

The Stikhera for the Last Kiss

(Tone 2 “Lord, I Call”)

Come, O brethren,

Let us give a last kiss to (him/her/them) who (*has/have*) died,

And give thanks to God.

For (*he/she/they*) (*has/have*) left (*his/her/their*) family(-ies) and

hasten(s) to the grave,

And (*he/she/they*) troubles (*himself/herself/themselves*) no longer with

vanities,

Nor with the flesh, which suffers sore distress.

Where now (*is/are*) (*his/her/their*) family(-ies) and friends?

We are now parting. ///

Let us pray that the Lord will give (*him/her/them*) rest.

What kind of parting is this, O brethren?

What kind of mourning is this?

What kind of lamentation do we sing at this time?

Come, therefore, let us kiss (*him/her/them*), for only a short time ago

(*he/she/they*)(*was/were*) with us.

(*He/She/They*) shall be committed to the grace.

(*He/She/They*) shall be covered with a stone.

(*He/She/They*) shall reside in darkness.

(*He/She/They*) (*is/are*) buried with the dead.

We, (*his/her/their*) family(-ies) and friends, are all now parting from

(*him/her/them*). ///

Let us pray that the Lord will give (*him/her/them*) rest.

Now all the evil gathering of vanity during life is being destroyed,

For the spirit has departed from its dwelling.

The clay is turning black.

The vessel is shattered.

It is mute, without feeling, dead, and still.

As we escort (*him/her/them*) to the grave, ///

Let us pray the Lord will give (*him/her/them*) rest forever.

What is our life?

It is truly a flower, a cloud, and the morning dew.

Come, therefore, let us look clearly into the graves.

Where is the beauty of the body and where is its youth?

Where are the eyes and the form of its flesh?

All are withered up like grass.

All have vanished. ///

Come, let us fall down before Christ in tears.

The parting of the soul is great weeping and sorrow,

Great sighing and affliction.

Hell and perdition are the life of things that pass away.

The toil of life on earth is an untimely illusion.

Shadow, unreality, a deceiving sleep.

Let us flee far away from every sinful deed of this world ///

So we may inherit heavenly blessings.

As we look upon our dead (*brother/sister/brethren*) before us,

Let us receive an example of our last moment.

For (*he/she/they*) (*is/are*) let from the earth like smoke.

(*He/She/They*)(*has/have*) been clothed in rags, and will be covered with
earth.

Leaving (*him/her/them*) hidden from sight ///

Let us pray to Christ to give (*him/her/them*) rest forever.

When the soul is about to be carried off by force,

By the fearsome angels,

It forgets all of its family and those it knows,

And is mindful of standing before the coming judgement

Of its folly and fleshly toil.

Come, let us implore the Judge ///

And pray that the Lord will pardon the sins (*he/she/they*)(*has/have*)
committed.

Come, O brethren,
Let us see the dust and ashes in the grave from which we were formed.
Where now are we going?
And what shall we become?
What has become of the poor man and the rich man?
What has become of the master or the freeman?
Are they all not ashes?
The beauty of the face has turned to dust ///
And death has withered up the flower of youth.

The illusions and the things of glory of this life
Are truly folly and corruption.
For all of them will end and we all shall die;
Kings and princes, judges and rulers,
The rich and the poor, and every kind of mortal man.
Now for those who in life were committed to the grave, ///
Let us pray that the Lord will grant them rest.

Now all the organs of the body
Are seen to be idle that a short while ago were active.
All are still, dead, without feeling.
For the eyes are closed, the feet are bound.
The hands are still, and ears do not hear.
The tongue is enclosed in silence.
(He/She/They) (is/are) committed to the grave. ///
Truly all human accomplishments are vanity.

Save those who hope in you, O Theotokos,
O mother of the never-setting Sun.
Ask Him Who is exceedingly good in your prayers we beg you,
That He will grant repose where the souls of the righteous rest
To *(him/her/them) who (has/have) departed*.
Present *(him/her/them) (an heir/heirs)* of divine blessings, O most pure
one ///
In the courts of the righteous in eternal remembrance.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit...

(Tone 6)

“As you see me set before you
Mute and without breath
Weep for me, my brethren, family, and all who know me,
For I spoke with you only yesterday,
And suddenly the fearful hour of death came upon me.
Come all those who love me
And give me the last kiss,
For never again shall I journey or talk with you
Until the end of time.
For I go to a Judge Who is impartial,
Where servant and master stand side by side.
King and soldier, rich and poor, are held in equal esteem.
For each will be glorified by his own deeds
Or will be put to shame.
But I ask and implore you all
To pray without ceasing for me to Christ our God,
That I may not be put into the place of torment because of my sins,
But that He may appoint me ///
To a place where there is the light of life.”

Now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Through the prayers of her who bore You, O Christ,
And of Your forerunner and apostles,
Your prophets, hierarchs, the pious and the righteous, and of all Your
saints, ///
Give rest to Your servant(s) who (*has/have*) fallen asleep.

Priest: Prayer of Absolution

*The clergy and choir escort the body/bodies out of the nave in
procession singing “Holy God” (pg. 1).*