

AKATHIST HYMN

SAINT MARY MAGDALENE, EQUAL OF THE APOSTLES

Whose Memory the Holy Church Celebrates on the 22nd of July

Kontakion I

Prepared by the Lord for a ministry equal to that of the apostles, O holy Mary Magdalene, thou didst follow after thy beloved Christ; wherefore, we lovingly praise thee with hymns. As thou hast great boldness before the Lord, by thy supplications deliver us from all manner of misfortunes, that we may ever cry out to thee with joy: Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Ikos I

The Creator of the angels and Lord of hosts, Who foreknew His good providence, chose thee, O holy myrrh-bearer, from the city of Magdala, freeing thee from the snares of the devil, and thereafter thou didst show thyself to be a faithful handmaid to the Lord, zealous for His glorification in thy life and ministry. And, marveling at God's dispensation concerning thee, we cry out to thee in compunction of heart:

Rejoice, thou who wast called by the Son of God into His wondrous light out of the darkness of the devil;

Rejoice, thou who, through His grace, didst remain pure of body and spirit to the end!

Rejoice, thou who didst with purity utterly preserve thy heart and poverty of spirit;

Rejoice, thou who, first of all, wast counted worthy to behold the risen Christ!

Rejoice, Thou who didst thoroughly conquer the power of the enemy;

Rejoice, thou who hast shone forth in mighty faith and fervent love for Christ God!

Rejoice, thou who didst love Christ the Savior with all thy heart;

Rejoice, thou who didst serve Him faithfully even unto death!

Rejoice, thou whose soul was made new by grace;

Rejoice, thou who didst store the preaching of the Gospel in the treasury of thy heart!

Rejoice, thou who didst announce the news of the Resurrection unto the apostles;

Rejoice, thou who wast honored by conversation with an angel!

Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion II

The holy Mary, beholding herself delivered from the seven cruel demons, cleaved unto Christ God, the Vanquisher of Hades, with all her heart, teaching all men to worship God, not with their lips alone, but with their whole life, and crying out to Him: *Alleluia!*

Ikos II

The human mind is at a loss, pondering how thou didst rise from such affliction to the summit of angelic life by the grace of Christ, O right laudable Mary Magdalene. Wherefore, having thee as our good intercessor, we entreat thee fervently: Deliver us from the abyss of sin, that with love we may cry out to thee such things as these:

Rejoice, thou who didst escape cruel enslavement to the demons;

Rejoice, thou who didst manifestly denounce the deception of the wicked spirits!

Rejoice, thou who hast taught all to have recourse to Christ God amid the assaults of the enemy;

Rejoice, thou who urgest all not to despair amid great sorrow of soul!
Rejoice, thou who hast shown all sinners the way to holiness;
Rejoice, thou who didst recognize the omnipotent power of the grace of Christ!
Rejoice, good instructor in the offering of thanksgiving meet for God;
Rejoice, faithful teacher of the true praise of God!
Rejoice, thou who in thy life hast shown us the right path of this earthly course;
rejoice, good helper of all sinners before God!
Rejoice, protectress of our souls from the deception of Satan;
Rejoice, O our fervent mediatrix before Christ in all sorrow!
Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest
Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion III

By the power of divine grace, as well as by thine own good volition, thou didst leave the house of thy father without regret, as did Abraham of old, and didst joyfully follow after Christ God; wherefore, we entreat thee, O glorious Mary, disciple of Christ: By thy supplications enlighten our hearts with love for God, that we may cry out to Him, now and forever: **Alleluia!**

Ikos III

Possessing the divinely bestowed power of wisdom, O Mary Magdalene, as a good disciple thou didst manfully reject the beautiful things of this world, and thou didst truly serve the Word Who impoverished Himself for us in His great tender compassion. Wherefore, we cry out to thee with compunction:

Rejoice, good disciple of Christ;
Rejoice, instructor in true love for God!
Rejoice, thou who didst recognize well the vanity of this world;
Rejoice, thou who didst manfully spurn its joys!
Rejoice, thou who considered the beautiful things of the world to be as naught;
Rejoice, thou who before time pointed out the good path of life to the ranks of
monastics!
Rejoice, thou who guidest all along the way to Christ God;
Rejoice, thou who didst leave thine earthly home to do works of compassion!
Rejoice, thou who hast found the tender compassion of Christ here and in heaven;
Rejoice, for thereby thou hast attained unto everlasting blessedness!
Rejoice, O wise ewe-lamb who didst flee from evil wolves to Christ, the good
Shepherd;
Rejoice, thou who hast entered into the fold of His reason-endowed sheep!
Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest
Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion IV

The tempest of demonic rage assailed the temple of thy soul with great force, O holy Mary, but was unable to shake it utterly, for thou didst find salvation on the firm rock of the Faith of Christ; and standing thereon, O wise woman, thou teachest all to chant unto our Supremely good God the hymn: **Alleluia!**

Ikos IV

Hearing, O divinely wise Mary, that in following Christ thou didst find true gladness of heart, righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, we also strive for a place in the choir of those who have a share in His divine kingdom. And to thee, as

an heir thereof who hast shown us the way to it, we all say such things as these:

Rejoice, thou who hast loved the heavenly sweetness of Jesus;
Rejoice, thou who hast found true life in Christ!
Rejoice, thou who by faith hast provided for us an image thereof;
Rejoice, thou who now dwellest in the joy of heaven forever!
Rejoice, thou who ever tastest of the food of paradise;
Rejoice, thou who kindled within thy heart the fire of love for God!
Rejoice, faithful handmaiden of Christ God, beloved of Him;
Rejoice, earnest intercessor for us before God!
Rejoice, O our helper amid tribulations; rejoice, O our good and meek teacher!
Rejoice, all-honored habitation of the Holy Spirit;
Rejoice, flute whereby the music of His grace falleth upon our ears!
Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion V

Among the myrrh-bearing women thou wast shown to be a divinely guided star leading all to Christ, O glorious Mary. And now, standing with them continually before the Holy Trinity, by thy supplications cause us also to be admitted to their sacred choir, illumining the gloomy path of our life with thy light, that we may cry out to God with joy: **Alleluia!**

Ikos V

Beholding Christ God hanging upon the Cross, O holy Mary, thou didst show wondrous courage; for many of His disciples deserted their Master. But as thy soul and mind were afire with His eternal divine teachings, thou didst surmount the weakness of thy female nature, and thus shared in the saving sufferings of Christ. Wherefore, seeing this thy valiant courage, we cry out to thee:

Rejoice, adornment and ornament of wise women;
Rejoice, goodly joy of all Christians!
Rejoice, thou who didst suffer with Christ God as He hung upon the Cross;
Rejoice, thou who hast shown us the path of steadfast love for Him!
Rejoice, thou who by such love hast obtained great boldness in intercession before God for us;
Rejoice, beauty and boast of women! Rejoice, mighty refuge for Christians;
Rejoice, thou who art mightier than powerful men!
Rejoice, thou who art wiser than the wise of this world;
Rejoice, for God revealed to thee the mysteries of His wisdom!
Rejoice, for God the Word Himself taught thee true theology;
Rejoice, thou who didst love Christ God more than thine own life!
Rejoice, O Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion VI

By Thy grace Thou healest the infirm and makest weak vessels strong, O Christ our King. For the myrrh-bearing women stood by Thy Cross and announced the grace of the Cross to all without fear; and the choirs of wise women, hastening to emulate the choirs of the angels, ever vigilantly cry out to the Holy Trinity: **Alleluia!**

Ikos VI

Seeking to be illumined by the light of true knowledge of God, O wondrous Mary,

when thou didst see God hanging upon the Cross, thou didst say, weeping: “How is it that our Light now accepteth a voluntary death?” And we, knowing of thy glorious enlightenment by the grace of the Holy Spirit, cry out to thee such things as these:

- R**ejoice, thou who didst weep over the crucified Christ from the depths of thy heart;
- R**ejoice, thou who hast found everlasting gladness in the mansions of heaven!
- R**ejoice, thou who hast provided us with an example of beneficial weeping;
- R**ejoice, for thou art our continual joy! Rejoice, true consolation of all the sorrowful;
- R**ejoice, for thou didst suffer with Christ on earth, for His sake!
- R**ejoice, for thou art glorified with Him and in Him in heaven;
- R**ejoice, mighty conqueror of all our enemies!
- R**ejoice, speedy helper amid all our tribulations;
- R**ejoice, for thy memory is sweet to all Christians!
- R**ejoice, for thy name is most precious to the whole Church of Christ;
- R**ejoice, true vine of the vineyard of Christ!
- R**ejoice, O Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion VII

Desiring to comprehend the invincible power of the Cross, with the other women thou didst stand in the presence of the suffering of Christ at the foot of the Cross of the Savior until the end, O most glorious Mary. And experiencing the pain of the Mother of the Lord with her, thou didst cry aloud in perplexity: “What is this strange mystery? He Who sustaineth all creation hath willed to suffer!” And with love we cry out to Him Who of His own will was lifted up upon the life-bearing Cross: **Alleluia!**

Ikos VII

A wondrous woman wast thou revealed to be in thy love for Christ God, O blessed Mary; for showing it forth in thy bitter lamentations, falling down before Him Who was taken down from the Cross, thou didst bathe His most pure wounds with thy tears. And following the noble Joseph and Nicodemus, the lover of justice, thou didst hasten with the other holy women to the tomb of the Savior, at once weeping and comforting His all-immaculate Mother as she wept inconsolably, her soul pierced by a cruel sword. And we, knowing thy courage to be such, humbly cry out to thee:

- R**ejoice, thou who didst wash the most pure wounds of Christ with thy tears;
- R**ejoice, thou who didst manifestly suffer with His all-immaculate Mother!
- R**ejoice, thou who didst remain with Christ even unto His burial;
- R**ejoice, thou who didst watch with perplexity as Life was laid in the tomb!
- R**ejoice, O our good teacher of tears of repentance;
- R**ejoice, thou who dost instruct us to wash away the defilements of sin thereby!
- R**ejoice, thou who dost urge us to soften therewith our hardened hearts;
- R**ejoice, thou who hast provided for us an example of true wisdom!
- R**ejoice, thou who teachest us to be ever mindful of the suffering of Christ;
- R**ejoice, O glorious Mary, together with the all-immaculate Virgin Mary, our faithful mediatrix!
- R**ejoice, good servant of Christ;
- R**ejoice, thou who didst please the Lord, and not men!
- R**ejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion VIII

The burial of the Bestower of life, Who granteth life to all, appeared a strange thing to thee, O divinely wise Mary. And wounded by the love of Him, while yet enshrouded in the gloom of grief, thou didst bring myrrh to His sepulcher and pour forth tears as sweet-smelling unguents. Wherefore, thou now abidest in the fragrant mansions of paradise, ever crying out to God with the choirs of the angels: *Alleluia!*

Ikos VIII

Jesus was all sweetness, all joy, all life to thee, O holy Mary. And seeing the stone rolled away from the tomb, and finding Him not, thou didst hasten, lamenting, to Simon, the living rock of faith, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved; and with anguish over this thou didst say unto them: "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and I know not where they have laid Him!" But now, free of that sorrow, thou dost rejoice eternally with Christ in heaven. And, hoping that by thy supplications we may enter into the same joy, with compunction we on earth cry out to thee thus:

Rejoice, thou who hast overcome the darkness of night by the radiance of thy love for Christ;

Rejoice, thou who hast taught us to keep nightly vigil in prayer!

Rejoice, thou who art illumined with everlasting light in heaven;

Rejoice, thou who hast bought the kingdom of heaven with poverty of spirit!

Rejoice, for after thy sorrow over the sufferings of Christ thou didst find abundant consolation;

Rejoice, O meek woman, inheritor of the land of celestial paradise!

Rejoice, thou who didst hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, for thou now eatest thy fill at the banquet of heaven;

Rejoice, O merciful one, who didst find the mercy of the Master and dost fervently entreat His mercy for us!

Rejoice, for, as one pure of heart, thou now beholdest God face to face;

Rejoice, for thou, first of all, wast deemed worthy to behold the resurrection of Christ, our everlasting Peace!

Rejoice, thou who wast persecuted for the sake of Christ's righteousness, for thine is the kingdom of God;

Rejoice, thou who hast acquired eternal gladness and a great reward in the heavens!

Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion IX

Every rank of the angels was amazed at the great mystery of Thy glorious resurrection, O Christ our King; and Hades was shaken, seeing Thee descend into the uttermost depths of the earth and break asunder the everlasting bonds which held the captives, O Christ. And, rejoicing with the myrrh-bearing women, we cry out to Thee with gladness: *Alleluia!*

Ikos IX

Even the tongues of the most eloquent of orators do not suffice to recount thy great sorrow as is meet, O glorious Mary, when thou didst stand outside the tomb, weeping. For who can describe the pain of thy soul when thou didst not find the Lord, Whom thou loved more than life, in the sepulcher? Thy grieving heart could not accept the consolation offered by the radiant angels. And remembering this thy

sorrow with compunction, we chant to thee such things as these:

Rejoice, thou who didst enter the cave to see Jesus Christ;
Rejoice, thou who now beholdest Him seated upon the throne of glory!
Rejoice, thou who didst see the radiant inhabitants of heaven while yet on earth;
Rejoice, thou who didst receive from them the joyful news of the resurrection of Christ!
Rejoice, for thou dost now ever rejoice with them;
Rejoice, thou who didst bring myrrh to Christ with love!
Rejoice, thou who didst sweetly hasten to the sweet-smelling fragrance of the myrrh of Christ;
Rejoice, thou who didst reject the bitterness of the joys of the sinful world!
Rejoice, thou who didst love the heavenly sweetness of Jesus;
Rejoice, O goodly and tender plant of the orchard of Jesus!
Rejoice, right fruitful vine of the garden of God;
Rejoice, thou who wast shown to be a temple of the most Holy Spirit, all adorned!
Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion X

Even if Thou didst descend into the grave, desiring to save the world, O Immortal One, yet didst Thou destroy the power of hades and didst rise again, O Christ God, exclaiming to the myrrh-bearing women: Rejoice! And with them we now offer unto Thee the hymn of joy: **Alleluia!**

IkosX

Thy love for Christ, Who loved thee, was stronger than walls of stone, O glorious myrrhbearer Mary Magdalene. Wherefore, thou alone, before all others, didst behold our Life risen from the grave. But thou didst suppose Him to be the gardener and didst cry out to Him, forgetting the weakness of thy nature: “If Thou hast taken Him, tell me where Thou hast lain Him, and I will take Him away!” But His sweet voice showed thee the Master, and hath taught us to cry out to thee thus:

Rejoice, thou who before all others didst see the true Gardener risen from the dead;
Rejoice, thou who hast thine abode in the garden of heaven!
Rejoice, thou who art now continually nourished on the grapes of God’s grace;
Rejoice, thou who art gladdened by the joys of paradise!
Rejoice, for thy love for God conquered nature;
Rejoice, for it hath also taught us zeal for God!
Rejoice, thou who first received tidings of the resurrection from the lips of Christ;
Rejoice, thou who first announced the words of joy to the apostles!
Rejoice, thou who hast found everlasting joy in the heavens;
Rejoice, for thou dost also call us to that joy!
Rejoice, for thou dost ever mediate before God, that we may receive this;
Rejoice, for thou dost fervently offer prayers to Him on our behalf!
Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion XI

There are no words which suffice fittingly to hymn the divine joy of Thy resurrection, O Christ, which, with the other women, the glorious Mary announced to

the apostles on this appointed and holy day, the feast of feasts and solemnity of solemnities. Wherefore, bowing down before the magnitude of the ineffable compassions which Thou hast bestowed upon us, O Christ our King, with humility and love we cry out to Thee: *Alleluia!*

Ikos XI

Thou wast shown to be a radiant star shedding thy light upon our sinful world, O Mary Magdalene, when, after the glorious ascension of the Savior, thou didst go about the cities and villages, proclaiming the word of the Gospel everywhere and laying the easy yoke of Christ upon many. And when thou didst reach ancient Rome, thou didst stand manfully before Caesar Tiberius and didst explain to him, by means of a red-dyed egg and thy wise words, the life-bearing power of Christ. And thou didst also denounce the wicked Pilate and the ungodly high priest, that they might receive a recompense worthy of their iniquitous deeds. And marveling at this great feat of thine apostolate, with joy we cry out to thee thus:

Rejoice, glorious herald of the teaching of Christ;

Rejoice, radiant dispeller of the darkness of paganism!

Rejoice, thou who didst release many men from the bonds of sin;

Rejoice, thou who hast taught the wisdom of Christ unto all!

Rejoice, thou who hast brought many people out of the darkness of ignorance into the wondrous light of Christ;

Rejoice, thou who hast provided us with a model for standing steadfastly for the righteousness of Christ!

Rejoice, thou who loved the salvation of sinners' souls more than thine own life;

Rejoice, thou who understood well the commandments of Christ!

Rejoice, thou who followed them faithfully; rejoice, thou who boldly denounced the darkness of the heathen!

Rejoice, thou who didst not fear the wrath of Caesar;

Rejoice, thou who showed him the malice and designs of the enemies of Christ!

Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion XII

Filled abundantly with grace from God, thou didst lead a multitude of souls to Christ, O glorious Mary; and thereafter thou didst go to Ephesus, where, serving the salvation of men with apostolic love together with the Apostle of love, in a blessed repose thou didst pass on to the Lord, to Whom thou now chantest continually with the multitudes of heavenly singers: *Alleluia!*

Ikos XII

Hymning thy right laudable life on earth and thy glory which is in heaven, we glorify thee joyfully, and hymn and magnify the King of heaven Who is wondrous in His saints; for it is not only thee thyself, O holy Mary who, by His grace, now dancest in the mansions of the righteous, but thou also makest us glad on earth, leaving us the priceless myrrh of thy relics, which the Emperor Leo the Wise commanded to be transferred from Ephesus to Constantinople. And venerating them noetically with faith and love, as a wellspring pouring forth inexhaustible grace upon all who have recourse to them with love, we chant to thee with compunction such things as these:

Rejoice, thou who on earth didst burn with love for Christ;

Rejoice, thou who hast made thine abode in heaven, in the mansions of paradise!
Rejoice, steadfast help of the faithful;
Rejoice, fragrant myrrh, perfuming the Church!
Rejoice, golden censer ever offering up the incense of prayers to God on our behalf;
Rejoice, inexhaustible wellspring of healings!
Rejoice, untold treasure of the grace of God;
Rejoice, faithful participant in the choirs of the apostles!
Rejoice, glorious inhabitant of the chambers of heaven;
Rejoice, for great is thy reward in the heavens!
Rejoice, for thy joy is crowned in the mansions of the saints;
Rejoice, for in thy mediation thou dost ever ask that we receive joy, grace and glory!
Rejoice, O holy Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles, who loved the Lord Jesus more than all good things!

Kontakion XIII

O all-wondrous and most marvelous adornment of women, boast and joy of all Christians, glorious myrrh-bearer Mary Magdalene, who wast shown to be the peer of the apostles! Accepting this our present entreaty, deliver us from all tribulation and sorrow of soul and body, and from the enemies, visible and invisible, who assail us; and by thy mediation guide to the kingdom of heaven all of us who with compunction and love chant with thee to God: **Alleluia!**

This Kontakion is said thrice; then Ikos I and Kontakion I are repeated.

PRAYERS TO THE HOLY MARY MAGDALENE, EQUAL OF THE APOSTLES

Prayer I

O holy myrrh-bearer and most laudable disciple of Christ, Mary Magdalen, equal of the apostles! To thee, as to our faithful and mighty mediatrix before God, do we, the sinful and unworthy, now earnestly have recourse and entreat in the contrition of our heart. In thy life thou didst have experience of the dread wiles of the demons, yet by the grace of Christ thou wast manifestly released from them; therefore, deliver us from the snares of the devil by thy supplications, that, all throughout our life, we may in act, word, thought and the secret workings of our hearts faithfully serve God, the one Holy Master, as we have promised Him. Thou didst love the sweetest Lord Jesus more than all the good things of earth, and didst follow him well all the days of thy life, nurturing not only thine own soul on His divine teachings and grace, but also leading a multitude of people out of the darkness of paganism to the wondrous light of Christ; and knowing this, we entreat thee: Beg of Christ God illuminating and sanctifying grace for us, that, enlightened thereby, we may excel in faith and piety, in feats of love and self-denial, that we may endeavor to serve our neighbors diligently in their spiritual and bodily needs, mindful of the example of thy love for thy fellow man. O holy Mary, vigilantly didst thou pass through this life on earth by the grace of God, and thou didst peacefully depart to the mansions of heaven. Beseech Christ the Savior, that by thy supplications He grant that we may complete our wandering in this vale of tears without hindrance and reach the end of our life in peace and repentance; that, having lived thus in holiness on earth, we may be counted worthy of the blessed life in heaven, and there, with thee and all the saints, may continually praise the indivisible Trinity, hymning the one Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Prayer II

○ holy myrrh-bearer Mary Magdalene, equal of the apostles! With thy fervent love for Christ God thou didst trample upon the evil designs of the enemy, didst find Christ, the priceless Pearl, and didst attain unto the kingdom of heaven. Wherefore, I fall down before thee and, with compunctionate soul and contrite heart, cry out to thee, unworthy though I am: Look down from the heights of heaven upon me, who am beset by sinful temptations. See how the enemy layeth traps for me every day with many sins and tribulations, seeking the destruction of my soul. O glorious and all-praised Mary, disciple of Christ, entreat Christ God, Who is beloved of thee and loveth thee, that He grant me forgiveness of my many transgressions, that by His grace He give me the strength to tread the path of His holy commandments with care and vigilance, and that He make me a fragrant temple of the Holy Spirit; that thus I may reach the end of my difficult life on earth in peace and may find my abode in the radiant and blessed mansions of celestial paradise, where thou and all the saints continually and joyously glorify the consubstantial Trinity: the Father, and the Son, and the Most holy Spirit. Amen.