

AKATHIST HYMN

To the Holy Prince Vladimir the Great, Equal of the Apostles

Kontakion I

O holy Prince Vladimir, equal of the apostles, we praise thee, the chosen beacon who dispelled the darkness of idolatry in the land of Rus and illumined it with the light of the divine Faith. As thou standest ever with boldness before the King of kings, cease thou never in thy prayers for thy posterity, and by thy supplications preserve us from all tribulations and evils, that with compunction we may cry out to thee in thanksgiving: Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Ikos I

When the Creator of angels and men, Who in His authority hath appointed the times and seasons and doth determine the fate of kingdoms and nations, was pleased to call the people of Rus out of the darkness of idolatry into the light of truth and eternal righteousness, He appointed thee, O right-believing prince, to proclaim and accomplish this, His all-good will. Wherefore, giving thanks to our Creator and Savior, we glorify thee as the great one chosen by God for the sake of our salvation, crying out with gladness:

Rejoice, O equal of the apostles, forechosen by Providence
all-wise for the enlightenment of the land of Rus;

Rejoice, thou who wast foretold on the hills of Kiev by the first-called apostle!

Rejoice, all-glorious vessel of the grace of God, bestowed upon thy realm;

Rejoice, all-wondrous root from whence the great tree of the right Faith hath sprung forth in
our land!

Rejoice, for thanks to thee the name of the Lord is glorified in all the ends of thy kingdom;

Rejoice, for thine all-glorious name is also hymned with love by all the peoples of the land
of Rus!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the Russian realm!

Kontakion II

Perceiving the vanity of inanimate idols and the deception of the devil, whereby he doth lure benighted folk into the snares of iniquity, and hearing of the holy protomartyrs of the land of Rus, who died for Christ while saying to their tormenters: "Your gods are not gods, but wood which lasteth today, but by tomorrow hath rotted away! There is but one true God: He Who hath created heaven and earth!", thy heart burned within thee to seek out and come to know this one true God, to whom the knee of every creature of heaven, of earth and of those beneath the earth doth bend, as they chant unceasingly: Alleluia!

Ikos II

Most exalted understanding overshadowed thee when the preachers of divers religions presented themselves before thee, and thou didst strive to avoid being caught in the nets of false teaching while trying to find the true and saving Faith. Wherefore, we thus call thee blessed:

Rejoice, all-wise ruler of the land of Rus;

Rejoice, thou who didst acquire a divinely illumined mind!

Rejoice, for thou didst put to shame the wiles and superstitions of the false teachers;

Rejoice, for thou didst wisely perceive the words of ever-lasting life in the speech of the true philosopher! Rejoice, ray of divine light in the midst of the darkness of false belief;

Rejoice, invincible bulwark amid the storm of pagan passions!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion III

Made wise by power from on high, thou didst send chosen men to other lands, to see and experience how other peoples worship God and how they show their faith in their deeds; and having observed well, they came at length to the Imperial City, where, beholding the magnificent celebration of the divine services, they thought they were standing, not on earth, but in heaven, and with compunction of heart they rendered praise unto the Lord, crying: Alleluia

Ikos III

Possessing in their hearts the firm conviction that the Eastern Orthodox religion of the Greeks is the best and that its mysteries are more majestic than all others, the men dispatched by thee, when they returned to their native land, confessed it in the presence of thee and thy leading nobles, saying: "No one, having tasted what is sweet, desireth that which is bitter. Thus also we cannot remain here and worship graven images." And accepting this announcement, thou didst sense thy heart burning with zeal for the true Faith. Wherefore, we magnify thee thus:

Rejoice, thou who didst earnestly heed the voice of divine grace;

Rejoice, thou who didst carefully follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit!

Rejoice, for thou didst impart wisdom to thy counsellors; Rejoice, for thou didst bring all thy people to the true Faith by thy counsels!

Rejoice, for thou didst diligently search for Christ, the good Pearl;

Rejoice, industrious bee who wisely sought out flowers wherein lay the sweet honey of truth and salvation!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion IV

Thou wast not shaken by the storm of doubts and perplexity when thou didst come to know Orthodoxy as the true Faith, but straightway didst desire to accept holy baptism with all thy people, that, together with them, like a father with his children, thou mightest chant unto God as is meet: Alleluia!

Ikos IV

When the nobles and elder counsellors heard of the true Faith, they remembered thy grandmother, the holy Princess Olga, who had received holy baptism in the Imperial City; and they said: "If this religion were not good, she would not have accepted it, for she was most wise among women." Wherefore, ever mindful of the all-wise Olga, we cry out to thee with thanksgiving:

Rejoice, for thou didst preserve the divine seed which thy blessed grandmother had sown
in thy heart;

Rejoice, for thou didst follow her to the holy commandments!

Rejoice, for thou didst foresee in her the light of salvation for thy people;

Rejoice, O sun who arose from her radiance!

Rejoice, light who didst illumine thy counsellors;

Rejoice, thou who didst lead all thy people to Christ! Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the
land of Rus!

Kontakion V

Wishing to receive the divinely woven robe of holy baptism, thou didst give thought from whence and how thou mightest acquire such an assembly of pastors and teachers to enlighten all thy people and thyself, and how to obtain a wife knowledgeable in the Holy Faith, as a good overseer of thy household, a mother in Christ to thy children and an advisor in piety for all; and burning with zeal for all of this, thy spirit led thee to the Byzantine land, where the faithful have, from ancient times, piously chanted unto God: Alleluia!

Ikos V

The Byzantine emperors, seeing that thy whole land slumbered in the darkness of idolatry, scorned thee as a worshiper of idols; but when they were vanquished by thee and came to know thy firm will to receive holy baptism and to lead all thy people to Christ, they were filled with joy and gave thee as a bride their own sister, Anna, as well as pastors and teachers for thy people. Wherefore, ever rejoicing over this, thy holy union, we chant to thee:

Rejoice, for the Orient from on high did visit thee;

Rejoice, for the star of the Most High led thee to the east, where Wisdom had built for herself a
house and set up seven pillars, the seven Ecumenical Councils which confirmed the Faith of
Christ throughout the world!

Rejoice, for this is the apostolic Faith, this is the Faith which hath made firm the universe;

Rejoice, for thou didst receive pure Christian doctrine from a pure wellspring!

Rejoice, good lover of thy home and thy children; Rejoice, all-wise instructor of thy whole
nation! Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion VI

O all-praised prince, the pastors and teachers, whom thou didst receive from the rulers of Byzantium to set all the Russian land afire with divine teachings, made haste diligently to do thy bidding, chanting with thanksgiving to the Lord God Who had called thy people to salvation: Alleluia!

Ikos VI

A material light shone most wondrously in thine eyes, which had been darkened by disease, when the light of grace shone forth in thy soul. Then, illumined by divine baptism, thou didst step forth from the holy font, restored, and didst exclaim with joy: "Now I have come to know the true God!" Wherefore, we bless thee thus:

Rejoice, beacon who wast set alight by the fire of divine grace in the midst of the darkness of paganism;

Rejoice, herald of the light of Christ, who opened the eyes and hearts of thy people!

Rejoice, for with thy spiritual eyes thou didst perceive the economy of God for thy realm;

Rejoice, for thou didst strive utterly that all thy people be illumined therein!

Rejoice, divinely radiant head of the kings of Rus;

Rejoice, most glorious adornment and boast of the Church of Christ!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion VII

Desiring to enlighten the Russian people with divine baptism, thou didst first command that thy sons and nobles be baptized, that all the people, following their steps, might approach holy baptism with a good intention, piously crying out to God: Alleluia!

Ikos VII

The manner of thy life showed thee to be a new creature in Christ after holy baptism; for as before thou wast a zealot of idolatry, so afterwards wast thou ever zealous for the Christian Faith: thou didst love meekness and kindness, abstinence and chastity, and a life lived according to the commandments of the Lord. And marvelling at this goodly change, we cry out to thee piously:

Rejoice, for by the dew of the Holy Spirit thou didst quench the flame of the passions within thyself;

Rejoice, for with the fire of divine grace thou didst burn up all thy wicked thoughts and desires!

Rejoice, thou who didst love the habitations of the Lord, the holy churches, more than all earthly dwellings; Rejoice, thou who didst prefer the divine services and the doctrines of Christ over all other works and teachings! Rejoice, thou who didst show forth in thyself a model of the new life for all thy people;

Rejoice, good nurturer and guardian of the orphaned and the poor!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion VIII

An awesome and joy-inspiring sight was it when tens of thousands of men and women, young men and virgins, and even innocent babes, made haste with joy to the River Dnieper, as to the Jordan, where they were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, while priests, standing on the bank, offered up the prayers of the mystery and chanted unto the Lord the hymn: Alleluia!

Ikos VIII

Thou wast wholly caught up in ineffable joy, O right blessed prince, when thou didst behold thy people baptized; and rendering praise to God the Savior with compunction of heart, thou didst earnestly beseech Him to look upon thy newly-enlightened people, to make them steadfast in faith and piety, and to glorify His own name in the land of Rus. Mindful, therefore, of these all-glorious and most gladsome events, we offer unto thee these hymns of thanksgiving and praise:

Rejoice, cause of the salvation of countless souls in the land of Rus;
Rejoice, inexhaustible wellspring of the blessings and mercies of God for thy people!
Rejoice, good husbandman who planted the garden of the divine Faith in thy kingdom;
Rejoice, torrent of sweetness who with the water of piety hast given drink to the people of Rus!

Rejoice, for thou didst glorify the divine Faith and hast put to shame the deception of idolatry;
Rejoice, for the King of kings imparted to thee the wisdom of Solomon, the meekness of David, the zeal of Elijah and the right faith of the apostles!
Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion IX

All the nature of angels, the guardians of the human race, glorified thee, O right-believing prince, when thou didst command fathers and mothers to give their children over to book learning, that they might understand what they believed and comprehend how to lead their life well according to the Faith. Wherefore, look down now on the children who are studying the divine Scriptures, and on their fathers and mothers, and bless their pastors and teachers who assist them in their study, strengthening and guiding them in their labors, that they may grow in the true Faith and in a virtuous life, chanting unto God: Alleluia!

Ikos IX

The most eloquent of orators are unable worthily to describe the greatness of the benefactions bestowed by thee, O prince, upon thy land; for having planted therein the divine Faith, thou didst deliver it from the gloom of paganism and from everlasting perdition, and didst open unto it the path to true enlightenment, to salvation and earthly prosperity. Wherefore, with thanksgiving we cry out piously to thee:

Rejoice, founder of the might and glory of the kingdom of Russia;
Rejoice, planter of true enlightenment and piety therein!
Rejoice, uprooter of heathen superstitions and wicked customs among thy nation;
Rejoice, destroyer of the temples and images of the idolators!

Rejoice, builder of holy churches;

Rejoice, emulator of the Emperor Constantine, equal of the apostles, who art equal in honor with him!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion X

Wishing to save from everlasting perdition thy kingdom, which was perishing in the abyss of idolatry, thou didst undertake great labors and didst exert great care, going about the cities and villages of thy land, everywhere sending forth spiritual shepherds to illumine thy people with the divine Faith and with holy baptism and to teach them to chant unto the one true God: Alleluia!

Ikos X

Thou wast a steadfast rampart for thy land all the days of thy life, protecting it from its enemies, and wast the author of its prosperity and glory. Be thou now also an invincible defender against its enemies, visible and invisible, and a helper in time of need and sorrow for us who with love cry out to thee:

Rejoice, shepherd full of goodly care for the people of Rus;

Rejoice, most sympathetic father of the orphaned and suffering!

Rejoice, ready aid for those who seek eternal salvation and true enlightenment;

Rejoice, glory and joy of the rulers of Rus!

Rejoice, true helper for those in the onerous task of government; Rejoice, mighty champion in battle for the forces of Rus and their leaders!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion XI

Accept from us this hymn of compunction, O favorite of God. By thy supplications subject all our enemies to thy right-believing people, and plant the Orthodox Faith in the midst of the pagans who do not acknowledge the true God. Uproot among us all heresies and schisms, that all the children of Rus may glorify God with one mouth and one heart, chanting unto Him: Alleluia!

Ikos XI

Thou art a radiant beacon enlightening all the land of Rus with thy splendor, O right-laudable Prince Vladimir, dispelling the gloom of idolatry and showing the path to true enlightenment and the blessedness of heaven. Wherefore, glorifying thee, we say:

Rejoice, star illumined by the never-waning Sun of righteousness;

Rejoice, guide who hast disclosed to us the narrow path which leadeth to everlasting salvation!

Rejoice, mighty helper and strengthener of those who preach the Orthodox Faith;

Rejoice, true protector of good instructors of youth and all who labor well for the common good!

Rejoice, guide and enlightener of those who administer the laws of the land;

Rejoice, for thou grantest goodly counsel unto the leaders and governors of this nation, who sincerely honor thee!

Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion XII

O our all-good shepherd, from our most compassionate God and Savior ask for us the grace of the all-holy Spirit which enlighteneth and strengtheneth us in the work of salvation, that the planting of the Holy Faith by thee in our midst be not in vain, but that, forsaking the ways of impiety and error, we may walk in the light of the commandments of God and attain unto everlasting blessedness, chanting unto God: Alleluia!

Ikos XII

Hymning thy many and all-glorious benefactions shown forth upon the land of Rus in its illumination by the light of the divine Faith, as well as thy great labors and struggles undertaken when thou didst set thy dominion in order, we fervently praise and thank thee, crying out with love:

Rejoice, divinely chosen and divinely glorified ruler of the Russian land;
Rejoice, O its invincible bulwark, protection and defense! Rejoice, tree of paradise who gayest rise to two all-wondrous offshoots: the holy passion-bearers Boris and Gleb;
Rejoice, first among the saints of the Church of Rus!
Rejoice, thou who dost share the throne and dost participate in the choir of the apostles;
Rejoice, for thou dost ever look down upon the realm of Rus and ask of the Lord temporal and eternal good things for it!
Rejoice, O Vladimir, enlightener of the land of Rus!

Kontakion XIII

O all-lauded and all-wondrous equal of the apostles, Prince Vladimir the Great: mercifully accept from us this hymn of thanksgiving for all that the Lord hath given through thee unto us, our fathers and forefathers, and to all the land of Rus, from the day of its conversion to this very hour; and entreat the all-good God to increase His mercy upon us and all our generations, to make us steadfast in the right Faith and piety, and to preserve us from all misfortunes and evils; that through thee we may be counted worthy, as children with their father, to chant unto God forever: Alleluia!

This Kontakion is chanted thrice; whereupon Ikos I and Kontakion I are repeated.