

CANON OF SAINT FRIDESWIDE

Ode I

Let us sing to the Lord, for he is greatly glorified; horse and rider he has cast into the sea.

Irmos: PHARAOH, who was proud of his chariots and his mighty captains, was drowned in the Red Sea with all his army; but Moses, leading Israel across as upon dry land, at the command of God, chanted: Let us sing unto the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified!

Helper and protector he has become for my salvation; he is my God and I will glorify him; my father's God and I will exalt him.

Irmos: PHARAOH...

The Lord shatters wars, the Lord is his name; Pharaoh's chariots and army he has cast into the sea.

Irmos: PHARAOH...

With the deep he covered them; they sank to the bottom like a stone.

MEET it is to praise thee with spiritual songs, O venerable Frideswide; for thou didst preserve thy virginity as a precious treasure to give to thy heavenly Bridegroom, and didst chant unto Him with zeal: Let us sing unto the Lord, for gloriously hath He been glorified!

Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.

MEET it is...

Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?

MEET it is...

Then the leaders of Edom and the rulers of the Moabites hastened; trembling took hold of them; all the inhabitants of Canaan melted away.

IN CONSTANT vigils and continuous prayers the holy Frideswide steadily mounted the ladder of the virtues, betrothing herself to Christ our God with unwavering intent; and she fled from her undesired suitor, crying: Let us sing unto the Lord, for He hath been glorified!

Let fear and trembling fall upon them; by the greatness of your arm let them be turned to stone.

IN CONSTANT vigils...

Till your people pass over, O Lord; till your people, whom you have purchased, pass over.

IN CONSTANT vigils...

The sanctuary which you have made, Lord; which your hands have prepared.

GIVING glory to God, the venerable Frideswide spent her life in fasting and prayer, striving ever toward her heavenly homeland; and from the proud king who would have taken her by force she found refuge in solitude, ever singing to the Lord, for He hath been glorified.

The Lord reigns over the ages and for ever and ever; for Pharaoh's horse went with the chariots and horsemen into the sea.

GIVING glory..

But the children of Israel walked on dry land in the midst of the sea.

GIVING glory..

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost

Theotokion: HOW LIKE the pillar of cloud and fire is the all-holy Mother of God! For she goeth before the chosen people of the New Israel, guiding us all to the promised land of paradise; and in exultation we cry with her: Let us sing unto the Lord Who hath gloriously been glorified!

Now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen

Theotokion: HOW LIKE...

Katabasia: *I shall open my mouth and it will be filled with the Spirit, and I shall sing a hymn to the Queen and Mother; and I shall celebrate with splendor and sing with joy of her wonders.*

Ode III

My heart is established in the Lord, my spirit is exalted in my God; my mouth derides my enemies, I rejoice in your salvation.

Irmos: THE BOW of the mighty hath been broken by Thy might, O Christ, and the strengthless have girded themselves with power.

There is none holy like the Lord, and none righteous like our God.

Irmos: THE BOW...

Do not boast or talk so very proudly; let no arrogance come from your mouth.

Irmos: THE BOW...

For the Lord is a God of knowledge; and God prepares his ways.

THE ARROGANCE of the prideful king, who sought to wrest thee from thy true Bridegroom, was broken by thy prayers, O saint.

The bows of the mighty men are broken

THE ARROGANCE...

and they that stumbled are girded with strength.

THE ARROGANCE...

He grants the prayers of him who prays; and blesses the years of the righteous

YE WHO love the saints of the Lord, praise now the wondrous Frideswide, who, though weak of body was filled with power divine.

The Lord will weaken his adversary; the Lord is holy.

YE WHO...

Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom, nor the powerful boast of his power, nor the wealthy boast of his wealth.

YE WHO...

But let him who boasts boast of this; of understanding and knowing the Lord; and of executing judgement and righteousness in the midst of the earth.

IN THE POWER of the Most High, wherewith she was girded, did Frideswide abound, and she was shown to be mighty in the grace of God.

The Lord has gone up to the heavens and thundered; being righteous he will judge the ends of the earth.

IN THE POWER...

He will give strength to our kings; and exalt the horn of his anointed ones.

IN THE POWER...

Glory...

Theotokion: SERAPHIM and cherubim all stand in awe of the all-holy Theotokos, the Queen of the angels, and they bow down before her in homage.

Now and ever...

Theotokion: SERAPHIM...

Katabasia: *O Theotokos, living and overflowing fountain, strengthen those who applaud you in this spiritual gathering; and in your holy feast make them worthy of crowns of glory.*

SESSIONAL HYMN

ABINGDON rejoiceth, for therein did the saint find safe refuge; and lowly Binsey is blessed, for there did she make her final abode, and there did her prayers call forth a well of curing waters; but even more doth Oxford exult, for there her sacred relics yet lie, like a hidden treasure, unto the healing of the faithful.

Glory..., Now and ever... :

Theotokion: O ALL-PURE Virgin, thou hope of Christians, unceasingly entreat God to Whom thou gavest birth in manner past understanding and recounting, in behalf of those who hymn thee, that He grant remission of all our sins and correction of life unto those who ever glorify thee with faith and love.

Stavrotheotokion

BEHOLDING Thee stretched out, dead, upon the Cross, O Christ, Thy most immaculate Mother cried aloud: "O my Son Who with the Father and the Spirit art equally without beginning, what is this, Thine ineffable dispensation, whereby Thou hast saved the creation of Thine own all-pure hands, O Compassionate One?"

Ode IV

O Lord, I heard your report and was afraid; Lord I considered your works and was amazed.

Irmos: PURIFIED by the fire of a mystical vision, the prophet praiseth the restoration of mortal men; and, filled with the inspiration of the Spirit, he lifteth up his voice to reveal the incarnation of the ineffable Word, Who hath broken the dominion of the mighty.

When my soul is troubled, in anger you will remember mercy.

Irmos: PURIFIED...

God will come from Teman; and the Holy One from a shady, wooded mountain.

Irmos: PURIFIED...

His glory covered the heavens; and the earth was full of his praise

FRIDESWIDE by her mighty supplications broke the power of the ungodly Algar, who burned with lust and breathed threats against her; for, struck blind by the power of her prayers, he was shown to be utterly impotent, and his rage was turned to grief.

He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations;

FRIDESWIDE...

and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting.

FRIDESWIDE...

For the fig-tree will not bear fruit, nor will there be produce on the vines.

RETURNING from her long seclusion, the venerable one gathered round about her a company of virgins, and together they laboured and prayed, giving thanks unto God for His rich benefactions, and offering up unceasing praise and glory to His name.

The labour of the olive will deceive, and the fields yield no food.

RETURNING...

The sheep have failed from lack of fodder, and there will be no oxen at the mangers.

RETURNING...

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will be joyful in God my Saviour.

IN HER SUPPLIANT prayers unto the Most High, the blessed one interceded for the whole world, entreating the King of all to grant peace to His people and fruitfulness to the land, that, delivered from famine and pestilence, all might praise Him forever.

The Lord is my strength; he will perfectly station my feet.

IN HER SUPPLIANT...

And he puts me on high places; for me to conquer with his song.

Glory...

Theotokion: DIVERSE miracles and awesome wonders do we witness even in our day, wrought by the all-immaculate Mother of God through her precious icons; and, deriving grace and benefit therefrom, we bow down before her in adoration, praising her forever.

Now and ever...

Theotokion: DIVERSE MIRACLES...

Katabasia: *He who sits in glory on the throne of divinity: Jesus the supreme God, came down on an ethereal cloud and with His pure hand redeemed those who cry out to Him: glory to your power, a Christ!*

Ode V

From nightfall my spirit is awake for you, O God; for your commands are light upon the earth.

Irmos: WASHED clean of the poison of the dark and vile enemy by the cleansing of the Spirit, we have set out upon a new path which leadeth to joy inaccessible, which only they attain whom God hath reconciled with Himself.

Learn righteousness, inhabitants of the earth.

Irmos: WASHED clean...

Let the impious be taken away, that he may not see the glory of the Lord. O Lord your hand was lifted up and they knew it not; but once they know they will be ashamed.

Irmos: WASHED clean...

Jealousy will seize an untaught people; and now fire devours their adversaries

EMITTING divine light, thy relics shine forth the grace of the Spirit upon those who honour thy memory, O saint, even though the impious have sought to confound thy veneration by mingling them with the bones of sinners.

Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

EMITTING divine light...

Thou hast increased the nation, O Lord, thou hast increased the nation: thou art glorified: thou hadst removed it far unto all the ends of the earth.

EMITTING divine light...

Bring evils upon them, O Lord, bring evils upon them; the glorious ones of the earth

STAINS of sin are washed clean from our souls when, filled with repentance and compunction, we beseech thee to pray to Christ for our forgiveness, O Frideswide; and, with great reverence honour thee as a mighty intercessor.

O Lord in affliction we remembered you, with a little affliction you chastised us

STAINS of sin...

As the woman in labour draws near the time of her delivery and cries out in her labour; so have we been to your beloved.

STAINS of sin...

We shall not fall, but they will fall, the inhabitants of the earth.

WHEN thou hadst cleansed thy soul of all impurity through fasting, vigils

and continual prayers, O venerable one, thou wast received by the Lord as a pure bride and didst set thy steps to enter His festive bridal-chamber.

The dead shall arise and those in the graves shall be raised; and those in the earth shall rejoice.

WHEN thou...

For the dew which comes from you is healing for them; but the land of the impious shall perish

WHEN thou...

Glory...

Theotokion: IN HEARTFELT hymns of praise let us laud the unblemished Ewe-lamb of Christ, the immaculate Virgin Mary; for by her maternal supplications, offered up with loving-kindness, she hath reconciled us with Him

Now and ever...

Theotokion: IN HEARTFELT hymns...

Katabasia: *The universe was amazed at your divine glory, for you, O Virgin, who knew not wedlock, have borne in your womb the God of all and have given birth to an eternal Son, who grants salvation to those who praise you.*

Ode VI

I cried to the Lord; and he heard me.

Irmos: THE UTTERMOST abyss of offences hath surrounded me, O Lord, but lead up my life from corruption, as Thou didst the Prophet Jonah, O Lord.

You cast me into the depths of the heart of the sea; and the floods surrounded me.

Irmos: THE UTTERMOST...

All your billows and your waves passed over me.

Irmos: THE UTTERMOST...

Shall I look again towards your holy temple?

DELUGED by the flood of mine offences, I am borne down into the sea of corruption; but the saint doth save me, extending to me a helping hand.

The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about,

DELUGED...

I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever:

DELUGED...

yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O Lord my God.

EVER surrounded by countless demons, which like ravening wolves seek the utter destruction of my soul, I turn to the holy one for deliverance.

When my soul fainted within me I remembered the Lord:

EVER surrounded...

And my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

EVER surrounded...

They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.

STRUGGLING to free myself from the dark abyss of offences, O venerable one, I beseech thee to free me, as God delivered Jonah from the monster.

But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving;

STRUGGLING...

I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord.

STRUGGLING...

Glory...

Theotokion: HAVING thee as a most powerful mediatrix, O Theotokos, we sinners escape damnation, for thou movest the Judge, thy Son, to pity by thy pleas.

Now and ever...

Theotokion: HAVING thee...

Katabasia: *Come, divinely inspired, let us clap our hands and celebrate this holy and most honorable feast of the Mother of God and glorify God who was born of her.*

KONTAKION

WE HONOUR thee, O venerable Frideswide, who didst forsake earthly wealth and royal glory to become a nun; for in Oxford, like a vine in the midst of thorns thou didst bring forth all the virtues like fruit, and didst astonish all by thy wondrous way of life. Wherefore, rejoicing now in gladness, thou dost dance with the choirs of venerable women on high, delighting in the beauty of paradise. Wherefore, we beseech thee: In our behalf entreat Christ our God, that He grant us peace and great mercy.

IKOS

FOR MANY centuries after thy repose, thy sacred relics were the glory of Oxford, O venerable mother, and thy holy shrine was a source of solace for the grieving and of healing for the sick. Then, unable to bear the grace which shone forth from thee, the ungodly concealed thy remains among those of sinners, that the faithful might no longer approach them with reverence. But the splendour of thy virtues and the love which thou dost have for thy heavenly Bridegroom continue to illumine those who have recourse to thee in prayer, and for thy sake He will yet grant us peace and great mercy.

Ode VII

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers; and praised and glorified is your name for ever more.

Irmos: THE COMMAND of the iniquitous tyrant, opposed to God, raised up a lofty flame; but Christ, Who is blessed and all-glorious, spread a spiritual dew upon the pious youths.

For you are righteous in all that you have done for us

Irmos: THE COMMAND...

And all your works are true, and your ways are right, and all your judgements are true;

Irmos: THE COMMAND...

and judgements of truth you have executed in all that you have brought upon us

OVER THE burning of the passions and all temptations of soul and body didst thou achieve triumph, the Spirit of God spreading upon thee the dew of grace, O divinely wise Frideswide.

And upon Jerusalem the city of our fathers.

OVER THE burning...

Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of our fathers; to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

OVER THE burning...

And blessed is your glorious, holy name; to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

LUSTS and sin, hateful to God, didst thou uproot from thy soul like tares from a field, O venerable one, and thou didst worthily praise Him Who is blessed and all-glorious.

Blessed are you in the temple of your glory; to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

LUSTS and sin...

Blessed are you who behold the deeps and sit upon the Cherubim; to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

LUSTS and sin...

Blessed are you on the glorious throne of your kingdom; to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

YE FAITHFUL Christians of England, turn ye from the vanity and errors of the iniquitous tyrant, who raised a lofty flame wherein to burn to ashes the sacred relics of the pious.

Blessed are you in the firmament of heaven;

YE FAITHFUL...

to be praised and exalted above all for ever.

YE FAITHFUL...

Glory...

Theotokion: VIRGIN and Mother both wast thou, alone among womankind, O most blessed and all-glorious Lady, and thou gavest birth unto Christ, Who hath redeemed us from sin and death.

Now and ever...

Theotokion: VIRGIN...

Katabasia: *The three young men divinely inspired, refused to worship creatures instead of the Creator. But with courage they trampled upon the threatening fire and sang joyfully: Blessed are You, O all praised Lord, the God of our Fathers.*

Ode VIII

Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

Irmos: REFUSING to obey the edict of the tyrant, the three venerable children were cast into the furnace, and confessed God, chanting: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!

Bless the Lord Angels of the Lord, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

Irmos: REFUSING...

Bless the Lord all you waters above the heavens, all you powers of the Lord, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

Irmos: REFUSING...

Bless the Lord sun and moon, stars of heaven, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

IN THE SWEAT of spiritual labours and ascetic feats the saint found the means to extinguish the furnace of carnal temptations, chanting: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!

Bless the Lord all you birds of the air, beasts and cattle, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

IN THE SWEAT...

Bless the Lord you sons of men. Let Israel bless the Lord, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

IN THE SWEAT...

Bless the Lord priests of the Lord and servants of the Lord, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

REFUSING the sinful demands of the wicked Algar, the pious Frideswide fled into hiding, preferring to live in God-pleasing solitude and to praise the Lord in chanting hymns.

Bless the Lord spirits and souls of the righteous, holy and humble of heart, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

REFUSING...

Bless the Lord Ananias, Azarias and Misael, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

REFUSING...

Bless the Lord Apostles, Prophets and Martyrs, praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

GOODLY confession of the God of our salvation didst thou make of thy whole life, O most glorious Frideswide, joyously chanting unto Him: Bless the Lord, O ye works of the Lord!

We bless Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we praise the Lord, and exalt him above all for ever.

GOODLY confession...

Glory...

Theotokion: IN THE MIDST of the furnace of fiery temptations, I cry out, O Virgin, my protectress, and beseech thee to send down the dew of grace upon me, lest I be utterly consumed.

Now and ever...

Theotokion: IN THE MIDST

We praise, we bless, we worship the Lord, praising and supremely exalting Him unto all ages.

Katabasia: *The maternity of the Theotokos preserved the three young men in the furnace. Then it was prefigured but now that it is accomplished, it brings the whole world together to sing: O works of the Lord, praise and exalt Him forever.*

Ode IX

THE SONG OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS
(THE MAGNIFICAT)

My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim; who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

For He hath looked upon the lowliness of His handmaiden; for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

More honorable than the Cherubim...

For the Mighty One hath done great things to me, * and holy is His name; and His mercy is on them that fear Him * unto generation and generation.

More honorable than the Cherubim...

He hath showed strength with His arm, and He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their heart.

More honorable than the Cherubim...

He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and exalted them of low degree; He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

More honorable than the Cherubim...

He hath holpen His servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy, as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever.

Blessed be the God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people.

Irmos: COME YE, and with pure souls and undefiled lips let us magnify the undefiled and all-pure Mother of Emmanuel, offering supplication unto Him Who was born of her, saying: Take pity on our souls, O Christ God, and save us!

And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David

Irmos: COME YE...

As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, who have been since the world began.

Irmos: COME YE...

Salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

NOW GLORIFY we all the great ascetic, the peer of the desert-dwelling women of old, the holy Frideswide, who with undefiled lips and a pure heart besought Christ God in her supplications, to have mercy on the souls of sinners.

To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant.

NOW GLORIFY...

The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us that without fear we, being delivered from the fear of our enemies.

NOW GLORIFY...

Might serve him in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

IN CONSTANT prayer and glorification thou didst find the antidote to the venom of the evil serpent, O holy Frideswide, and, full of spiritual health, thou didst set thy feet on the path to the kingdom of heaven, rejoicing exceedingly.

And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways.

IN CONSTANT prayer...

To give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins through the tender mercy of our God.

IN CONSTANT prayer...

By which the Dayspring from on high has visited us

THOUGH our mouths are defiled with unseemly words, and our souls are polluted beyond measure with countless iniquities, let us magnify the wondrous virgin Frideswide, for she offereth supplication to the Lord in our behalf.

to appear to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death

THOUGH our mouths...

To guide our feet into the way of peace.

THOUGH our mouths...

Glory...

Theotokion: YE WHO have received the great benefactions of the Mother of Emmanuel, come, let us offer praise and glory unto her, crying out in thanksgiving: We bless thee who hast had pity on our souls, O most blessed Queen and Lady!

Now and ever..

Theotokion: YE WHO....

Katabasia: *Let every human being take up a torch and let him dance in spirit and let the immaterial spirits celebrate this holy feast of the Mother of God and cry out: Rejoice, O all-blessed and pure and ever Virgin Theotokos!*

It is truly meet to bless thee, the Theotokos, ever-blessed and most blameless, and Mother of Our God. More honorable than the Cherubim, and beyond compare more glorious than the Seraphim, who without corruption gavest birth to God the Word, the very Theotokos, thee do we magnify.

Lord, have mercy. (Thrice)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. *Amen.*

EXAPOSTILARION:

O holy mother Frideswide, who didst fill the lamp of thy soul with the oil of the virtues, thy divine Bridegroom hath arrived, escorted by ranks of angels and saints, to lead thee into the splendours of immutable light.