Akathist to the Holy Right-believing Grand Prince Alexander Nevsky

November 23 (repose); August 30 (translation of the relics)

Kontakion 1. Chosen by Christ the King of kings to shepherd His people in a time of trial, O right-believing Prince Alexander, you laid down your glory for your flock and kept the Orthodox faith unharmed. Standing now with boldness before the throne of the Lord, pray that He may keep us in peace and in the true faith, as we cry to you with love:

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Ikos 1. An angel of peace would have marveled at the counsel of God, who raised up from the house of Vladimir a prince for the days of tribulation. Born at Pereslavl to the pious Prince Yaroslav, baptized Theodore, you were nourished from childhood on the Scriptures and the services of the church. Seeing in you the fruit of that holy upbringing, we sing to you:

Rejoice, blessed offspring of the right-believing princes;
Rejoice, chosen vessel prepared by God from childhood;
Rejoice, for the Lord sent you to a suffering people;
Rejoice, joy of Pereslavl, where you first saw the light;
Rejoice, for you loved the house of God above palaces;
Rejoice, for you learned wisdom from the holy books;
Rejoice, bright dawn of a darkened age;
Rejoice, gift of God to the Russian land;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 2. Seeing the young prince grow in wisdom and stature, Bishop Simon of Suzdal blessed you with the princely tonsure in the Transfiguration cathedral, and you were consecrated to the service of the Lord and of your people. Giving thanks to God for His providence, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 2. Understanding was given to you beyond your years, O blessed one, when your father left you to govern Great Novgorod in your own name. You judged the poor with justice, honored the clergy and listened to the counsel of the wise, so that all marveled at the young ruler and said:

Rejoice, wise ruler of Great Novgorod;
Rejoice, for in youth you showed the prudence of the elders;
Rejoice, righteous judge of widows and orphans;
Rejoice, for you did not respect the persons of the mighty;
Rejoice, lover of the holy temples of God;
Rejoice, for you honored bishops and monks as fathers;
Rejoice, for you governed with the fear of God;
Rejoice, example for all who hold authority;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 3. The power of the Most High overshadowed your marriage to the princess Alexandra of Polotsk, when your father blessed you both with the Feodorovskaya icon of the Theotokos. Before this holy image you prayed all your days, entrusting your life to the Lord, to whom we cry: Alleluia!

Ikos 3. Having learned that the Swedes had entered the Neva in arms, you went into the church of Holy Wisdom in Novgorod and prayed with tears for your people. Coming out, you strengthened your small army with the words of the Psalmist: God is not in might, but in truth. Remembering your faith, we sing:

Rejoice, for you placed your hope in God, not in weapons;
Rejoice, for you sought the Lord before going out to battle;
Rejoice, for you received the blessing of the archbishop;
Rejoice, for you strengthened the fearful with the word of God;
Rejoice, for you knew that victory comes from the Lord;
Rejoice, humble suppliant before the altar of Holy Wisdom;
Rejoice, for prayer was your first and best defense;
Rejoice, teacher of trust in God's help;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 4. A storm of fear arose among the people at the coming of the enemy, yet the Lord comforted them. On the eve of the battle, a watchman beheld the holy passion-bearers Boris and Gleb in a boat upon the waters, coming to help their kinsman. Glorifying God, who is wondrous in His saints, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 4. The people of Novgorod heard of your victory on the Neva on the fifteenth of July in the year 1240, and they named you Nevsky. You did not ascribe the triumph to yourself, but gave thanks to God, and we, honoring your humility, cry to you:

Rejoice, victor on the banks of the Neva;
Rejoice, for the holy martyrs Boris and Gleb stood with you;
Rejoice, for you won the victory with a small army;
Rejoice, for you gave all the glory to God;
Rejoice, defender of the churches of Novgorod;
Rejoice, for you turned back the invader from your land;
Rejoice, for your name became a sign of hope;
Rejoice, humble even in triumph;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 5. Like a divinely guided star, you shone in your land, yet the men of Novgorod repaid your labors with ingratitude, and you departed from them. You bore this wrong without anger, and when they called upon you again in their distress, you returned to them, singing to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 5. Seeing the knights of the Teutonic Order seize Koporye and Pskov, you came back to the city that had sent you away, forgetting every offense. You took Koporye and freed Pskov, and the people received you with joy, singing:

Rejoice, for you forgave those who had wronged you;
Rejoice, for you repaid ingratitude with sacrifice;
Rejoice, liberator of Pskov the God-protected;
Rejoice, for you restored the fortress of Koporye;
Rejoice, for you did not remember evil;
Rejoice, faithful servant of your people;
Rejoice, for you showed the meekness of Christ;
Rejoice, model of patience under wrong;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 6. The ice of Lake Peipus proclaimed your victory, when on the fifth of April in 1242 you defeated the Livonian knights who sought to bring the Russian land under their rule. Seeing the hand of God over His people, the Orthodox sang: Alleluia!

Ikos 6. A new light shone upon the northern lands when you returned from the Battle on the Ice. You entered Pskov amid the ringing of bells and went first to the church of the Holy Trinity to give thanks, so that the people, seeing your piety, cried:

Rejoice, victor on the frozen lake;
Rejoice, for the Lord gave you the victory;
Rejoice, for you defended the faith of your fathers;
Rejoice, for you went first to give thanks in the church;
Rejoice, for you showed mercy to the captives;
Rejoice, for you did not seek the lands of others;
Rejoice, wall of the Russian land in the west;
Rejoice, for God crowned your labors with peace;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 7. Wishing to spare your people from destruction, you understood that the land, wasted by Batu's invasion, could not overcome the Horde by arms. With great humility you traveled to the khans, enduring long journeys and dangers, so that your people might live, and you sang to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 7. Strange and wonderful was your wisdom, O prince: the brave warrior of the Neva bowed his head before the khan, not from fear but from love of his people. You won the friendship of Batu and of his son Sartaq, and through your humility, the Lord gave rest to the Russian land. Therefore we sing to you:

Rejoice, for you laid down your honor for your people;
Rejoice, for you endured the long roads to the Horde;
Rejoice, for courage and humility were joined in you;
Rejoice, for you chose peace to spare the innocent;
Rejoice, wise counselor in days of captivity;
Rejoice, for you preserved the freedom of the church;
Rejoice, for you bore the yoke so that others might live;
Rejoice, servant who imitated the humility of Christ;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 8. Strangers came to you from Rome, offering an alliance if you would accept the Latin teaching. Holding fast to the faith received from the apostles and confirmed by the seven councils, you refused their proposals, singing to God with the Orthodox: Alleluia!

Ikos 8. Wholly devoted to the truth, you answered the envoys that your people knew the teaching of the apostles and of the holy Fathers, and would keep it unchanged. Honoring your faithfulness, we cry to you:

Rejoice, steadfast confessor of Orthodoxy;
Rejoice, for no promise of help could shake your faith;
Rejoice, for you kept the teaching of the holy councils;
Rejoice, for you preferred the truth to earthly advantage;
Rejoice, guardian of the faith of Saint Vladimir;
Rejoice, for you were faithful to the traditions of the Fathers;
Rejoice, for your firmness strengthened the wavering;
Rejoice, pillar of the right faith;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 9. All the angelic powers rejoiced to see you seated upon the throne of Vladimir as grand prince in 1252. You did not grow proud, but gave alms to the poor, built and adorned churches, and made peace with Norway, crying to God the Giver of every good: Alleluia!

Ikos 9. Eloquent orators cannot fully describe your care for the church. In your days, a diocese of the Russian church was established at Sarai, so that the Christians living in the Horde might have a shepherd. Marveling at this fruit of your labors, we sing:

Rejoice, grand prince who ruled in the fear of God;
Rejoice, generous friend of the poor and needy;
Rejoice, builder and adorner of holy churches;
Rejoice, for in your days a bishop was given to Sarai;
Rejoice, for you cared for Christians in captivity;
Rejoice, for you sought peace with your neighbors;
Rejoice, protector of widows and orphans;
Rejoice, ruler who served rather than ruled;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 10. Wishing to save your people from a punitive army after several cities rose against the tribute collectors, you went to the Horde for the last time. By your intercession before the khan, the army was turned back, and the Russian land was spared, singing to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 10. A wall of protection you were for your people even to the end, O blessed one. Falling ill on the road home, you came to Gorodets on the Volga and there received the monastic tonsure in the great schema with the name Alexis. Seeing you exchange a crown for the monastic habit, we cry:

Rejoice, for you gave your last strength for your people;
Rejoice, for you turned back the wrath of the khan;
Rejoice, for at the end you put on the holy schema;
Rejoice, for you exchanged a princely crown for the monk's habit;
Rejoice, Alexis, faithful monk of Christ;
Rejoice, for you prepared for death with repentance;
Rejoice, for you ended your earthly labor in prayer;
Rejoice, for you entered the joy of your Lord;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 11. A hymn of lamentation arose when you reposed in the Lord on the fourteenth of November in 1263. Metropolitan Kirill announced to the people of Vladimir that the sun of the Suzdal land had set, and all wept, yet they glorified God, who had given them such a prince, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 11. Light-bearing was your burial on the twenty-third of November in the monastery of the Nativity of the Theotokos at Vladimir. When the metropolitan came to place the prayer of absolution in your hand, your hand opened and received it, as though you were alive. Filled with awe, we sing:

Rejoice, for the whole land wept at your repose;
Rejoice, sun of the Suzdal land, set but not extinguished;
Rejoice, for the Lord glorified you after death;
Rejoice, for your hand received the prayer of absolution;
Rejoice, for God showed that His saints live in Him;
Rejoice, for your body was brought to Vladimir in honor;
Rejoice, for your memory is kept from generation to generation;
Rejoice, for you rest in the courts of the Lord;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 12. Grace was revealed when your relics were uncovered incorrupt at Vladimir in 1380, and the council of 1547 under Metropolitan Macarius glorified you among the saints. In 1724, your relics were brought to the city on the Neva, where you had once defended the land, and the faithful sang to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 12. Singing of your many miracles, the faithful come to your relics in the Holy Trinity Cathedral of the Alexander Nevsky Lavra, to which they returned in 1989 after years of exile in a museum. Kissing your shrine with love, we cry:

Rejoice, for your relics were found incorrupt;
Rejoice, for the church glorified you among the saints;
Rejoice, for your relics returned to the banks of the Neva;
Rejoice, for the Lord grants healing through your prayers;
Rejoice, for your shrine came home after years of exile;
Rejoice, heavenly patron of soldiers and rulers;
Rejoice, intercessor for all who call upon you in faith;
Rejoice, adornment of the Lavra that bears your name;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 13. O holy and right-believing Grand Prince Alexander, monk Alexis, faithful servant of Christ and guardian of your people: receive this small offering of praise, and pray to Christ our God that He may keep our land in peace, our rulers in justice and all of us in the true faith, so that with you we may sing to Him forever: Alleluia!

This kontakion is said three times.

Ikos 1 (repeated). An angel of peace would have marveled at the counsel of God, who raised up from the house of Vladimir a prince for the days of tribulation. Born at Pereslavl to the pious Prince Yaroslav, baptized Theodore, you were nourished from childhood on the Scriptures and the services of the church. Seeing in you the fruit of that holy upbringing, we sing to you:

Rejoice, blessed offspring of the right-believing princes;
Rejoice, chosen vessel prepared by God from childhood;
Rejoice, for the Lord sent you to a suffering people;
Rejoice, joy of Pereslavl, where you first saw the light;
Rejoice, for you loved the house of God above palaces;
Rejoice, for you learned wisdom from the holy books;
Rejoice, bright dawn of a darkened age;
Rejoice, gift of God to the Russian land;

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Kontakion 1 (repeated). Chosen by Christ the King of kings to shepherd His people in a time of trial, O right-believing Prince Alexander, you laid down your glory for your flock and kept the Orthodox faith unharmed. Standing now with boldness before the throne of the Lord, pray that He may keep us in peace and in the true faith, as we cry to you with love:

Rejoice, holy Prince Alexander, faithful guardian of the Russian land!

Prayer

O holy right-believing Grand Prince Alexander, faithful servant of Christ, defender of the Orthodox faith and guardian of your people: you laid down your honor and your strength for the flock entrusted to you, and at the end you put on the holy schema and gave your soul into the hands of God.

Look upon us who honor your memory, and pray to the Lord that He may grant to those who govern wisdom and the fear of God, to those who serve in arms courage joined to mercy, and to all of us steadfastness in the faith of the apostles and the Fathers. Help us, by your example, to prefer the truth of the Gospel to every earthly advantage, to forgive those who wrong us, and to lay down our lives for others in humility.

By your prayers, may Christ our God turn away from us every division and every enmity, and lead us to a good repentance and a peaceful end, so that with you we may glorify the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.