AKATHIST HYMN
FOR THE REPose OF THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP

Kontakion I

O Lord, Who in Thine incomprehensible providence preparest the world for eternal blessedness, and dost determine the time and manner of death for all: Forgive the offenses of those who have died in times past; receive them into the abodes of light and rejoicing; mercifully open Thy fatherly embrace unto them; and hearken unto us who keep their memory and chant:

O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Ikos I

O Good One, Who savest fallen Adam and the whole human race from everlasting damnation, Thou didst send Thy Son into the world, and by His Cross and resurrection hast shone forth upon us life everlasting. Trusting in Thy boundless lovingkindness, we hope for the glory of the incorrupt kingdom, and we beg that Thou wilt bestow it upon our departed ones; and we pray Thee:

O Lord, gladden the souls of those who were beset by the storms of life, that they may forget the tribulations and sighs of earth!

O Lord, hearken unto them in Thy bosom, like as a mother hearkeneth to her children; and say unto them: Your sins are forgiven you!

O Lord, receive them in Thy blessed and calm haven, and open unto them the abodes of the angels and saints, that they may rejoice in Thy divine glory!

O Lord, number them with the Church of the firstborn, that they may praise Thee for all eternity!

O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion II

Illumined with the effulgence of the Most High, the venerable Macarius heard a voice issue forth from a skull, saying: “When ye pray for those suffering in hades, even the heathen experience relief.” O the wondrous power of Christian prayers, whereby light doth penetrate even the uttermost depths! Yea, even unbelievers receive consolation with the faithful when we chant for the whole world: Alleluia!

Ikos II

Memorable are the words of Isaac the Syrian: “The heart that is full of mercy for humans and animals, and for all creation, with tears offereth up prayers at every hour, that they be preserved and purified.” Wherefore, with boldness we ask the Lord to help all who have fallen asleep in times past, crying out:

O Lord, send down upon us the gift of ardent prayer for the departed!

O Lord, remember all who have commanded us, the unworthy, to pray for them, and smooth away the sins they have forgotten!
O Lord, have mercy on all who have been buried without funeral prayers!
O Lord, accept into the dwelling-place those who have died suddenly in sorrow or in joy.
O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion III

We are guilty of causing tribulations in the world, the sufferings of irrational creatures, the pain and torment of innocent babes: for through the fall of men the blessedness and beauty of creation are violated. O Christ our God, Who art the greatest of innocent victims, Who alone hast the authority to forgive all: Forgive all things for everyone, and restore to the world the good estate it enjoyed of old, that both the dead and the living may find rest, crying out: Alleluia!

Ikos III

O gladsome Light, Redeemer of the universe, Who enfoldest the whole world in Thy love! Lo! the cry Thou didst utter from the Cross for Thine enemies, “Father, forgive them!”, is still heard. And mindful of Thy forgiveness of all we dare to entreat the heavenly Father to grant everlasting rest to Thine enemies and ours, saying:

O Lord, forgive those who have shed innocent blood, who have heaped tribulations upon the path of our life, who have built their own prosperity upon the tears of their neighbors!
O Lord, judge not those who have persecuted us with slander and malice!
O Lord, give not over to condemnation those who have despitefully used us!
O Lord, recompense with mercy those whom we ourselves have oppressed or unknowingly offended; and may our supplication for them be hallowed through the mystery of reconciliation!
O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion IV

O Lord, save those who have reposed amid grievous torments, those who were slain, those who were buried alive, those who were covered over by the earth, those who were swallowed up by waves or fire, those who were rent asunder by wild beasts, those who died of starvation, amid cold and storm, those who fell from the heights, or died of sorrow. Grant them Thine everlasting joy, that they may bless the time of their sufferings as a time of redemption, chanting: Alleluia!

Ikos IV

Unto all who were taken by the grave in the splendor of their youth, unto those whom the thorny lot of sufferings fell on earth, unto all who saw no earthly happiness, do Thou, O Lord, grant the compassions of Thy boundless love!
O Lord, reward those who have died under the heavy burden of toils!
O Lord, receive into the bridal-chambers of paradise the male-children and virgins who have fallen asleep, and vouchsafe that they may join chorus at the banquet of Thy Son!
O Lord, assuage the sorrow of parents over the loss of their children!
O Lord, grant rest to all who died orphaned and alone, and who have no one to pray for them, that their sins may be cut off amid the rays of Thy fulsome forgiveness!
O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion V

O Lord, Thou hast provided death as the ultimate means to enlightenment and repentance. In its dread radiance earthly vanity is exposed, the carnal passions and suffering abate, the rebellious mind is humbled, and eternal righteousness is revealed. Wherefore, on their death-beds even inveterate sinners and the godless confess Thine eternal existence and cry out to Thy lovingkindness: Alleluia!

Ikos V

Thou dost provide light through the sun, dost nurture with fruits, and dost gladden both friends and enemies with the beauties of the world, O Father of all consolation. And we believe that even beyond the grave Thy lovingkindness, which hath mercy even on sinners spurned by all, is never exhausted, though we grieve over the hard-hearted and iniquitous who blaspheme Thy holiness.

O Lord, may Thy good and saving will be upon them!
O Lord, have pity on them, who were wounded with pemicious unbelief and did not acknowledge Thee here on earth, that they may recognize and love Thee in heaven!
O Lord, forgive those who have died unrepentant!
O Lord, save those who, their minds benighted, have ended their own life, that the flame of their impiety may be quenched in the sea of Thy grace.
O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion VI

Dreadful is the darkness of the soul which hath withdrawn far from God, for there is the rending of the conscience, the gnashing of teeth, the unquenchable fire and the worm which dieth not! I tremble at such a lot and, as though for my own self, I pray: O ye who suffer in hades, may our hymn descend upon you like a cooling dew: Alleluia!

Ikos VI

Thy light shone forth upon those sitting in darkness and shadow of death, those in hades who remember Thee not, O Christ our God; and, having descended into uttermost depths of the earth, Thou didst lead up to joy those separated from Thee by sins, yet who had not denied Thee.

O Lord, Thy children suffer. Have mercy on them: they have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and their sins are immeasurably grievous, yet Thy mercy is infinite.
O Lord, visit the bitter poverty of the souls which are far from Thee.
O Lord, have mercy on those who rejected the Truth out of ignorance, that for them Thy love may not be fire, but rather the coolness of paradise.
O Lord, for the sake of the innocent babes, have mercy on their parents, and with the tears of mothers redeem the offenses of their children!
O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!
Kontakion VII

O Lord, Who desirest to extend a helping hand to the dead, Who dost disclose Thyself to them in mystic visions, Who revealest Thyself to the living: Thou dost inspires them to prayer, that, mindful of the departed, they may undertake the good works and struggles of the faith for them, crying out: Alleluia!

Ikos VII

Throughout the world the Church of Christ daily offereth up supplications for those who have reposed; throughout the earth, at every hour, the sins of the world are washed away by the all-pure Blood of the divine Lamb. From death unto life, and from earth to heaven the souls of those who have fallen asleep ascend through the power of the supplication made for them before the altars of God.

O Lord, may this mediation of the Church be for the dead a ladder to heaven!

O Lord, have mercy on them at the intercession of the all-holy Theotokos and all the saints!

O Lord, forgive them for the sake of the faithful, who cry out to Thee day and night!

O Lord, in exchange for the supplications of those who suffered undeservedly and the blood of the martyrs, take pity and have mercy on sinners!

O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion VIII

The whole world is a common, sacred grave. In every place lieth the dust of our brethren and fathers. O Christ our God, Who alone hast immutably loved us, forgive all who have died from the beginning to the present day, that with boundless love they may chant: Alleluia!

Ikos VIII

Lo! a day is coming like a burning furnace, the great and dread day of the Last Judgment. The secrets of men will be laid bare, the books of their conscience will be opened. “Be ye reconciled with God!”, crieth the Apostle Paul; “Be reconciled before that fearsome day!”

O Lord, let the tears of the living help fill what is lacking in the dead!

O Lord, let the sound of the angel’s trumpet be an announcement of their salvation, and at the hour of Thy judgment vouchsafe them joyful mercy!

O Lord, crown with glory those who suffered for Thee, and with Thy goodness cover the transgressions of the weak!

O Lord, Who knowest all by name, remember those who sought their salvation in the monastic rank, and be mindful of the blessed pastors and their spiritual children!

O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion IX
Bless ye time which quickly passeth, for each hour, each minute bringeth us closer to eternity. Every new tribulation, every new gray hair, is a herald from the world to come: they are witnesses to earthly corruption; they proclaim that everything changeth, that the eternal kingdom draweth nigh, where there are no tears or sighs, but the joyful hymn: Alleluia!

**Ikos IX**

Just as a tree sheddeth its leaves a little at a time, so doth our life run out with every passing year. The exuberance of youth abateth; the lamp of joy guttereth out; alienating old age cometh on; friends die; those close to us move away. “Where are ye, O ye who are young, joyful and happy?” Their tombs are mute, but their souls are in Thy hand. We sense their gaze from the world beyond the grave.

O Lord, Who art the all-radiant Sun: Illumine and warm the habitations of those who have fallen asleep!

O Lord, that the bitter time of separation may pass forever, vouchsafe that we may joyfully meet again in the heavens!

O Lord, arrange that we may all be one with Thee!

O Lord, return childlike purity and the courage of youth to the departed, and let life everlasting be for them as the celebration of Pascha!

O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

**Kontakion X**

Let us pour forth quiet tears upon the graves of our kin; let us pray with hope, crying out: “Tell us, O Lord, that Thou hast glorified them! And grant Thou a mystic revelation to our spirit concerning this, that we may chant: Alleluia!”

**Ikos X**

Lowering our gaze to the path of life I have trodden, I see the multitude of those who have already died from the first day until now, and who have served for my good. And repaying the debt of love, I cry out for them:

O Lord, vouchsafe the glory of heaven to my parents and loved ones, who kept watch over the cradle of mine infancy, and raised and nurtured me!

O Lord, glorify before the angels those who proclaimed to me the word of salvation, who taught me what is good and righteous by the example of their life!

O Lord, delight with treasured manna those who served me in times of difficulty!

O Lord, reward all their virtues and good works, and save them!

O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

**Kontakion XI**

O death, where is thy sting, where is thy former darkness and fear? Thou art henceforth desirable, for thou unitest us inseparably with God. Thou art the great rest, the mystic Sabbath. The Apostle crieth out: “We desire to die and be with Christ!” Wherefore, looking upon death as a guide to life everlasting, we cry aloud: Alleluia!
Ikos XI

The dead shall arise, and those in the graves shall stand forth, and the living shall rejoice on earth; for the spiritual bodies will rise up, radiantly glorified and incorrupt. Ye dry bones, hearken to the word of the Lord: “Be ye clad in sinews; cover yourselves with skin!” Leave behind the gray times of the past. Ye have been redeemed by the Blood of the Son of God and given life through His death. The light of the resurrection shineth upon you!

O Lord, disclose now unto them all the depths of Thy perfections!
O Lord, reveal to them the unfathomable abyss of Thy lovingkindness!
O Lord, Thou didst shine forth upon them the light of the sun and the moon, that they might also see the glory of the radiant choirs of the angels!
O Lord, Thou didst delight them with the majesty of the rising and waning of the stars of the sky, that they might also see the never-waning light of Thy divinity!
O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion XII

Flesh and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God, and as long as we live in the flesh we are separated from Christ. But if we die, we shall live for eternity. Our corrupt body must needs be clothed in incorruption, and that which is mortal must shine forth in immortality, for us to chant in the light of the never-waning day: Alleluia!

Ikos XII

We expect to meet the Lord; we hope for the brilliant rays of the resurrection; we await the awakening from the grave of those dear to us and the restoration of the dead unto life in the most reverent beauty of life. And we likewise celebrate the coming transfiguration of all creation, and cry out to our Creator:

O Lord, Who didst create the world for the celebration of joy and good, Who hast lifted us up unto holiness from the abyss of sin, grant that the dead may reign in the midst of new life, that they may shine forth like the stars in heaven in the day of their glory!
O Lord, may the divine Lamb be for them never-waning Light!
O Lord, grant that we may celebrate the Pascha of incorruption with them!
O Lord, unite Thou the dead and the living in endless joy!
O Lord, ineffable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep!

Kontakion XIII

O all-loving and unoriginate Father, Who desirest that all be saved, Who didst send the Son to those who were perishing, and didst pour out the life-creating Spirit! Have mercy, forgive and save our relatives and friends who have fallen asleep, NN, and all who have reposed from ages past; and by their intercession visit us also, that with them we may cry out to Thee, our Savior and God, the hymn of victory: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

This Kontakion is recited thrice, whereupon Ikos I and Kontakion I are repeated.
Prayer

O God of spirits and of all flesh, Who hast trampled down death, set the devil at nought, and bestowed life upon Thy world! Do Thou Thyself, O Lord, grant rest to the souls of Thy servants who have fallen asleep—the most holy patriarchs, the most reverend metropolitans, archbishops and bishops, and those who served Thee in the priestly, ecclesial and monastic ranks; the founders of this holy temple; our ancestors, parents, brethren and sisters, who lie here and everywhere; the officers and soldiers who have laid down their life for Faith and fatherland; the faithful slain amid civil strife; those drowned, consumed by fire, frozen with cold, rent asunder by wild beasts; those who reached the end of their life suddenly, without repentance, and did not manage to reconcile themselves with the Church and their enemies; those who did themselves to death in frenzy of mind; all those who have adjured and asked us to pray for them; the faithful who have no one to make supplication in their behalf; those denied Christian burial; and the servants of God, NN. Yea, grant rest to them in a place of light, a place of rest, from whence pain, grief and sighing have fled. And as Thou art the Good One Who loveth mankind, forgive every offense committed by them in word, deed or thought: for there is no man who liveth and sinneth not. For Thou alone art without sin; Thy righteousness is right-eousness forever, and Thy word is truth.

For Thou, O Christ our God, art the resurrection, the life and repose of Thy servants who have fallen asleep, NN., and we send up glory unto Thee, and Thine unoriginate Father, and Thine all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and ever, and unto the ages of ages. Amen.