for five months, she said: For the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein He looked on me to take away my reproach among men. But when she received Her Who bore Christ in Her womb, she was filled with the Holy Spirit and cried

with a loud voice: How is this to me that the Mother of my Lord should come to me? And rejoicing with Her, she cried out to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 3

You who was to go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias was filled with the Holy Spirit while still in Your mother's womb, How You appeared as a marvelous prophet, when You leapt with rejoicing at the coming of the Mother of the Lord; for You recognized God borne in the womb of Her Who is full of Grace, and by Your mother's voice preached about Him; for it was proper for the beginning of Divine things to be most glorious. Therefore, reverently marveling at this, with joy we cry to You:

Rejoice, while still in Your mother's womb proclaiming with miraculous gladness the Lord Who glorified You!

Rejoice, for because of You and Your mother Elizabeth the incarnation of Christ was revealed!

Rejoice, for she also was filled with the Holy Spirit!

Rejoice, for she also appeared as a most marvelous prophetess!

Rejoice, for by her the Most Holy Virgin Mary was called blessed among women!

Rejoice, for by her She was also named the Mother of the Lord!

Rejoice, for Her seedless fruit was declared most blessed!

Rejoice, manifestation of divine wisdom!

Rejoice, blessing of a holy marriage!

Rejoice, wonderful offspring of a barren womb!

Rejoice, You who astonished men by Your birth!

Rejoice, radiant voice of the Word!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 4

Disturbed by a storm of doubt, the priest Zachariah was unable to speak, according to the angel's word. But when after Your birth, O Forerunner of the Lord, he wrote Your Grace-filled name, immediately his lips and tongue were loosened, and he spoke, blessing God and prophesying, saying: Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and You, child, shall be called the prophet of the Highest, singing out to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

On hearing of Your most glorious and miraculous birth, the people who lived round nearby said among themselves with amazement: What will this child become? But we unworthily honor You, most glorious Forerunner of the Lord, as the greatest of those born of women, and glorify You:

Rejoice, You were filled with manifestations of Grace from Your conception!

Rejoice, You were glorified by God in Your birth!

Rejoice, You who were in Your infancy called a prophet of the Most High by Your father!

Rejoice, You who were in Your childhood enlightened and strengthened by the Holy Spirit!

Rejoice, You who were a blood relative of God incarnate!

Rejoice, You who received from God the lofty calling of Forerunner and Baptist!

Rejoice, ray proclaiming New Light to the World!

Rejoice, star illumining the path that leads to Christ!

Rejoice, morning star of the unsetting sun!

Rejoice, lamp of the Never-waning Light!

Rejoice, You who prepares the way for the approaching Christ!

Rejoice, You who appears as both angel and man!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 5

The ungodly command of the lawless murderer of children, Herod, drove You out of Your father's house into the trackless wilderness, carried by Your mother, O Forerunner of the Lord, and there You lived until the day of Your appearance out to Israel, eating locusts and wild honey, and calling to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 5

Beholding God's wonderful providence concerning You, O John praised by God, You appeared as a lover of a life of fasting from infancy's swaddling clothes, How by the will of the Most High You was sent to preach the approaching salvation in Christ. For this reason with amazement and love we cry out to You:

Rejoice, for, while yet an infant, You terrified King Herod!

Rejoice, You who were preserved from his vain
murdering by the right hand of the Most High!

Rejoice, fragrant rose of the desert!

Rejoice, You who amazed all by the height of Your
ascetic labors!

Rejoice, faithful indicator of the true way!

Rejoice, most wonderful preserver of purity and
chastity!

Rejoice, perfect example of the self-denial of the
Gospel!

Rejoice, monastics' protection and security!

Rejoice, enlightenment of theologians' minds!

Rejoice, You who opens the doors of God's compassion
to the sinful!

Rejoice, You who grants forgiveness from God to
repentant sinners!

Rejoice, You who helps to bring forth fruits worthy of
repentance!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of
the Lord!

Kontakion 6

A glorious preacher, a Divine Forerunner, were You shown to be in the desert of Jordan on the day of the appearance of Christ God to the world, for upon His approaching You, You showed Him to the people, saying: Behold, the Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world! And we, having known Him through faith, sing out to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos 6

You shone as a light of truth, O John, enlightened by God, manifesting out to all the effulgence of the Glory of the Father, appearing in the flesh for our sake. For You cried out to the people in the wilderness: Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand; bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. For behold, there comes after me, One Who shall baptize you with water and the Spirit. Therefore we cry out to You with praises:

Rejoice, herald of the coming of the Messiah!

Rejoice, preparer of the paths of the Lord!

Rejoice, intercessor of the old and new Grace!

Rejoice, end of the prophets and beginning of the apostles!

Rejoice, renowned voice of the Word!

Rejoice, thundering preacher of repentance!

Rejoice, You who converted many of the sons of Israel to the Lord!

Rejoice, You who made people perfect for the Lord!

Rejoice, You who boldly exposed the Pharisees and Sadducees!

Rejoice, teacher to bear fruit worthy of repentance!

Rejoice, indicator of spiritual enlightenment!

Rejoice, untiring intercessor for those seeking Your protection!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 7

When the Lord Jesus wanted to be baptized, O Divinely-blessed John, You said: I have need to be baptized by You; however, submitting to Him Who said, Let it be so now! You raised Your right hand upon His head and having baptized Him Who did not need purification, You cried out: Alleluia!

Ikos 7

Giving You new Grace, the Lord willed to be baptized by You, granting You to behold the coming of the Spirit and to hear the Father's voice from the heavens testifying to His Sonship. You taught us to worship one God in Three Persons; Whom glorifying with lips of clay, we offer these praises to You:

Rejoice, first preacher of the Trinity's Theophany!

Rejoice, true worshipper of the one God in Three Persons!

Rejoice, clear beholder of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove!

Rejoice, witness to His descent from the Father upon the Son!

Rejoice, hearer of the voice of God the Father from Heaven!

Rejoice, beholder of the revelation of the Father's love for the Son!

Rejoice, chosen Baptist of the Son of God!

Rejoice, fulfiller of His holy will!

Rejoice, zealous struggler in the glorious service for the salvation of the human race!

Rejoice, first celebrant of the great Mystery of Baptism!

Rejoice, herald of divine joy!

Rejoice, first teacher of the New Testament!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 8

Having beheld the strange and ineffable humility of the incarnate God the Word, a Divinely-blessed Baptist, when He bowed His Divine Head to You and received a servile baptism, You Yourself were wholly filled with great humility. Entreat therefore this Divinely-loved virtue for us also, who are possessed by pride that we may cry to Him from a humble heart: Alleluia!

Ikos 8

Wholly filled with the gifts of Grace, in finishing the course of earthly life, John the Divinely-chosen, You taught all to please God well through fulfillment of the Law and repentance. Therefore, we sing out thankful praises to You, the great teacher of truth:

Rejoice, planter of the law and statutes of the Lord!

Rejoice, exposor of Herod's lawlessness!

Rejoice, zealot for his correction!

Rejoice, You who suffered imprisonment and bonds for the sake of righteousness!

Rejoice, You who were beheaded for the truth!

Rejoice, for Your body was given an honorable burial by Your disciples!

Rejoice, for by God's providence Your head was preserved incorrupt!

Rejoice, for it have granted consolation, sanctification, and healing to Christians!

Rejoice, for the faithful piously bow down also before Your right hand which baptized the Lord!

Rejoice, for many miracles are thereby accomplished even to the present day!

Rejoice, for by You the faithful are delivered from the dishonor of passions!

Rejoice, for by You the sinful are moved to repentance!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 9

The angelic realm was amazed at the loftiness of Your ministry, and the Church reverently praises You as the friend of Christ God, coming before Him in the spirit and power of Elias. For, zealous for truth, You boldly exposed the Pharisees and lawless Herod, from whom You received a martyr's end. Therefore, we bow down before Your holy head, and pray to You: deliver us from the

dishonor of passions, that with a pure heart and lips we may chant: Alleluia!

Ikos 9

No rhetoric of the earthly-born can suffice worthily to praise You, John the Divinely-praised; for the lips of Christ praised You, calling You higher than the prophets and the greatest of all those born of woman. Therefore, not knowing how to offer You worthy praise, we cry to You such things as these:

Rejoice, great glory of the Church of Christ!

Rejoice, most marvelous wonder of the angels!

Rejoice, joy and glorification of the forefathers!

Rejoice, lofty praise of the prophets!

Rejoice, divinely-illuminated crown of the apostles!

Rejoice, magnificent beauty of hierarchs!

Rejoice, beginning of martyrs in the new Grace!

Rejoice, perfection of holy monastics!

Rejoice, adornment of the righteous!

Rejoice, foundation of virgins and fasters!

Rejoice, great consolation of all Christians!

Rejoice, for Your name is glorified by all Christian generations!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 10

You proclaimed to those in Hades the good news of Christ, come in the flesh to save the world; for like the morning star preceding the sun, You illuminated those sitting in the darkness and shadow of death. You were soon led forth by the Lord with all the righteous from the beginning of the age, chanting to Him as the Deliverer and Conqueror of death: Alleluia!

Ikos 10

You are a wall and saving refuge to all who go to You in prayer, Divine John; therefore, we bless You with hymns of praise:

Rejoice, our mighty intercessor and faithful preserver from harm!

Rejoice, quick helper and deliverer of those suffering from the spirits of malice!

Rejoice, You who sends down the blessing from God on the barren!

Rejoice, You who delivers those who run to You with faith from great disturbance of passions!

Rejoice, You who quickly reconciles those who are at enmity!

Rejoice, You who grants speedy help to those who fervently go to You in every need and sorrow!

Rejoice, You who rescues those who are running the good race from self-deception!

Rejoice, You who helps those who entrust themselves to Your intercession at the hour of death!

Rejoice, You who by Your intercession delivers those who love You!

Rejoice, You who guaranteed eternal life to those who honor Your glorious memory!

Rejoice, defense of the poor and widows and orphans!

Rejoice, after God and the Mother of God, the refuge and hope of Christians!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 11

No hymn is sufficient to praise You according to the legacy of Your great deeds, O Baptist of the Lord. But we, compelled by love, dare to sing of Your greatness. Mercifully accept this from us, O intercessor before the Throne of the Most Holy Trinity, and pray to free us from

every sinful corruption, that with pure heart and lips we may chant to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 11

Knowing You to be a lamp of the Unapproachable Light and entirely filled with the all-radiant gifts of Grace, John the Divinely-enlightened, joyfully we offer You such words as these:

Rejoice, eyewitness of the Divine Light shining from on high!

Rejoice, You who praise God by the light of Your virtues!

Rejoice, You who reveal the majestic glory of the Most Holy Trinity!

Rejoice, You who points out the correct and marvelous path to Heaven!

Rejoice, harbinger of the good news of God Incarnate for those in Hades!

Rejoice, bearer of glad tidings for the righteous held in the nether regions from the beginning of the age!

Rejoice, sincere friend of the Master, Christ God!

Rejoice, You who revealed to the world the True Light!

Rejoice, radiance of the shining light of the Gospel!

Rejoice, glorification of the Christian race!

Rejoice, fulfillment of the Counsel of God!

Rejoice, for from the rising of the sun out to the going down of the same Your name is to be praised!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of the Lord!

Kontakion 12

Bearing the name of Grace, O Baptist of the Lord, and enriched thereby, You appeared as a most glorious bearer of victory; for You conquered enemies and every malice, and You sealed Your ministry with martyrdom. And now, standing before the throne of the King of kings, entreat Him to grant to all the faithful victory over their enemies and Godspeed in all things, and the strengthening of Grace in virtues, as they chant to Him: Alleluia!

Ikos12

Hymning God, Who was wondrously glorified in You, we praise You, Divinely-blessed Baptist, as the sincere friend of Christ; we praise Your great ascetic struggles, we bless Your martyr's death, and joyfully we cry to You such things as these:

Rejoice, universal apostle and first martyr of the New Testament!

Rejoice, first preacher of the Kingdom of Heaven
manifested by the appearance of Christ on the earth!

Rejoice, foreteller of the divine calling of the gentiles!

Rejoice, You who manifested to the world the hidden
and secret things of the wisdom of God!

Rejoice, You who were shown to be more fruitful than
others in divine deeds!

Rejoice, for by the light of Your deeds the Heavenly
Father was glorified!

Rejoice, for You unspeakably gladden the Church of
Christ concerning Your memory!

Rejoice, for now You eternally enjoy abundant
gladness!

Rejoice, illuminated by the divine rays of the Light of the
Three-sunned Light!

Rejoice, for You unceasingly chant with the bodiless
ones the thrice-holy Hymn to God!

Rejoice, for now with the mirror removed, You directly
behold the Holy Trinity!

Rejoice, great John, Prophet, Forerunner, and Baptist of
the Lord!

Kontakion 13

O great and most glorious John, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord! Receive from us now this supplication offered to You, and by Your prayers, which are pleasing to God, I deliver us from evil of all kind, and rescue us from eternal torment, and make us heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven, that throughout the ages we may chant out to God: Alleluia! (Thrice).

And again Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1.

Prayer to Saint John the Baptist

O Baptist of Christ, Holy Forerunner, last of the prophets, first of the martyrs, instructor of fasters and desert-dwellers, teacher of purity and close friend of Christ! I pray You; I run to You. Do not reject me from Your protection, but lift me up who am fallen in many sins; renew my soul by repentance, as by a second Baptism. Purify me, corrupted by sins, and compel me to enter therein where no corruption can enter: into the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

(Conclude with the usual ending prayers.)

This booklet is intended solely for private devotional use. It is not an official publication of St. Mary's Byzantine Catholic Church of the Eparchy of Passaic. This publication was adapted from various sources.

