Akathist to the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew

November 16

Kontakion 1. Chosen by Christ from the tax booth to become an Apostle and an Evangelist, you left everything at His word and wrote the Gospel of the Kingdom for all generations, O holy Matthew. Accept our song of praise, and pray to the Lord for us, that we may follow Him with the same readiness and cry to you:

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Ikos 1. You were called Levi, the son of Alphaeus, and you sat at the tax office in Capernaum, collecting taxes for the rulers. The people despised you as a sinner, yet the Lord saw in you a soul ready for the Kingdom, and so we sing:

Rejoice, Levi son of Alphaeus;
Rejoice, tax collector of Capernaum;
Rejoice, for the people despised you;
Rejoice, for the Lord saw your heart;
Rejoice, for God chose what the world rejected;
Rejoice, for you waited for a word of mercy;
Rejoice, for grace sought you in your sin;
Rejoice, hope of all who feel unworthy;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 2. As Jesus passed by, He saw you sitting at the tax booth and said to you, “Follow Me.” You rose at once, left everything and followed Him, singing in your heart: Alleluia!

Ikos 2. You did not hesitate or bargain, but left your money, your accounts and your position for the sake of Christ. Marveling at your readiness, we cry out:

Rejoice, for you heard the words, “Follow Me”;
Rejoice, for you rose at once;
Rejoice, for you left your money behind;
Rejoice, for you left your accounts unfinished;
Rejoice, for you chose Christ over wealth;
Rejoice, for you did not look back;
Rejoice, for your conversion was complete;
Rejoice, model of ready obedience;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 3. You made a great feast for the Lord in your house, and many tax collectors and sinners came and sat at table with Him. When the Pharisees murmured, He said, “I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” Hearing this, you sang: Alleluia!

Ikos 3. Your house became a place of mercy, where sinners met the Savior, and your feast foreshadowed the banquet of the Kingdom, where all who repent are welcome. Rejoicing in this mercy, we sing:

Rejoice, for you made a feast for the Lord;
Rejoice, for you invited your fellow sinners;
Rejoice, for they sat at table with Christ;
Rejoice, for the Lord came to call sinners;
Rejoice, for your house became a house of mercy;

Rejoice, for your feast foretold the Kingdom;
Rejoice, for you brought your friends to Christ;
Rejoice, host of the merciful Lord;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 4. The Lord chose you as one of the Twelve, and you walked with Him through Galilee and Judea, hearing His teaching and seeing His miracles. You treasured His words in your heart, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 4. You heard the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and you wrote it down for the whole Church, so that every generation might hear the Beatitudes. Thanking God for this gift, we cry out:

Rejoice, one of the Twelve;
Rejoice, for you walked with the Lord;
Rejoice, for you heard His teaching;
Rejoice, for you saw His miracles;
Rejoice, for you wrote the Sermon on the Mount;
Rejoice, for you gave us the Beatitudes;
Rejoice, for you recorded the Lord's Prayer;
Rejoice, faithful witness;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 5. You saw the Lord betrayed, crucified and buried, and you rejoiced to see Him risen from the dead. On the mountain in Galilee, you heard His command, "Go and make disciples of all nations," and you sang: Alleluia!

Ikos 5. You received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost with the other Apostles, and you began to preach the Gospel in Judea to the people of your own nation. Rejoicing in your apostolic zeal, we sing:

Rejoice, witness of the Passion;
Rejoice, witness of the Resurrection;
Rejoice, for you heard the Great Commission;
Rejoice, for you received the Holy Spirit;
Rejoice, for you preached in Judea;
Rejoice, for you spoke to your own people;
Rejoice, for you showed that Jesus is the Messiah;
Rejoice, herald of the Gospel;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 6. Before leaving Judea, you wrote the Gospel for the Hebrews, showing how the Law and the Prophets were fulfilled in Jesus, the Son of David. The Church received your Gospel as the first of the four, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 6. You wrote of the genealogy of Christ, the visit of the Magi, the flight into Egypt and the fulfillment of the prophecies, so that all might know that He is the promised King. Thanking God for your Gospel, we cry out:

Rejoice, first of the Evangelists;
Rejoice, for you wrote for the Hebrews;
Rejoice, for you showed the Law fulfilled in Christ;
Rejoice, for you traced His genealogy;
Rejoice, for you told of the Magi;
Rejoice, for you told of the flight into Egypt;
Rejoice, for you recorded the prophecies fulfilled;
Rejoice, Evangelist of the Kingdom;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 7. The Church places your Gospel first in the New Testament, and she reads it in the weeks after Pentecost, so that the faithful may hear the Kingdom proclaimed. Rejoicing in this order, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 7. Among the four living creatures that Ezekiel saw, the Fathers gave you the face of a man, for you began your Gospel with the human ancestry of Christ. Contemplating this image, we sing:

Rejoice, for your Gospel stands first;
Rejoice, for it is read after Pentecost;
Rejoice, for you proclaim the Kingdom of heaven;
Rejoice, for you bear the face of a man;
Rejoice, for you show the humanity of Christ;
Rejoice, for you show His divine authority;
Rejoice, for you teach us to be His disciples;
Rejoice, living creature of the heavenly throne;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 8. After writing your Gospel, you went out to preach to the nations, and tradition says you labored in Syria, Persia and Parthia, and at last in Ethiopia. You brought the light of Christ to distant peoples, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 8. Wherever you went, you lived in poverty and fasting, eating only seeds, herbs and vegetables, and you healed the sick and cast out demons in the name of Christ. Marveling at your labors, we cry out:

Rejoice, apostle to the nations;
Rejoice, for you preached in Syria and Persia;
Rejoice, for you labored in Parthia;
Rejoice, for you reached the land of Ethiopia;
Rejoice, for you lived in poverty and fasting;
Rejoice, for you healed the sick by the power of Christ;
Rejoice, for demons fled at His name;
Rejoice, enlightener of distant peoples;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 9. In the land where you preached, you converted many to Christ and baptized them, and you built a church and ordained clergy for them. At last you received the crown of martyrdom, and the angels sang: Alleluia!

Ikos 9. Tradition tells that the prince Fulvian, who had persecuted you, saw wonders at your death and believed, and he became a bishop, taking the name Matthew. Seeing the persecutor become a shepherd, we sing:

Rejoice, for you founded a church among the nations;
Rejoice, for you ordained clergy for the new faithful;
Rejoice, for you received the crown of martyrdom;
Rejoice, for you gave your life for Christ;
Rejoice, for your persecutor came to faith;
Rejoice, for Fulvian became a bishop;
Rejoice, for he took your name;
Rejoice, for your death bore fruit;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 10. Your holy relics were later brought to Salerno in Italy, where they are venerated to this day. Pilgrims come to pray at your tomb, singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 10. You who once counted money now teach all who handle money to use it with honesty, and to remember that no one can serve both God and mammon. Asking your prayers for all who work with money, we cry out:

Rejoice, for your relics rest in Salerno;
Rejoice, for pilgrims come to your tomb;
Rejoice, patron of accountants and bankers;
Rejoice, for you teach honesty with money;
Rejoice, for no one can serve God and mammon;
Rejoice, for you call the rich to generosity;
Rejoice, for you warn against greed;
Rejoice, for you show that treasure is in heaven;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 11. Every hymn falls short of your glory, O holy Apostle Matthew, for the Gospel you wrote is read in every land. Receive our song, offered with love, as we sing to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 11. You are a light for all who feel unworthy of God, for you show that Christ calls sinners and makes them Apostles. Calling on your prayers, we sing:

Rejoice, hope of those who feel unworthy;
Rejoice, for you show that Christ calls sinners;
Rejoice, for He made a tax collector an Apostle;
Rejoice, for no one is beyond His mercy;
Rejoice, for you encourage the repentant;
Rejoice, for you teach us to leave our idols;
Rejoice, for you call us to follow at once;
Rejoice, joy of repentant sinners;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 12. The grace of God works through your prayers and your Gospel, and every day the Church hears your words proclaimed. Glorifying the Lord who spoke through you, we sing: Alleluia!

Ikos 12. Singing of your apostleship, we praise Christ, who called you, taught you and sent you into the world. We honor your memory and cry to you:

Rejoice, Levi called from the tax booth;
Rejoice, host of the Lord's feast;
Rejoice, one of the Twelve;
Rejoice, first of the Evangelists;
Rejoice, writer of the Beatitudes;
Rejoice, apostle to the nations;
Rejoice, martyr of Christ;
Rejoice, foundation of the Church;

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Kontakion 13. O holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, receive this our offering of praise. Pray to Christ our God that He may call us from our attachments, open our hearts to His Gospel, and grant us to follow Him without delay, so that we may sing with you forever: Alleluia!

This kontakion is said three times.

Ikos 1 (repeated). You were called Levi, the son of Alphaeus, and you sat at the tax office in Capernaum, collecting taxes for the rulers. The people despised you as a sinner, yet the Lord saw in you a soul ready for the Kingdom, and so we sing:

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Kontakion 1 (repeated). Chosen by Christ from the tax booth to become an Apostle and an Evangelist, you left everything at His word and wrote the Gospel of the Kingdom for all generations, O holy Matthew. Accept our song of praise, and pray to the Lord for us, that we may follow Him with the same readiness and cry to you:

Rejoice, holy Apostle Matthew, who left the tax booth to follow Christ!

Prayer

O holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew, you who left the tax booth at the word of Christ, who welcomed sinners to His table, and who wrote the Gospel of the Kingdom for all generations, we come to you with faith and ask your prayers.

Pray to Christ our God for all who feel unworthy of His love, that they may hear His call; for all who handle money, that they may be honest and generous; and for all who read the Gospel, that they may understand and keep it. Help us, by your example, to rise at once when Christ calls, to leave behind what holds us back, and to bring our friends to His table.

Through your prayers, may the Lord grant us to inherit the Kingdom of heaven, so that with you we may glorify the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.