

# **Akathist Hymn to The Spiritual Ladder, The Precious Cross**

## **Kontakion 1**

O thrice blessed and all worshipped Cross of Christ, we the faithful venerate and magnify you, being joyous at your divine Exaltation. But as the trophy and unconquered weapon that you are, by your Grace, protect, cover, and shelter those who cry to you: Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Ikos 1**

Angels from Heaven invisibly circle the life-bringing Cross in fear, and seeing it now brilliantly shed light-bestowing Grace upon the faithful, they stand amazed and cry to you such words as these:

Rejoice, O Cross, guardian of the world!  
Rejoice, the glory of the Church!  
Rejoice, you that bountifully gush forth with healings!  
Rejoice, you that enlighten the ends of the earth!  
Rejoice, wood fragrant with life, and treasury of wonders!  
Rejoice, fitly-joined, thrice-blessed, and bestower of Grace!  
Rejoice, for you are the divine footstool  
Rejoice, for you were ordained for the worship of all.  
Rejoice, bowl of nectar, full to the brim!  
Rejoice, torch of the radiance above!  
Rejoice, you through which creation is blessed!  
Rejoice, you through which the Creator is worshipped!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Kontakion 2**

Perceiving the longing within her, Helen spoke to the Emperor boldly: The great desire of your soul seems most agreeable to my zeal; therefore, seeking that most excellent trophy for you as you said, I cry: Alleluia!

## **Ikos 2**

Knowing knowledge formerly unknown, the Queen called out to her attendants: From the bowels of the earth, hasten with speed to discover and give me the Cross, to which, when she saw it, she spoke in fear, crying:

Rejoice, the sign of veritable joy!  
Rejoice, redemption from the ancient curse!  
Rejoice, treasure in the earth, hidden by envy!  
Rejoice, that which appeared in the stars as a sign!  
Rejoice, four-rayed shining and fire-like Cross!  
Rejoice, ladder set on high, once foreseen of old!  
Rejoice, tranquil-appearing wonder of angels!  
Rejoice, greatly-bemoaned wounding of demons!  
Rejoice, welcome relic of the Word!  
Rejoice, quencher of deception's fire!  
Rejoice, O Cross, protector of the helpless!  
Rejoice, the stern trainer of the victors!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Kontakion 3**

The might of the Tree was then shown forth as a true pledge to all; and it raised her that was voiceless and dead to life — an awesome sight to them that shall reap salvation by singing: Alleluia!

## **Ikos 3**

Holding the invincible weapon, Helen ran back to her offspring; and she gave a great leap straightway when she looked upon the Cross most great. She rejoiced and with leaps and songs she cried to it such words as these:

Rejoice, O Cross, vessel of light!  
Rejoice, O Cross, treasury of life!  
Rejoice, bestower of the gifts of the Spirit!  
Rejoice, storm-free port of those at sea!

Rejoice, table that holds Christ as Sacrifice!  
Rejoice, vine that bear the cluster dripping mystical wine!  
Rejoice, for you protect the scepters of Princes!  
Rejoice, for you crush the heads of great serpents!  
Rejoice, illustrious sign of the faith!  
Rejoice, preservation of all the world!  
Rejoice, blessing of God upon mortals!  
Rejoice, mediation of mortals with God!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

### **Kontakion 4**

Receiving divine zeal within, Helen diligently sought and found the Cross hidden in the earth, though displayed in the sky to the King, who exalted and upon seeing it, the people cried in faith: Alleluia!

### **Ikos 4**

Like the sun, did the Cross appear in the world, and all men were filled with its light, and running as towards a star, they viewed it as the cause of good raised up by hands divine; hymning it, they said:

Rejoice, dawn of the spiritual Sun!  
Rejoice, unfailing fount of myrrh!  
Rejoice, summoning of Adam and Eve!  
Rejoice, death-blow to the princes of hades!  
Rejoice, that in being exalted, you now also exalt us!  
Rejoice, that in being venerated, you sanctify men's souls!  
Rejoice, the world-proclaimed report of the Apostles!  
Rejoice, most plentiful strength of Martyrs!  
Rejoice, O Cross, reproach to the Jews!  
Rejoice, praise to men of Faith!  
Rejoice, you through which Hades was cast down!  
Rejoice, you through which Grace did rise up!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Kontakion 5**

Having beheld the God-crowned Tree, let us come under its protection  
Taking it up as a weapon, with it we put our enemies to flight, and touching  
the untouchable, with our lips we cry to it: Alleluia!

## **Ikos 5**

The great Constantine beheld a light from heaven, displaying the sign of the  
Cross in the stars, through which also he was to conquer a multitude of  
adversaries; he made haste to reveal the Tree, and to cry to it such words  
as these:

Rejoice, accomplishment of the ineffable counsel!  
Rejoice, the horn of godly people!  
Rejoice, you that turn back the ranks of our foes!  
Rejoice, flame that burns the demons!  
Rejoice, heavenly scepter of the faithful King!  
Rejoice, invincible trophy of the Christ-loving troops!  
Rejoice, you that humble the arrogance of barbarians!  
Rejoice, you that care tenderly for the souls of men!  
Rejoice, defense against many evils!  
Rejoice, awarder of many good things!  
Rejoice, you on whose account the Christ-bearers rejoice!  
Rejoice, you on whose account the Jews lament!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Kontakion 6**

The Cross of the Lord become a ladder as lofty as Heaven, leading up all  
from earth to the height of Heaven, that they might always dwell together  
with the choirs of angels, abandoning things present as though they were  
not, and knowing how to chant: Alleluia!

## **Ikos 6**

Shining as a light upon all in Hades, O Savior, you enlightened them that  
lay below, and the gatekeepers of Hades, not enduring your, dawning, fell

down as dead; but they that were delivered from them, now behold the Cross and cry:

Rejoice, resurrection of the dead!  
Rejoice, consolation of them that mourn!  
Rejoice, despoiling of the treasuries of Hades!  
Rejoice, enjoyment of the Paradise of delight!  
Rejoice, rod that drowned the Egyptian army!  
Rejoice, that which in turn watered the Israelite people!  
Rejoice, living Tree, the thief's salvation!  
Rejoice, fragrant rose, sweet scent of the godly!  
Rejoice, food of those who hunger in spirit!  
Rejoice, seal that men have received!  
Rejoice, O Cross, doorway to mysteries!  
Rejoice, that from which divine streams pour forth!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

### **Kontakion 7**

When Moses was about to deliver his much-troubled race from the Spoiler, you were given to him as a rod; but you were made known to him also as a symbol of God. Wherefore, amazed at your sovereign might, O Cross, he cried: Alleluia!

### **Ikos 7**

He Who on Sinai gave the law to the God-seer of old, by His own will is nailed to the Cross lawlessly by lawless men; and He loosed the ancient curse of the law, so that beholding the might of the Cross, we might all now cry:

Rejoice, uplifting of the fallen!  
Rejoice, downfall of those who adore the world!  
Rejoice, inauguration of the Resurrection of Christ!  
Rejoice, divine joy of monastics!  
Rejoice, shady-leafed Tree, under which believers are sheltered!  
Rejoice, prophet-proclaimed Tree, which has been planted on earth!  
Rejoice, alliance of the Kingdom against the enemy  
Rejoice, mighty protection of the state!

Rejoice, manifestation of the just Judge!  
Rejoice, condemnation of offending mortals!  
Rejoice, O Cross, help of orphans!  
Rejoice, O Cross, enricher of the poor!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

### **Kontakion 8**

Seeing the strange wonder, let us live our life as strangers, lifting our minds up to Heaven; since for this was Christ nailed to the Cross, and suffered in the flesh, having willed to draw to the heights them that cry to it: Alleluia!

### **Ikos 8**

Perfectly whole, He came down from on high, retaining His divinity, the only Word from before all ages; and being born of a Virgin Mother, He appeared to the world as a lowly man, accepting the Cross, and gave life to them that cry thereto:

Rejoice, starting-point and goal of travelers!  
Rejoice, wisdom and firm support of the saved!  
Rejoice, folly and destruction to the damned!  
Rejoice, fruitful, immortal, and life-bearing plant!  
Rejoice, flower that blossomed with our salvation!  
Rejoice, for you join together things on earth with things above!  
Rejoice, for you enlighten the hearts of them below!  
Rejoice, you through which corruption is banished!  
Rejoice, you through which sorrow has vanished!  
Rejoice, myriad-numbered wealth of good things!  
Rejoice, myriad-named boast of believers!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

### **Kontakion 9**

Fallen is the profane legion of demons, and the race of Jews is put to shame, seeing that the Cross is worshiped by all with longing, as it ever streams forth healing to them that cry: Alleluia!

## **Ikos 9**

The floods of the heretics' notions were checked when you, O Christ, were nailed to the Tree; for they are confounded at how you both endured the Cross and avoided corruption; but we, glorifying your Resurrection, cry out:

Rejoice, height of the wisdom of God!  
Rejoice, depth of His providence!  
Rejoice, ignorance of irrationally-rational babblers!  
Rejoice, misfortune of the foolish fortune-tellers!  
Rejoice, for you manifest the Resurrection of Christ!  
Rejoice, for you revive His Passion!  
Rejoice, undoer of the trespass of the first-created!  
Rejoice, opener of the entrance to Paradise!  
Rejoice, O Cross, revered by all!  
Rejoice, adversary of faithless nations!  
Rejoice, O Cross, healer of the sick!  
Rejoice, constant help of them that weep!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Kontakion 10**

With the purpose of saving the world, the Lord of the world ineffably descended to it and submitted to the Cross; and being God, for us He accepts all that pertains to our nature.'Wherefore, having also redeemed us, He hears from all: Alleluia!

## **Ikos 10**

O Cross, impregnable and divine, we perceive you to be a rampart of the inhabited world; for the Creator of Heaven and earth Who prepared you stretches out His hands — O strange account! —and teaches all to proclaim:

Rejoice, foundation of godliness!  
Rejoice, conquest of the promised land  
Rejoice, you that put the spiritual Amalek to flight!  
Rejoice, you that were prefigured by the hands of Jacob!  
Rejoice, for you fulfilled the prophetic proclamations!

Rejoice, you that upheld the Savior of all  
Rejoice, you that destroyed the corrupter of souls!  
Rejoice, you through which we are united with angels!  
Rejoice, you through which we are illumined by light!  
Rejoice, for with honor we worship you!  
Rejoice, for with glory we praise you!  
Rejoice, for crying out we address you:  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

### **Kontakion 11**

Every hymn, that would comprehend the multitude of your many wonders, falls short; for though we should offer you a multitude of praises, O precious Cross, we should do nothing worthy of what you have granted us, but still we cry: Alleluia!

### **Ikos 11**

This Life-giving Cross bestows the radiance that gives light to them in darkness; for it has shown us the immaterial light, and has illumined the way for all to divine knowledge; and being lifted up, it now lifts up our minds that we might chant these words:

Rejoice, luminary that shines on them in darkness!  
Rejoice, star that dawns upon the world!  
Rejoice, lightning that blinds the slayers of Christ!  
Rejoice, thunder that terrifies the faithless!  
Rejoice, for you made radiant the choirs of the Orthodox!  
Rejoice, for you consumed the altars of idols!  
Rejoice, you whose form has appeared from Heaven!  
Rejoice, you whose Grace drives away evil!  
Rejoice, you that signify mortification of the flesh!  
Rejoice, you that slay the insurrection of the passions!  
Rejoice, you upon which Christ was crucified!  
Rejoice, you by which all the world was saved!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Kontakion 12**

Having willed to grant Grace unto men, Christ stretched out His hands on the Tree, and calls all the nations together, granting the Kingdom of Heaven to all that worthily sing the hymn, and faithfully cry: Alleluia!

## **Ikos 12**

Chanting your hymn, out of love we praise you as the living Tree of the Lord; for being nailed upon you in the flesh, He that rules over the Hosts on high has sanctified, glorified, and taught us to cry these words unto you:

Rejoice, O Cross, spiritual sword!

Rejoice, holy gaze of saints!

Rejoice, prediction of the prophets and righteous!

Rejoice, brilliant ruse of Christ!

Rejoice, beauty and crown of pious Kings!

Rejoice, strength and stronghold of reverent priests!

Rejoice, most noble jewel of truth!

Rejoice, fairest haven of salvation!

Rejoice, joyful splendor of all!

Rejoice, banishment of Hagar's sons!

Rejoice, lamp of purest light!

Rejoice, gladness of my soul!

Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

## **Kontakion 13**

O most laudable Tree which held the Word, the most holy of all holy beings, having received our entreaties, deliver from every calamity and redeem from eternal torment all them that cry to you: Alleluia!

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Rejoice, O Cross, guardian of the world!

Rejoice, the glory of the Church!

Rejoice, you that bountifully gush forth with healings!  
Rejoice, you that enlighten the ends of the earth!  
Rejoice, wood fragrant with life, and treasury of wonders!  
Rejoice, fitly-joined, thrice-blessed, and bestower of Grace!  
Rejoice, for you are the divine footstool  
Rejoice, for you were ordained for the worship of all.  
Rejoice, bowl of nectar, full to the brim!  
Rejoice, torch of the radiance above!  
Rejoice, you through which creation is blessed!  
Rejoice, you through which the Creator is worshiped!  
Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

### **Kontakion 1**

O thrice blessed and all worshiped Cross of Christ, we the faithful venerate and magnify you, being joyous at your divine Exaltation. But as the trophy and unconquered weapon that you are, by your Grace, protect, cover, and shelter those who cry to you: Rejoice, O Tree most blessed!

### **Orthodox Prayer to the Holy Cross (Let God Arise)**

Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered; and let those who hate Him flee from His face. As smoke vanishes, let them vanish; and as wax melts from the presence of fire, so let the demons perish from the presence of those who love God and who sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross and say with gladness: Hail, most precious and life-giving Cross of the Lord, for Thou drivest away the demons by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ Who was crucified on thee, went down to hell and trampled on the power of the devil, and gave us thee, His honorable Cross, for driving away all enemies. O most precious and life-giving Cross of the Lord, help me with our holy Lady, the Virgin Theotokos, and with all the Saints throughout the ages. Amen.