

A K A T H I S T
for the R E P O S E
of Those Who have FALLEN ASLEEP

KONTAKION 1

O Thou Who by Thy inscrutable Providence didst prepare the world for eternal beatitude and Who appointest times and seasons and the manner of our end: Forgive, O Lord, those who have died in past ages all their sins, receive them into the realms of light and joy, hasten to open Thy Fatherly arms to them, and hear us who celebrate their memory and sing:

O Lord of unutterable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep.

IKOS 1

O Thou Who savest Adam and the whole human race from eternal perdition, Thou didst send Thy Son into the world, O Good God, and by His Cross and Resurrection Thou hast granted us also eternal life. Trusting to Thy infinite mercy, we look for the deathless Kingdom of Thy Glory, we implore Thee to grant it to those who have fallen asleep, and we pray: Gladden, O Lord, souls wearied by the storms of life, that earth's sorrows and signings may not bury them in oblivion. Hear them, O Lord, in Thy bosom, as a mother responds to her children, and say to them: Your sins are forgiven you. Receive them, O Lord, into Thy calm and blessed haven that they may rejoice in Thy divine glory.

O Lord of unutterable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep.

KONTAKION 2

Enlightened by the illumination of the Most High, Saint Macarius heard a voice from a pagan skull: "When you pray for those suffering in Hell, there is relief for the heathen." O wonderful power of Christian prayer, by which even the infernal regions are illumined! Both believers and unbelievers receive comfort when we cry for the whole world: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 2

Saint Isaac the Syrian once said: "A merciful heart is one that burns with love for men and animals and for the whole of creation, and at all times offers prayers with tears that they may be purified and kept." Likewise we all boldly ask the Lord for help for all the dead from the beginning of time and cry: Send down to us, O Lord, the gift of fervent prayer for the dead. Remember, O Lord, all who have charged us, unworthy as we are, to pray for them, and pardon the sins they have forgotten. Remember, O Lord, all who have been buried without prayer. Receive, O Lord, into Thy dwellings all who have died of sorrow or joy by a sudden or untimely death.

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KONTAKION 3

We are to blame for the calamities in the world, for the sufferings of dumb creatures, and for the diseases and torments of innocent children, for through the fall of man the beatitude and beauty of all creation has been marred. O Christ our God, greatest of innocent Sufferers! Thou alone canst forgive all. Forgive, then, all and everything, and grant to the world its primordial prosperity, that the living and the dead may rejoice and cry: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 3

O Glad Light, Redeemer of the world, embracing the whole universe with Thy love: behold, Thy cry from the Cross for Thy enemies is heard: "Father, forgive them." In the name of Thy all-forgiving love we make bold to pray to our Heavenly Father for the eternal repose of Thy enemies and ours. Forgive, O Lord, those who have shed innocent blood, those who have sown our path of life with sorrows, those who have waded to prosperity through the tears of their neighbors. Condemn not, O Lord, those who persecute us with slander and malice. Repay with mercy those whom we have wronged or offended through ignorance, and grant that our prayer for them may be holy through the sacrament of reconciliation.

O Lord of unutterable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep.

KONTAKION 4

Save, O Lord, those who have died in grievous sufferings, those who were murdered, those buried alive, those who were drowned or burned, those who were torn by wild beasts, those who died of hunger or cold, from exposure in storms, or by falling from heights, and grant them all eternal joy for the sorrow of their death.. May the time of their suffering be blessed as a day of redemption, for which they sing: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 4

Recompense with the compassion of Thy infinite love, O Lord, all who have died in the full flush of their youth, who received on earth the thorny crown of suffering, who never experienced earthly joy. Grant recompense to those who died from overwork, through exploitation or sweated labor. Receive, O Lord, into the bridal halls of Paradise boys and girls, and grant them joy at the marriage supper of Thy Son. Comfort and console the grief of parents over their dead children. Give rest, O Lord, to all who have no one to offer prayer for them to Thee, their Creator, that their sins may vanish in the dazzling light of Thy forgiveness.

O Lord of unutterable Love, remember Thy servants who have fallen asleep.

KONTAKION 5

Thou hast given us death as a last prodigy to bring us to our senses and to repentance, O Lord. In its threatening light, earthly vanity is exposed, carnal passions and sufferings become subdued, insubmissive reason is humbled. Eternal justice and righteousness opens to our gaze, and then the godless and those burdened with sins confess on their deathbed Thy real and eternal existence and cry to Thy mercy: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 5

O Father of all consolation and comfort, Thou brightenest with the sun, delightest with fruits, and galddenest with the beauty of the world both Thy friends and enemies. And we believe that even beyond the grave Thy loving kindness, which is merciful even to all rejected sinners, does not fail. We grieve for hardened and wicked blasphemers of Thy Holiness. May Thy saving and gracious will be over them. Forgive, O Lord, those who have died without repentance. Save those who have committed suicide in the darkness of their mind, that the flame of their sinfulness may be extinguished in the ocean of Thy grace.

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KONTAKION 6

Terrible is the darkness of a soul separated from God, the torments of conscience, the gnashing of teeth, the unquenchable fire and the undying worm. I tremble at the thought of such a fate, and I pray for those suffering in Hell as for myself. May our song descend upon them as refreshing dew as we sing: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 6

Thy light, O Christ our God, has shone upon those sitting in the darkness and shadow of death and those in Hell who cannot cry to Thee. Descend into the infernal regions of the earth, O Lord, and bring out into the joy of grace Thy children who have been separated from Thee by sin but who have not rejected Thee. For they suffer cruelly. Have mercy on them. For they sinned against Heaven and before Thee, and their sins are infinitely grievous, and Thy mercy is infinite. Visit the bitter misery of souls separated from Thee. Have mercy, O Lord, on those who hated the truth out of ignorance. May Thy love be to them not a consuming fire but the coolness of Paradise:

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KONTAKION 7

Endeavoring to give help by Thy might power to Thy servants who have fallen asleep, Thou hast appeared to their loved ones, O Lord, in mysterious visions clearly

inspiring them to pray, that they may remember the departed, and do good works and labors of faith and love for them, crying: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 7

The universal Church of Christ unceasingly offers prayers every hour for the departed throughout the world, for the sins of the world are washed away by the most pure Blood of Thy divine crown, and the souls of those who have fallen asleep are translated from death to life and from earth to Heaven by the power of the prayers offered for them at God's altars. May the intercession of the Church for the dead, O Lord, be a ladder to Heaven. Have mercy on them, O Lord, through the intercession of the most holy Mother of God and all the Saints. Forgive them their sins for the sake of Thy faithful who cry day and night to Thee. For the sake of innocent children, O Lord, have mercy on their parents, and by the tears of their mothers, forgive the sins of their children. For the sake of the prayers of innocent sufferers and the blood of martyrs, spare and have mercy on sinners. Receive, O Lord, our prayers and alms as a memorial of their virtues.

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KONTAKION 8

The whole world is a sacred and common graveyard, for in every place is the dust of our fathers and brothers. O Christ our God, Who alone unchangeably lovest us, forgive all who have died from the beginning till now, that they may sing with infinite love: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 8

The day is coming, as a burning furnace, the great and terrible day of the Last Judgment, when the secrets of men will be revealed and the books of conscience will be torn apart. "Be reconciled with God!" cries the Apostle Paul. "Be reconciled before that terrible day." Help us, O Lord, to fill up with the tears of the living what was lacking in the dead. May the sound of the Angel's trumpet, O Lord, be to them the glad announcement of their salvation and the joyful manumission of their freedom at the hour of Thy judgment. Crown with glory those who have suffered for Thee, O Lord, and cover the sins of the weak with Thy goodness. O Lord, Who knowest all by name, remember those who have sought salvation in the monastic life. Remember the blessed pastors with their spiritual children.

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KONTAKION 9

Bless swiftly passing time. For every hour, every moment brings eternity nearer. A new sorrow, a new gray hair are heralds of the coming world, witnesses of earthly

corruption, for all is passing (they tell us) and the Eternal kingdom draws near, where there is no sorrow, no sighing, no tears, but joyful singing: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 9

Just as a tree loses its leaves after a time, so our days after a certain number of years come to an end. The festival of youth fades, the lamp of joy goes out, the alienation and dispossession of old age approaches. Friends and relations die. Where are you, young merrymakers? Their tombs are silent, but their souls are in Thy hand. Let us think how they watch us from the spiritual world. O Lord, Who art the brightest Sun, illumine and warm the abodes of those who have fallen asleep. May the time of our bitter separation pass for ever. Grant us a joyful meeting in Heaven. Grant that all may be one with Thee, O Lord. Restore to the departed, O Lord, the purity of childhood and the genial spirit of youth, and may eternal life be to them a Paschal Festival.

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KONTAKION 10

Shedding silent tears at the graves of our relatives, we pray with hope, and cry expectantly: Tell us, O Lord, that their sins are forgiven. Give our spirit a secret assurance of it, that we may sing: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 10

Looking back, I see the whole of our past life. What a vast multitude of people have departed from the first day until now! And many of them have done me good. In gratitude for what I owe them, with love I cry to Thee: Grant heavenly glory, O Lord, to my parents and those near and dear to me who watched over my cradle in childhood, and reared and educated me. Glorify, O Lord, in the presence of the Holy Angels all who have told me the glad tidings of salvation and have taught me what is right and good, just and true by the holy example of their lives. Fill with delight, O Lord, those who fed me on hidden manna in the days of my sorrow and affliction. Recompense and save all benefactors and all who have helped others personally and by prayer.

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KONTAKION 11

O death, where is thy sting? Where is the gloom and terror that held sway in the past? From now on thou art the longed for means of inseparable union with God. Oh, the great peace of the mystical Sabbath! We long to die and to be with Christ, cries the Apostle. Therefore, we too look upon death as the gateway to eternal life, and cry: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 11

The dead will rise and those who are in the graves will stand up, and those who are alive on earth will exult when they stand with their spiritual bodies, radiantly glorious and incorrupt. Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord: "I will bring upon you a spirit of life, and will lay sinews upon you; and I will bring flesh upon you, and cover you with skin." Rise out of the ancient past, you who are redeemed by the Blood of the Son of God, restored to life by His death, for the light of the Resurrection has dawned upon you. Open to them now, O Lord, the whole abyss of Thy perfections. Thou hast shone upon them with the light of the sun and moon, that they may see the glory of the radiant choirs of Angels, Thou hast delighted them with the magnificence of the heavenly lights of East and West, that they may also see the never-setting light of Thy Divinity.

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KONTAKION 12

Flesh and blood will not inherit the Kingdom of God. While we live in the flesh, we are separated from Christ. And if we die, we live for eternity. For our corruptible body must put on incorruption, and this mortal nature must shine with immortality, that in the light of the eternal day we may sing: ALLELUIA.

IKOS 12

We expect to meet the Lord, we expect the clear dawn of the Resurrection, we expect the rousing from their tombs of our dead relatives and acquaintances and their restoration to the most holy beauty of life. And we rejoice in the coming transfiguration of all creation, and cry to our Creator: O Lord, Who didst create the world for the triumph of joy and goodness, Who hast restored us to holiness from the depths of sin, grant that the dead may reign in the new creation, and may shine as heavenly lights in the day of their glory. May the Divine Lamb be their perpetual light. Grant, O Lord, that we too may celebrate with them a deathless Passover. Unite the dead and the living in unending joy.

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KONTAKION 13

O most merciful and eternal Father, Whose will it is that all should be saved, Who didst send Thy Son to the lost and didst pour out Thy Life-giving Spirit: Have mercy on our relatives and those who are near and dear to us who have fallen asleep, and on all who have died throughout the ages; forgive and save them, and by their intercession visit us, that with them we may shout to Thee, our God and Saviour, the song of victory: ALLELUIA. (3 times)

Then the First Ikos and Kontakion.

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP

O God of spirits and all flesh, Who hast trampled down death, overthrown the devil, and given life to Thy world: Give rest, O Lord, to the souls of Thy servants who have fallen asleep, Patriarchs, Metropolitans, Archbishops, Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Monks and Nuns, and all who have served Thee in Thy Church; the founders of all Churches and Monasteries, and all Orthodox forefathers, fathers, brothers and sisters who lie here and everywhere; officers and men of the armies and navies who have laid down their lives for their Faith and country, all the faithful killed in civil wars, all who were drowned, burned, frozen to death, torn by wild beasts, all who died suddenly without repentance and had no time to be reconciled with the Church and with their enemies; all who took their own lives in a moment of mental unbalance; all who have asked us to pray for them, and those who have no one to pray for them, and all who died without a Christian burial, (**NAMES**), in a place of light, in a place of refreshment, in a place of repose, whence all suffering, sorrow, and sighing have fled away. Forgive every sin committed by them in thought, word and deed, for Thou art the good God and Lover of men. For there is no one who lives without sinning. Thou alone art without sin, and Thy righteousness is eternal righteousness, and Thy Word is Truth.

For Thou art the Resurrection, the Life, and the Repose of Thy servants who have fallen asleep (**NAMES**), O Christ our God, and to Thee we send up glory, with Thy Eternal Father, and Thy Holy and Good and Lifegiving Spirit, both now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.