



Akathist to the Holy Hierarch Ambrose Bishop of Milan

Kontakion 1

Come, O ye faithful, and let us rightly honour with fervent praise Saint Ambrose, the chosen wonderworker and luminary of the Church of Milan. And thou, O merciful God-pleaser, accept from us with love this, our offering, that we may cry unto thee: **R**ejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Ikos 1

The Creator of the angelic hosts and of all creation foretold the beauty of thy soul even from the swaddling clothes of thine infancy, O holy Ambrose, giving thee, when thou camest of age, unto the Church of Milan as an angel, a shepherd, and a teacher of thy noetic flock and, by this, teaching us to call unto thee thus:

Rejoice, thou who in thy cradle wast foreordained by a swarm of bees for service to the Church;

Rejoice, thou who wast called by God to the episcopacy through the voice of a mute babe.

Rejoice, thou who didst disdain the wealth, glory, and honours of the world;

Rejoice, thou who didst desire to serve the one Lord.

Rejoice, worthy successor of Christ's apostles;

Rejoice, venerable coruler with the holy hierarchs.

Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 2

Seeing the Providence of Heaven accomplished in thy miraculous calling to the service of the Church, O most wise one, thou didst commit the remaining time of thy life to fulfilling the Divine will, and didst bring all of thyself and all that was thine to the Lord Who summoned thee, chanting unto Him: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 2

Understanding through a knowledge illumined by God and watered by His word that the foundation of all virtues and the unity of spiritual perfection is love for God and neighbour, O pious one, thou didst hasten to manifest it in thyself not in word alone, but in deed and truth. Therefore, thou didst stretch out thine hand in speedy aid to the poor, distributing all thy possessions to the needy, thereby instructing us to call unto thee thus:

Rejoice, for thou didst love to walk the path of apostolic unacquisitiveness;

Rejoice, for thou didst entrust all thy cares to God's Providence.

Rejoice, imitator of the compassion of Christ;

Rejoice, willing follower of His earthly poverty.

Rejoice, friend and benefactor of thy brethren in Christ;

Rejoice, speedy comforter of the sorrowful and oppressed.

Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 3

Strengthened by the power of the Most High, O venerable one, thou didst bear with serenity the labours and sorrows of thy lofty hierarchal service to the Church of Milan and unto the glory of the Lord Jesus, praising God for all things and singing to Him: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 3

Possessing the staff of power and the strength of the Gospel, sent to you from the Heavenly Sion, O hierarch, thou didst reign in the midst of thine enemies and didst not permit the wolves who walked in sheep's clothing, bearing in their hearts the poison of destruction, to scatter thy flock. Therefore, we dedicate to thee these hymns of praise:

Rejoice, most faithful servant of the Saviour;

Rejoice, most vigilant watchman of the house of God.

Rejoice, most honourable shepherd of Christ;

Rejoice, most wise warrior of the Faith in disputation against teachers of heresy.

Rejoice, destroyer of Arian impiety;

Rejoice, sower of right dogmas.

Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 4

Behold a tempest of sedition threatening the Church of Milan, O Ambrose, by the sweet words of thy speech and the cooperation of God thou didst quell the tumult of the crowd, and thus didst teach the children of this world to chant unto God: **Alleluia**.

Ikos 4

Having heard of thy rebuke, by which thou didst forbid him as a murderer to enter into the temple of God and receive the Sacred Mysteries, the Emperor Theodosius obeyed thee as a humbly penitent sinner and one thirsting to be reconciled to the Lord. Therefore, we rightly exclaim to thee:

- R**ejoice, wise steward of the Mysteries of God¹;
- R**ejoice, faithful keeper of the ordinances of the fathers.
- R**ejoice, emulator of Nathan and the Forerunner;
- R**ejoice, unhypocritical denouncer of transgressors.
- R**ejoice, instructor of repentance and correction;
- R**ejoice, undying glory and adornment of the Church of Milan.
- R**ejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 5

A divinely moving star in the firmament of the Church wast thou, O father Ambrose, by the radiance of thy teaching and life driving away the darkness of heresies and destroying the gloom of godlessness, drawing unbelievers from the shadow of unbelief to the unfading light and leading all to salvation who chant unto God: **Alleluia**.

Ikos 5

The people of Milan, seeing thee to be a wise schoolmaster and abundantly loving father to thy flock, O hierarch, fled to thy compassion in all their sorrows and needs. And thou, O merciful one, didst turn none away, but wast a helper to all men in all things², worthy of such praises as these:

- R**ejoice, protector of orphans;
- R**ejoice, defender of the oppressed.
- R**ejoice, redeemer of those taken captive by barbarians;
- R**ejoice, liberator from satanic machinations.
- R**ejoice, for thou didst rightly bear the name of sweetness;
- R**ejoice, for thou wast truly a sweet instructor and helper for all.
- R**ejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

¹ I Corinthians 4:1

² I Corinthians 9:22

Kontakion 6

Thou wast a preacher of the words of God whispered by an angel in thine ear, O holy hierarch Ambrose; therefore, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb³ did the words of thy mouth sweeten all those who obeyed thee and cried out to God: **Alleluia**.

Ikos 6

Shining like the sun the light of thy virtuous life upon the earth, O divinely wise father, in thee do we behold whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure⁴; for which, glorifying the Holy Spirit, the Cause of good things, Who leadeth thee from strength to strength in a sacred and mystical manner⁵, we cry:

- R**ejoice, most rich treasury of the Gospel virtues;
- R**ejoice, most precious sanctuary of everlasting sighings and prayers to God.
- R**ejoice, godly abode of meekness and humility;
- R**ejoice, secure repository of patience.
- R**ejoice, adorer and most wondrous champion of the churches of God;
- R**ejoice, teacher of the purity of virginity and inexhaustible wellspring of tears.
- R**ejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 7

Desiring to obtain salvation in a multitude of counsel⁶, O humble-minded one, thou didst have as a friend of thine heart a presbyter aged and wise, whom thou revered as a father and with whom thou didst consult regarding thy works⁷; teach us also to do all things with the counsel of our divinely wise fathers, that being saved by their nourishment, we may chant unto God: **Alleluia**.

Ikos 7

Thou didst manifest a sign of Gospel love for thy neighbour, O father Ambrose, when thou didst good unto thine enemies and didst bitterly weep with penitent sinners. Therefore, as unto a shepherd and father who remembered no wrongs and whose heart ached for the salvation of thy spiritual children, we sing:

- R**ejoice, imitator of Christ's gentleness;
- R**ejoice, ardent co-sufferer of penitent sinners.
- R**ejoice, thou who wast benevolent to Justina, who warred against thee;
- R**ejoice, thou who didst heal the withered hand of him who did evil to thee.
- R**ejoice, for thou wast wholly meekness and love;
- R**ejoice, for thou didst attain the heights of humility.
- R**ejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

³ Psalm 18:10

⁴ Philippians 4:8

⁵ "From my youth," Tone 4

⁶ Proverbs 11:14

⁷ St. Simplician, Archbishop of Milan (+401)

Kontakion 8

Powers strange and marvelous hath the finger of God wrought in thy life, O holy hierarch, when by thee he raised the dead youth, healed the paralytic, handed over to demonic possession the Arian who maligned thee for venerating the holy relics, and inflicted wrath upon the shameless woman of Sirmium who mocked thee. And who among those who hear all these things will fail to glorify God, Who is wondrous in thy life, chanting: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 8

Wholly filled with zeal for God wast thou, O father Ambrose, and didst acquire such authority over the demons, that they were unable even to approach the doors of thine house: for fire emitted therefrom and scattered them like dust swept by wind from the face of the earth. As thou art so greatly terrifying to the demons, O God-pleaser, compass about our infirmity by thine intercessions, guarding it from their destructive arrows, that we may cry unto thee thus:

Rejoice, mighty guardian of the faithful against the evil prince of this world;

Rejoice, our faithful defender against his malevolent servants, who are yawning to devour us.

Rejoice, thou who like flame hast scorched the faces of the demons;

Rejoice, thou who like thunder didst vanquish the arrogance of the fallen morning star.

Rejoice, thou who hast trampled down all his power with the power of the Cross;

Rejoice, thou who hast chased away unclean spirits from those who come unto thee.

Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 9

All our life in this vale of earthly sojourning is filled with countless temptations and misfortunes, sins and passions, which war against us: how then can we, wretched ones, escape the eternal torments when inexorable death shall overtake us, save than if thou, O father, together with the Theotokos our hope, shalt intercede for us, chanting unto God: **Alleluia.**

Ikos 9

We see most eloquent orators put to shame by thee, O holy hierarch: thou didst defeat the blasphemous followers of Arius, didst overthrow the haughty-minded Symmachus, didst cause wise men from the East to marvel at the depth of thy theology, and didst enlighten all the faithful with true teaching. Therefore, we pray thee: illumine us with the light of thy divine understanding, that fleeing from the impurity of the corrupting spirit of the age and the temptations of the adversary, we may cry unto thee:

Rejoice, enlightener of our souls;
Rejoice, champion of the Orthodox Faith.
Rejoice, teacher of God's commands;
Rejoice, uprooter of the tares of the enemy sown in the souls of men asleep⁸.
Rejoice, for thou didst reinforce in the true Faith many who wavered in unbelief;
Rejoice, for thou didst make clear the dogma of the Divinity of the Son, of one essence with and equal in honour to the Father and the Spirit.
Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 10

Having won perfect salvation away from fleeting tempests and misfortunes, O God-pleaser Ambrose, forget not us, who are drowning in the tempest of temptations. But as thou thyself hast suffered being tempted, so thou art able to succour them that are tempted⁹, that we may chant unto God: **Alleluia**.

Ikos 10

As a firm bulwark and confirmation well-known to thy city and to all those who honour thy memory, O holy hierarch, we dare to worthily chant unto thee such laudation as this:

Rejoice, thou who pacifiest belligerent kings;
Rejoice, guardian of the prosperity of thine homeland.
Rejoice, for through thee was the Emperor Gratian given victory over the Goths;
Rejoice, for through thee was petitioned from Theodosius peace for many.
Rejoice, for through thee we receive forgiveness of sins;
Rejoice, for through thee are we delivered from misfortunes and acquire harmony with God.
Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 11

The hymn "We praise Thee, O God: we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord..."¹⁰, which more than any woodwind instrument delighteth the faithful, didst thou chant in honour of the Divine Trinity, O holy hierarch. And now in the Church of Heaven with the Angels dost thou chant a new hymn to that selfsame Trinity: **Alleluia**.

Ikos 11

Knowing thee to be a radiant lantern, which whilst still on earth shone with the uncreated light, O holy father, what worthy praise can we sinners offer thee, with what hymn can we the unworthy bless thee, O hierarch of Christ? The One Who alone knoweth the depths

⁸ Matthew 13:25

⁹ Hebrews 2:18

¹⁰ The *Te Deum*, sung in the Moleben.

of the heart and said: "I will honour them that honour Me"¹¹, – He alone knoweth how rightly to honour thee. But as thou, as a man, knowest our infirmity, reject not also, as a merciful father, these our praises, which, though impoverished, are offered unto thee from sincere hearts:

Rejoice, O earthly angel, who whilst still on earth wast illumined with the uncreated light;

Rejoice, O Heavenly man, who whilst still in the flesh wast honoured to behold the most sweet Jesus.

Rejoice, lantern of Divine light, who dost enlighten the ends of the earth with thy teaching;

Rejoice, ray of the noetic Sun, who by the warmth of thy love enlivened His Vineyard.

Rejoice, star radiantly adorning the firmament of the Church;

Rejoice, laudation that to this day illumineth the people of Milan.

Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

Kontakion 12

Deprive us never of thine Heavenly protection, O merciful father, but ever pray for us to the Compassionate Lord, unto Whom thou unceasingly chantest with the choirs of the saints: **Alleluia**.

Ikos 12

Singing of the wonders and ascetic labours of thy venerable life, O holy hierarch, we glorify thy repose, by which thou didst peacefully depart for Heaven, and bless thy co-reign there with the eternal God. And thou, O holy saint, look down from the heights of that, thy blessed haven, on us who are adrift in the tumult of life's cares and who cry unto thee, our invisible nourisher, from the depths of our souls:

Rejoice, thou who hast accomplished well thy voyage across the sea of life and hast not drowned the priceless treasure of the Faith in its abysses;

Rejoice, thou who hast safely sailed to the calm haven of Paradise and received from Christ an imperishable crown.

Rejoice, for rejoicing there, with thy love thou reachest down to us living here below;

Rejoice, for thou ever abidest with us in thy spirit.

Rejoice, for through thee are we delivered from the wrath of God;

Rejoice, for through thy prayers are we directed to the anchorage on high.

Rejoice, O Ambrose, thou holy hierarch of Christ and wonderworker.

¹¹ I Kings 2:30

Kontakion 13

O holy and merciful God-pleaser Ambrose! Receive from us this our praise, which, though humble, is offered unto thee with love and fervour, and speed thou to deliver us from sicknesses of soul and body, from all misfortunes and evils, that having obtained through thee the Kingdom of Heaven, we might hymn God unto the ages: **Alleluia**.

This kontakion is read thrice, after which follow Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1.

Ikos 1

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Kontakion 1

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A Prayer

O most glorious wonderworker, speedy helper in sorrows and fervent prayerful intercessor before God for the world, O holy father Ambrose! We know that thou hast great boldness before the Saviour, standing before His Throne on high, for which cause we humbly fall down before thee: pray unto Him, O God-pleaser, that He may grant unto [our] people prosperity and a peaceful life, and that He may deliver us from enemies visible and invisible, from foreign invasion, from afflictions and famine, from every sorrow and death-bearing pestilence and from every evil thing; and that He may send

down upon all of us, who celebrate with faith thy holy memory and fervently await thine intercession, all things good and needful for our temporal and eternal life, and moreover the remission of sins, tranquility in our thoughts, peace in our hearts, and health for our souls and bodies. Yea, O hierarch of God, shepherd of the most merciful Christ, our most ready protector! Hearken unto us, who ask of thee yet one thing more: be thou a fervent prayerful intercessor and mediator unto the Lord for our spiritual pastors and fathers, *N.N.*, who bear our infirmities and who take care for us until Christ shall take shape in us; that He, the all good and almighty Master, might preserve the most precious days of their lives in inviolable peace and indissoluble strength of soul and body; that by their nourishment and prayers and by thine intercession and mediation He might lead us, His unworthy servants, to the calm haven of everlasting life, wherein the cherubim and seraphim and all the saints, together with the Theotokos and thee, our Heavenly patron, glorify with unceasing voices the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.

Amen.

Another Prayer

O all-holy Ambrose, most excellent God-pleaser, my most merciful Heavenly patron! Look down from the heights of thine abode on high upon me who am unworthy, careless, and despondent in this current life. See me, a sinner, abiding in this present state: with darkened mind, a will inclined toward sin, and a heart joined more to the earth than to the Heavens. See the passionate tempest of my soul and mine infirmity and heedlessness. See along with these also the cunning of the prince of evil and my destroyer; see, O hierarch of Christ, and have compassion on me for the sake of this my sorry state. Help me, O my mediator, by thy speedy intercession. Ask for me determination and strength from the Father of benefactions, that I might do His will: good, well-pleasing, and perfect; might deaden my passions, cast down demons, and crucify the world to myself and myself to the world; and thus might attain a Christian ending to my life: painless, blameless, and peaceful. Upon the departure of my most timid soul from this wretched body of clay, be unto it a protecting angel, a good fellow traveler, a faithful guardian and defender from the wily assaults of the prince of the aerial toll-houses, that having passed through these without harm, by the power of thine intercession, even I, the last of all, might further be vouchsafed to behold the sweetest face of our Lord in the Kingdom of grace, and to glorify Him with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and thy merciful mediation for me, unto the ages of ages.

Amen.