

Akathist to Saints Peter and Paul



The Holy Glorious and All-Praised Leaders of the Apostles, Peter and Paul - June 29

Sermon of Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo

Today the Holy Church piously remembers the sufferings of the Holy Glorious and All-Praised Apostles Peter and Paul.

Saint Peter, the fervent follower of Jesus Christ, for the profound confession of His Divinity: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” was deemed worthy by the Savior to hear in answer, “Blessed art thou, Simon ... I tell thee, that thou art Peter [Petrus], and on this stone [petra] I build My Church” (Mt.16:16-18). On “this stone” [petra], is on that which thou sayest: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God” it is on this thy confession I build My Church. Wherefore the “thou art Peter”: it is from the “stone” [petra] that Peter [Petrus] is, and not from Peter [Petrus] that the “stone” [petra] is, just as the Christian is from Christ, and not Christ from the Christian. Do you want to know, from what sort of “rock” [petra] the Apostle Peter [Petrus] was named? Hear the Apostle Paul: “Brethren, I do not want ye to be ignorant,” says the Apostle of Christ, “how all our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and all were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ” (1 Cor.10: 1-4)...

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in the final days of His earthly life, in the days of His mission to the race of man, chose from among the disciples His twelve Apostles to preach the Word of God. Among them, the Apostle Peter for his fiery ardor was vouchsafed to occupy the first place (Mt.10:2) and to be as it were the representative person for all the Church. Therefore it is said to him, preferentially, after the confession: “I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in the heaven: and what-

soever thou shalt loose on earth: shall be loosed in heaven” (Mt.16: 19). Therefore it was not one man, but rather the One Universal Church, that received these “keys” and the right “to bind and loosen.” And that it was actually the Church that received this right, and not exclusively a single person, turn your attention to another place of the Scriptures, where the same Lord says to all His Apostles, “Receive ye the Holy Spirit” and further after this, “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: and whose soever sins ye retain, are retained” (John 20: 22-23); or: “whatsoever ye bind upon the earth, shall be bound in Heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosened in heaven” (Mt.18:18). Thus, it is the Church that binds, the Church that loosens; the Church, built upon the foundational cornerstone, Jesus Christ Himself (Eph 2:20), doth bind and loosen. Let both the binding and the loosening be feared: the loosening, in order not to fall under this again; the binding, in order not to remain forever in this condition. Therefore “Iniquities ensnare a man, and everyone is bound in the chains of his own sins,” says Wisdom (Prov 5:22); and except for Holy Church nowhere is it possible to receive the loosening.

After His Resurrection the Lord entrusted the Apostle Peter to shepherd His spiritual flock not because, that among the disciples only Peter alone was pre-deserved to shepherd the flock of Christ, but Christ addresses Himself chiefly to Peter because, that Peter was first among the Apostles and as such the representative of the Church; besides which, having turned in this instance to Peter alone, as to the top Apostle, Christ by this confirms the unity of the Church. “Simon of John” -- says the Lord to Peter -- “lovest thou Me?” -- and the Apostle answered: “Yea, Lord, Thou knowest that I love Thee”; and a second time it was thus asked, and a second time he thus answered; being asked a third time, seeing that as it were not believed, he was saddened. But how is it possible for him not to believe That One, Who knew his heart? And wherefore then Peter answered: “Lord, Thou knowest all; Thou knowest that I love Thee.” “And sayeth Jesus to him” all three times “Feed My sheep” (John 20:15-17).

Besides this, the triple appealing of the Savior to Peter and the triple confession of Peter before the Lord had a particular beneficial purpose for the Apostle. That one, to whom was given “the keys of the kingdom” and the right “to bind and to loose,” bound himself thrice by fear and cowardice (Mt.26:69-75), and the Lord thrice loosens him by His appeal and in turn by his confession of strong love. And to shepherd literally the flock of Christ was acquired by all the Apostles and their successors. “Take heed, therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock;” the Apostle Paul urges church presbyters, “over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28); and the Apostle Peter to the elders: “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly: not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind: neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when is appeared the Prince of pastors, ye will receive unfading crowns of glory” (1 Pet. 5:2-4).

It is remarkable that Christ, having said to Peter: “Feed My sheep,” did not say: “Feed thy sheep,” but rather to feed, good servant, the sheep of the Lord. “Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?” (1 Cor.1:13). “Feed My sheep”. Wherefore “wolfish robbers, wolfish oppressors, deceitful teachers and mercenaries, not being concerned about the flock” (Mt.7:15; Acts 20:29; 2 Pet 2:1; John 10:12), having plundered a strange flock and making of the spoils as though it be of their own particular gain, they think that they feed their flock. Such are not good pastors, as pastors of the Lord. “The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep” (John 10:11), entrusted to Him by the chief Shepherd Himself (1 Pet 5:4). And the Apostle Peter, true to his calling, gave his soul for the very flock of Christ, having sealed his apostleship by a martyr’s death, is now glorified throughout all the world.

The Apostle Paul, formerly Saul, was changed from a robbing wolf into a meek lamb. Formerly he was an enemy of the Church, then is

manifest as an Apostle. Formerly he stalked it, then preached it. Having received from the high priests the authority at large to throw all Christians in chains for execution, he was already on the way, he breathed out “threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord” (Acts 9:1), he thirsted for blood, but “He that dwells in the Heavens shall laugh him to scorn” (Ps 2:4). When he, “having persecuted and vexed” in such manner “the Church of God” (1Cor.15:9; Acts 8:5), he came near Damascus, and the Lord from Heaven called to him: “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?” and I am here, and I am there, I am everywhere: here is My head; there is My body. There becomes nothing of a surprise in this; we ourselves are members of the Body of Christ. “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me; it is hard for thee to kick against the goad” (Acts 9:4-5). Saul, however, “trembling and frightened”, cried out: “Who art Thou, Lord?” The Lord answered him, “I am Jesus Whom thou persecutest.”

And Saul suddenly undergoes a change: “What wantest Thou me to do?” -- he cries out. And suddenly for him there is the Voice: “Arise, and go to the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (Acts 9:6). Here the Lord sends Ananias: “Arise and go into the street” to a man, “by the name of Saul,” and baptize him, “for this one is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel” (Acts 9: 11, 15, 18). This vessel must be filled with My Grace. “Ananias, however, answered: Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints in Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Thy Name” (Acts 9:13-14). But the Lord urgently commands Ananias: “Search for and fetch him, for this vessel is chosen by Me: for I shall show him what great things he must suffer for My name’s sake” (Acts 9:11, 15-16).

And actually the Lord did show the Apostle Paul what things he had to suffer for His Name. He instructed him the deeds; He did not stop at the chains, the fetters, the prisons and shipwrecks; He Himself felt for him in his sufferings, He Himself guided him towards this day. On a single day the memory of the sufferings of both these Apostles is celebrated,

though they suffered on separate days, but by the spirit and the closeness of their suffering they constitute one. Peter went first, and Paul followed soon after him. Formerly called Saul, and then Paul, having transformed his pride into humility. His very name (Paulus), meaning “small, little, less,” demonstrates this. What is the Apostle Paul after this? Ask him, and he himself gives answer to this: “I am,” says he, “the least of the Apostles... but I have labored more abundantly than all of them: yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me” (1 Cor.15:9-10).

And so, brethren, celebrating now the memory of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, remembering their venerable sufferings, we esteem their true faith and holy life, we esteem the innocence of their sufferings and pure confession. Loving in them the sublime quality and imitating them by great exploits, “in which to be likened to them” (2 Thess 3: 5-9), and we shall attain to that eternal bliss which is prepared for all the saints. The path of our life before was more grievous, thornier, harder, but “we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses” (Heb 12: 1), having passed by along it, made now for us easier, and lighter, and more readily passable. First there passed along it “the author and finisher of our faith,” our Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Heb 12: 2); His daring Apostles followed after Him; then the martyrs, children, women, virgins and a great multitude of witnesses. Who acted in them and helped them on this path? He Who said, “Without Me ye can do nothing” (John 15: 5).

Akathist to Saints Peter and Paul

Trisagion Prayers - The Usual Usual Beginning

† In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

† Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God have mercy on us. Amen.

† Glory be to You, Our God, glory be to You!

Heavenly King, Advocate, Spirit of Truth, Who are everywhere present and fill all things, Treasury of Blessings, Bestower of Life, come and dwell within us; cleanse us of all that defiles us, and O Good One, save our souls.

† Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us.

† Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us.

† Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, have mercy on us.

† Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Trinity most holy, have mercy on us. Cleanse us of our sins, O Lord; pardon our transgressions, O Master; look upon our weaknesses and heal them, O Holy One; for the sake of Your Name.

Lord, have mercy. *(3x)*

† Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us

this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

† Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God have mercy on us. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. (12x).

† Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

† Come, let us bow in worship before the King, our God.

† Come, let us bow in worship before Christ, the King, our God.

† Come, let us bow in worship and fall down before the very Lord Jesus Christ, our King and God.

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, O God, in the greatness of Your compassion;* according to the multitude of Your mercies blot out my offence. • Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,* and cleanse me from my sin. • For I acknowledge my iniquity,* and my sin is always before me. • Against You alone have I sinned* and done what is evil in Your sight, • that You may be justified when You speak* and win when You are judged. • Behold, in wickedness I was conceived* and in sin my mother bore me. • For see, You have loved truth;* You have shown me the hidden and secret things of Your wisdom. • Sprinkle me with hyssop and I shall be clean.* Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. • Make me hear joy and gladness;* the bones that were crushed shall rejoice. • Turn Your face from my sins* and blot out all my lawlessness. • Create in me a pure heart, O God,* and renew a right spirit within me. • Cast me not from Your presence,* nor deprive me of Your Holy Spirit. • Give me again the joy of Your salvation,* and sustain me with Your sovereign Spirit. •

I will teach transgressors Your ways,* and sinners will return to You. • Deliver me from blood guilt, O God, the God of my salvation,* and my tongue shall ring out Your justice. • Lord, You will open my lips,* and my mouth shall declare Your praise. • For if You had wanted sacrifice, I would have given it;* You will not take pleasure in burnt offerings. • A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit.* A humbled and contrite heart God will not spurn. •

Deal favorably, O Lord, with Sion in Your good pleasure* and let the walls of Jerusalem be rebuilt. • Then You will be well pleased with a sacrifice of justice, oblations and holocausts;* then they will lay calves upon Your altar.

THE SYMBOL OF FAITH

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty* maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. • I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,* eternally begotten of the Father. • Light from Light, true God from true God,* begotten, not made,* one in being with the Father * through Him all things were made. • For us men and for our salvation He came down from heaven,* by the power of the Holy Spirit He was born of the Virgin Mary and became man. • For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;* He suffered* died and was buried,* on the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; • He ascended into heaven as is seated at the right hand of the Father.* He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,* and His kingdom will have no end. • I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,* who proceeds from the Father* with the Father and the Son He is worshiped and glorified,* He has spoken through the prophets. • I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. * I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. • I look for the resurrection of the dead,* and the life of the world to come. - Amen.

† Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

† Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Glory be to You, O God. (3x).

KONTAKION 1

The Lord Who said of Him: “I am the Good Shepherd,” said to you, O First-Enthroned Peter: “If you love Me, feed My sheep.” And He Who said: “I am Jesus,” said of you, O Pre-Eminent Apostle Paul: “He is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles.” And likewise, to all your colleagues, His apostles, He said: “As My Father has sent Me, even so send I you; go and teach all nations.” And you, receiving such grace from your good Chief Shepherd, as the foremost shepherds and teachers of all the world, from all misfortunes preserve us on the pasture of salvation that we may cry out to you:

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

IKOS 1

“Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonas!” said Christ, the Son of the living God, to you, O right glorious Apostle Peter. How then can we worthily call you blessed who have been called blessed by God Himself? Yet drawn faithfully, by a debt of love alone, we cry out to you:

Rejoice, first among the Apostles, foundation of the Holy Church;

Rejoice, mighty pillar and ground of the orthodox Faith!

Rejoice, ardent lover of the teaching of Christ;

Rejoice, first-seated among the Council of the Apostles!

Rejoice, good gate-keeper of the Kingdom of Heaven;

Rejoice, renowned physician for them that repent of their sins!

Rejoice, you spurned the vanity of the world and loved the spiritual life;

Rejoice, you forsook corruptible nets and fished the whole world with incorruptible ones!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, for you both shone forth like two great beacons;

Rejoice, O you like a pair of steeds were harnessed by God to His chariot of noetic light!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, beholders of God, you are the light of the entire world;

Rejoice, through you the faith which saved us has shown forth from Christ in every place!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 2

O teacher of the Gentiles, who received your title wondrously from on High, you believed when Jesus said to you: “Saul, why persecute Me who cannot be touched by unbelief?” Yet you believe from now on; for, lo, contrary and audacity had darkened you, but I have chosen you to be a witness to My judgments before the rulers, the nations and the children of Israel. And you, O Apostle Paul, called such things by God, cried out: Alleluia!” (3x).

IKOS 2

Hearing a voice from heaven, O Saul, you were thereafter unable to see; for you had adversely persecuted the Inaccessible One and received blindness of your eyes in return for your zeal for the law; but, guided to the font, you attained to divine baptism, where having been immersed with faith, the sight of your bodily and spiritual eyes was restored. Wherefore, mindful of your miraculous calling, we cry out to you:

Rejoice, O Apostles called by God, sent forth to preach to all the nations;

Rejoice, chosen vessel which pours forth the sweetness of the faith of Christ upon all men!

Rejoice, beholder of the Divine Light which illuminates from on High;

Rejoice, you more than others were enlightened by grace after the shadow of the Old Covenant!

Rejoice, you on earth conversed with the Lord Jesus Who appeared to you;

Rejoice, you with His strength dared to denounce them that were adamant in their unbelief!

Rejoice, you have enlightened the whole world with your divinely wise writings;

Rejoice, you following Christ, labored more than others for the salvation of man!

Rejoice with Paul, O Peter, for you overshadow the Holy Church as the two Cherubim did the Ark;

Rejoice, you stand before the Throne of the Most High like two Seraphim!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, for you are like the Heavens which proclaim the Glory of God;

Rejoice, you are the stars which crown the Church!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 3

You were struck with horror, O Holy Apostle Peter, beholding the sheet descending from on High, filled with all manner of living creatures, moreover with unclean beasts, wherein was set forth a parable of God's love for man, signifying it is not fitting to reject those from all the nations who desire to believe in Christ Jesus. And understanding this mystery, you cried out to God: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 3

“Nothing that is vile or unclean has ever passed my lips!” you said, O most Blessed Apostle Peter. But divine providence answered you with a voice from heaven, saying: “What God has cleansed, that do you not revile, calling it unclean; for the Savior came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance!” And we, knowing what was revealed to you, cry out:

Rejoice, O Apostle, who mercifully opened the Kingdom of Heaven;

Rejoice, you not only watch over men, but over the affairs of all the nations!

Rejoice, you with your love cover the multitude of our sins;

Rejoice, you perfected our meager repentance with your mercy!

Rejoice, speedy helper for them that call upon you amid spiritual tribulations;

Rejoice, you by your supplication raise up those dead of body and soul!

Rejoice, you strengthen with the Holy Spirit the faithful who hearken to your word;

Rejoice, you wound the unbelieving with your words, as with darts!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, in that you are as the two eyes of the Church, endued with divine sight;

Rejoice, ever-vigilant guides watching over the New Israel!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, for you are as a guard upon the walls of Jerusalem;

Rejoice, O our instructors, who keep watch over the souls of Christians!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 4

To the Jews living in Damascus you began to preach, O Apostle Paul, enlightened of God, that they might believe in Christ Jesus the Son of God; and they were astonished at how one who before had persecuted them that believed in the name of Christ had - O, the wonder! - himself been transformed into a believer! Wherefore, they took counsel together to slay you; but knowing their intent and the hardness of their hearts, you left them in the blindness of their unbelief and let down over the wall in a basket by the faithful, you cried out to God: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 4

With great zeal, O Holy Paul, you preached to turn away from the prescriptions of the old law and circumcision and to make haste to the font of divine baptism, proclaiming this not only to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles, who's most loving teacher you were. Wherefore, we exclaim to you:

Rejoice, preacher sent by God to announce repentance to sinners;

Rejoice, teacher of piety with a thunderous voice, denouncer of ungodliness!

Rejoice, merciful inviter of them among the Gentiles that are astray, yet hasten to the faith of Christ;

Rejoice, true guide to the straight path!

Rejoice, ship which keeps the faithful from drowning in sin;

Rejoice, helmsman who guides us to the haven of the pleasing of God!

Rejoice, quickly interceding comforter of the sorrowful;

Rejoice, healer who accepts no recompense for curing ailments of body and soul!

Rejoice with Paul, O Peter, for you are like two wings furnished to the Church by Christ, the great eagle;

Rejoice, you are like two wings given to her, the dove, by the Holy Spirit!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, who are doves and through hope have been furnished with wings like eagles;

Rejoice, where Christ was in the body, there were you gathered together!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 5

Sweating from your earthly labors and providing for yourself by fishing, O Holy Apostle Peter, you were called to be an apostle and believed in Christ Who nurtured abundantly, Who fed a thousand people with five loaves; and you followed Him, laboring for food which perished not, but abides to everlasting life; and you cried out to Him as God: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 5

Forbidden by the chief priests and elders of the Jews to teach the name of the Lord Jesus, O Blessed Apostle Peter, arming yourself with steadfast faith, you answered: We ought to obey God rather than man! And having endured imprisonment and stripes for this, you departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of the Lord. Wherefore, we also offer to you exclamations of joy, saying:

Rejoice, you put the council of the Jews to shame by the writings of the prophets concerning Christ;

Rejoice, you rendered asunder the false threats of the Pharisees and Sadducees like a spider's web!

Rejoice, you worked many miracles through the grace of the Holy Spirit;

Rejoice, you grant sight to the blind and the ability to walk to the lame!

Rejoice, you by your shadow raised the sick from their beds of pain;

Rejoice, you healed them that suffered from many unclean spirits!

Rejoice, you summon fishermen to a wondrous catch;

Rejoice, you draw the unbelieving to faith as if they were voiceless fish!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, for you are like two breasts of the Church, the Bride of Christ, our Mother;

Rejoice, you are like two grapes of the vine, which nourish us and make us glad!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, for you are branches of Christ, the True Vine;

Rejoice, you are good husbandmen of the vineyard of Christ!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 6

An Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin, a Pharisee according to the law, a persecutor of the Church of God in your zeal, you called yourself, O Holy Apostle Paul, not hiding your former hot temper against them that believed in Christ Jesus; but as you greatly persecuted the Church of God and strove to destroy it, so now, gloriously adorned by you, and made steadfast in might by your mellifluous teachings, it cried to God: Alleluia (*3x*).

IKOS 6

YWho shall separate us from the love of God? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or like things? You said, O Apostle Paul, preacher of the Word beloved of God, bringing all to the love of Christ who sincerely believe in Him, that with boldness and thanksgiving we may endure tribulation for God's sake. Wherefore, we lovingly exclaim to you these things:

Rejoice, you were a zealot for the law named Saul;

Rejoice, lover of Christ, named Paul, perfected in grace!

Rejoice, light of divine knowledge, illumining them that are in the darkness of unbelief;

Rejoice, star guiding them that languish in the depths of iniquity!

Rejoice, you betroth the souls of the faithful to Christ and summons them to the Heavenly Bridal Chamber;

Rejoice, you endured many tribulations and have made others also steadfast to endure them!

Rejoice, you into whose hands God placed mighty powers;

Rejoice, your sweat-soaked kerchief healed the sick!

Rejoice with Paul, O Peter, for you are like the two pillars which uphold the Church of the Heavenly Solomon;

Rejoice, you like two lilies on its pillars, adorn the sanctuary of God!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, for like flowers do you impart fragrance to the entire world;

Rejoice, you through your fragrance dispel the stench of all iniquity!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 7

On your arrival in Lydda, O Blessed Apostle Peter, you amazed the people living there when by the name of Jesus Christ you raised up Aeneas, who was sick of the palsy, for eight years, and caused him to walk; in Joppa you likewise, by your supplication, returned to life the dead Tabitha; and summoned to Caesarea, you enlightened with divine baptism Cornelius the Centurion with all in his household. Wherefore, we all straightway cry aloud to God in unity of soul: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 7

Simon Magus thought to acquire the grace of the Holy Spirit with silver; but you, O Blessed Apostle Peter, condemned him to inherit damnation with his silver and sternly forbade both the avaricious practice of selling for profit holy and sacred things by first stealing these sacred things. Wherefore, we exclaim to you:

Rejoice, you enriched the Church of Christ with the grace of the Spirit;

Rejoice, you forbade the reception of recompense for holy things in the Church!

Rejoice, you cut off avarice as the root of all evils through the grace of the Spirit;

Rejoice, you cast away covetousness by sanctity as a type of idolatry!

Rejoice, you lead a hard life for the sake of Christ;

Rejoice, you fulfilled well the Commandment of Christ: that you cannot serve God and mammon!

Rejoice, you sternly punished the sacrilege of Ananias with death;

Rejoice, you likewise committed Sapphira, who was guilty of that sin, to the same punishment!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, for you are like two olive trees which pour forth mercy;

Rejoice, for you are like two lamps radiating wisdom!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, as tender olive shoots;

Rejoice, because of you, all are like a fruitful olive tree in the House of God!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 8

Having attained to the third Heaven because of your sanctity of body and soul and been enriched with ineffable benefactions, you descended from there, O Divinely Blessed Apostle Paul, and astonished all, filling those of the Jews and of the Gentiles who believed in Christ with your teachings of the knowledge of God. And together with them, we the faithful, who have a share of your heavenly teaching, cry out to God: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 8

A model for the faithful, you joyfully endured many stripes, beatings and stonings of your body for the sake of sweet Jesus, O Apostle Paul, called by God, manifestly indicating that it is the part of them that believe in Christ Jesus to undergo all manner of tribulations thankfully, for His sake. Wherefore, we also cry out to you, using such exclamations as these:

Rejoice, you joyfully bore the wounds of the Lord on your body;

Rejoice, adamant firm of body and soul, who mightily endured all manner of tribulation!

Rejoice, insuperable confessor of Christ before the nations and their rulers;

Rejoice, teacher invincible in the face of the Israelite teachers of the law!

Rejoice, luminous star which shone forth from the third Heaven;

Rejoice, greatly fruitful branch which buds forth from paradise, full of spiritual food!

Rejoice, you by your teaching have illumined all the earth as with an unwaning light;

Rejoice, you have fed the faithful throughout the world with the produce of your works as with most comely fruits!

Rejoice with Paul, O Peter, for you are as two trees in the midst of the garden of the Church;

Rejoice, you who put forth the fruit of life and good understanding!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, who are like noetic palm trees and cedars;

Rejoice, you have been transplanted to Heaven as the garden of the Heavenly Father!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 9

You were possessed of an all-embracing concern for those who came to the faith of Christ, O Blessed Apostle Peter, that their heart and soul become one. Wherefore, you appointed for their needs a minister, the chaste Stephen, and six other deacons; and you yourself, together with the rest of the Apostles, dedicated yourself to

prayer and the preaching of the Word, instructing all the faithful who cried out with oneness of mind to God: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 9

Aflame with zeal for your Lord, you cut off the ear of Malchus, for he seemed to you as one disinclined to heed the writings of the Prophets concerning Jesus Christ. But, reprov'd for such audacity by your Teacher, O Blessed Apostle Peter, you thankfully bore His reproach and all its contrary results. Wherefore, mindful of your zeal, we cry aloud to you:

Rejoice, you surpassed the rest of the disciples in your zeal for Christ;

Rejoice, manful sword-bearer of Christ in the garden!

Rejoice, you followed Christ, Who was being led to His suffering, even to the house of Caiaphas;

Rejoice, you were prepared for prison and death for the sake of your Lord!

Rejoice, you with bitter lamentation healed your weakness in denying your Master;

Rejoice, you after the Lord's Resurrection were summoned to your former dignity!

Rejoice, you have provided a model of repentance for the rest of us sinners;

Rejoice, you vowed to forgive the weakness of the penitent many times over!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, for you are like the tables of the law of the Lord;

Rejoice, teachers of love for God and neighbor!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, who perfectly kept all the Commandments of the Lord;

Rejoice, you left all and followed after Christ and found all in Him!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 10

Great testimony you produced from the sayings of the Prophets concerning Christ in the face of the leaders of the Jews, and before the Procurator Festus and King Agrippa, O Apostle Paul, who was called of God, and all were utterly brought to nothing; for many of the Jews quoted books to you in their frenzy, and you were answered by both Festus and Agrippa falsely, and were condemned to be sent to Rome. But, enduring everything with thanksgiving, you cried out with the faithful to God: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 10

O Apostle Paul, who were led to proclaim the Life-Creating Trinity in Heaven, most elect vessel of the great mysteries of God: declaring the Good News before the Gentiles, the judges and rulers, you promised salvation to them that desire to believe in Christ Jesus and receive holy baptism in the name of the Trinity. Wherefore, all we the faithful, being of good hope concerning that salvation, cry out to you:

Rejoice, Apostle Paul who spread the mystical doctrine with great understanding of the revelation of the Lord;

Rejoice, confessor of the One God in Three Persons!

Rejoice, you proclaimed Christ to be the One Foundation of the faithful;

Rejoice, you have made all the pious steadfast in that confession!

Rejoice, you endured raging reproaches from the unbelieving Festus;

Rejoice, you uttered words of truth and chastity in his presence!

Rejoice, you most clearly recounted your Heavenly vision to King Agrippa;

Rejoice, you manifestly denounced his error which is not consonant with the faith of Christ!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, for you are like two silver trumpets of Moses;

Rejoice, you call those of earth and beneath the earth to battle against evil!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, who have suffered cruelly as valiant warriors of Christ;

Rejoice, you have vanquished the kingdoms of the earth by faith and have received heavenly things!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 11

Having slain Iakovos, the brother of John, Herod went on to seize you as well, O Divinely Blessed Apostle Peter; and he placed you under heavy guard in prison to await execution. Yet while fervent prayer was being offered up by the Church for your deliverance, the Angel of the Lord loosed your bonds and led you through the gates, which opened of themselves, and you thought that you were beholding a dream. But when the Angel departed, you came to your senses and truly realized that you had been freed; and you cried out to God in thanksgiving: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 11

That which had been asked by Philip: Lord, show us the Father! You came to know, O Blessed Apostle Peter, on Mount Tabor, whereon, beholding the all-glorious transformation of the countenance of the Transfigured Lord, you heard the voice of God the Father say of Him from Heaven: “This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I Am well pleased; hear Him!” And we cry out to you who were counted worthy of such a revelation:

Rejoice, reliable witness of the Transfiguration of Christ;

Rejoice, renowned one who heard the divine voice of the Father from Heaven!

Rejoice, you beheld the countenance of the Son of God illumined like the sun;

Rejoice, you most splendidly received the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit in the cloud!

Rejoice, the most exalted Mystery was disclosed to you upon the mountain;

Rejoice, the majestic glory of the All-Holy Trinity was made manifest to you!

Rejoice, you heard the departure of Christ was to take place in Jerusalem;

Rejoice, you, following Christ, accomplished your departure on a cross in Rome!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, for you are two noetic mountains like Tabor and Hermon;

Rejoice, you from the east and the west to whom was revealed the promised land in Heaven!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, like the mountains of Zion;

Rejoice, you let the sweetness of salvation fall upon us!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 12

We hymn you who stand on equal footing with the Cherubim, O most Blessed Apostle Paul, who were enlightened by divine wisdom in Heaven; for hearing ineffable words that which is not lawful for a man to utter, you traveled the whole world therewith, teaching all to believe in the crucified Christ, the Son of God, and to chant unceasingly to Him as the True God: Alleluia (3x).

IKOS 12

Full of the great revelation of divine Mysteries, O chosen vessel of Jesus, all-wise Apostle Paul, you diligently bore forth the name of God Who has appeared in the flesh and saved them that believe in Him; and having converted many of the Gentiles and fought the good fight, in the city of Rome you finished your course most gloriously for the name of your Lord, and then received therein a crown of righteousness. Wherefore, we cry out to you:

Rejoice, great lover of the name of Jesus, who suffered greatly for Him;

Rejoice, you bore witness before those of Heaven, of earth and beneath the earth, concerning His name!

Rejoice, you bore witness well concerning the Lord in Jerusalem;

Rejoice, you were commanded by Him to bear witness also in Rome!

Rejoice, you denounced the Emperor Nero and converted his consort to the Christian Faith;

Rejoice, you in the same Rome bowed your head beneath the sword, executed with Peter, who was crucified head downward!

Rejoice, at the severing of your honored head, milk flowed forth;

Rejoice, this great wonder drew many soldiers to the faith!

Rejoice with Paul, O Peter, for you are like two rivers of living water gushing forth from the wellspring of the Holy Spirit;

Rejoice, you were shown forth by the confluence of the two rivers named Jordan and Dan!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, like torrents of rivers which gladden the city of the Church of God;

Rejoice, you are like streams of sweetness which give all the faithful a drink from the cup of salvation!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 13

O most glorious and laudable Disciples of Christ, Peter and Paul, First-Enthroned and Equally Enthroned Holy Apostles, who have enlightened the entire universe with the holy faith and will come with Christ to judge the whole world! Your proper dignity is not on earth, but is the glory and praise rendered in Heaven. Accepting now our unworthy entreaty, by your worthy supplications preserve us from all misfortunes, and beseech Christ, the Just Judge, to be merciful to us at the last judgment, that, saved by your mediation, we may chant to God our Savior: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

IKOS 1

Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonas! said Christ, the Son of the living God, to you, O Right Glorious Apostle Peter. How then can we worthily call you blessed who have been called blessed by God Himself? Yet drawn faithfully, by a debt of love alone, we cry out to you:

Rejoice, first among the Apostles, foundation of the Holy Church;

Rejoice, mighty pillar and ground of the orthodox Faith!

Rejoice, ardent lover of the teaching of Christ;

Rejoice, first-seated among the Council of the Apostles!

Rejoice, good gate-keeper of the Kingdom of Heaven;

Rejoice, renowned physician for them that repent of their sins!

Rejoice, you spurned the vanity of the world and loved the spiritual life;

Rejoice, you forsook corruptible nets and fished the whole world with incorruptible ones!

Rejoice with Peter, O Paul, for you both shone forth like two great beacons;

Rejoice, O you like a pair of steeds were harnessed by God to His chariot of noetic light!

Rejoice, all you Holy Apostles, beholders of God, you are the light of the entire world;

Rejoice, through you the faith which saved us has shone forth from Christ in every place!

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

KONTAKION 1

The Lord Who said of Him: I am the Good Shepherd, said to you, O First-Enthroned Peter: If you love Me, feed My sheep. And He Who said: I am Jesus, said of you, O Pre-Eminent Apostle Paul: He is a chosen vessel to Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles. And likewise, to all your colleagues, His Apostles, He said: As My Father has sent Me, even so send I you; go and teach all nations. And you, receiving such grace from your good Chief Shepherd, as the foremost shepherds and teachers of all the world, from all misfortunes preserve us on the pasture of salvation, that we may cry out to you:

Rejoice, O Holy First-Enthroned Peter and Paul, with all the Holy Apostles!

It is truly right to bless you, O God-bearing One, as the ever-blessed and immaculate Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and by far more glorious than the seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

PRAYERS TO THE HOLY PRE-EMINENT APOSTLES PETER & PAUL

Prayer Number 1: O most Glorious Apostles Peter and Paul, who laid down your lives for Christ and beautified His pasture with your blood! Hearken to the prayers and sighs of your children which are now offered up with contrite heart. For, we have darkened ourselves with iniquities, and for this cause we have been covered with misfortunes as with showers; and we have become exceedingly poor in the oil of a good life, and we cannot fend off the ravening wolves which boldly strive to lay hands on the inheritance of God. O you mighty ones! Bear our infirmities and separate yourselves not from us in spirit, that we not depart utterly from the love of God; but

with your mighty assistance defend us, that the Lord have mercy on us all for the sake of your prayers, that He rend asunder the handwriting of our countless sins, and that He vouchsafe us with all the saints the blessed kingdom and the wedding feast of His Lamb, to Whom be honor and glory, thanksgiving and worship, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer Number 2: O Holy Peter, Chief of the Apostles, rock of faith fixed firmly upon Christ, the Chief Cornerstone, through your confession, pray that, unmoved by the imaginations of my mind and carnal lusts, I too, may through faith be fixed firmly upon Christ, the Rock, living, chosen and precious; that through love I may be made perfect as a temple of the spirit, wherein I may offer up spiritual sacrifices to Jesus Christ our God. O Holy Paul, Chief of the Apostles, chosen vessel of Christ, overflowing with grace and the glory of God! Entreat the Creator, Who has authority over creation that He make of me, who am now a vessel of perdition, a vessel of honor for Himself, sanctified and fitting, ready for every good work, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer Number 3: Foremost of the Apostles: Peter, steadfast exponent of the faith of Christ, and Paul, melodious swallow of the teaching of the Lord! We perceive you to be a flowing river recounting the words of Christ, gushing forth from the breast of the Lord, disclosing to us the depths of the well of divinely revealed truths. We see you to be lamps which make things clear for us with streams of the fervor of divine love from Heaven. We bless you, for you endured tribulation and pain to sow the seed of divine teaching, and with your footsteps went around all the ends of the earth. With compunction we entreat you, O Holy Apostles: cause us, in our sinful foolishness, to fall prostrate before the Lord, our Teacher; cause that the head of our pride be cut off, and hasten to raise us up by your unceasing supplications, that there, with the choir of

the Angels and the Apostles, we may glorify the Father of all, Who is wondrous in His saints, and Who sent our Lord Jesus Christ into the world, as well as the Holy Spirit, Who is One in Essence with Them, now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer Number 3: O Holy Peter, Chief of the Apostles, rock of faith steadfast in your confession, foundation of the Church, immovable in Christ, pastor of the rational flock of Christ, keeper of the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, fisherman most wise, who from the depths of unbelief draws forth men! You I humbly entreat, that the net of your divine draught encompass me and draw me forth from the abyss of perdition. I know that you have received from God the authority to loose and to bind; release me who am bound fast with bonds of sin, show forth your mercy on me, wretch that I am, and give life to my soul which has been slain by sins, as before you rose up Tabitha from the dead; restore me to the good path, as before you restored the lame man at the Beautiful Gates, who had been lame from his mother's womb; and as you healed all the infirmed by your shadow, may the grace given to you by God overshadow me, healing my ailments of body and soul. For you can do all things, O Holy One, through the power of Christ, for whose sake you forsook all to follow in His steps. Wherefore, pray to Him on my behalf, wretch that I am, that by your supplications He may deliver me from all evil and teach me with a pure heart to send up glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and now and for ever and ever. Amen.

Prayer Number 4: O Holy Paul, eminent among the Apostles, chosen vessel of Christ, recounter of Heavenly Mysteries, teacher of all the nations, clarion of the Church, renowned orator, who endured many misfortunes for the name of Christ, who traversed the sea and went about the land, and converted us from the deception of idolatry! You do I entreat and to you do I cry: disdain me

not, defiled as I am, but raise me up who have fallen through sinful sloth, as in Lystra you rose up the man who had been lame from his mother's womb; and as you gave life to Euthyches who lay dead, so also raise me up from my dead works; and as at your entreaty the foundation of the prison once quaked and you loosed the bonds of the prisoners, so draw me out of the snare of the enemy, and strengthen me to do the will of God. For you can do all things by the authority given to you by God, to Whom is due all glory, honor and worship, with His Unoriginate Father and His all Holy, Good and Life-Creating Spirit, now and ever, and to ages of ages. Amen.

The Trisagion Prayers on page 8 (through Our Father)

THE DISMISSAL

More honorable than the cherubim and by far more glorious than the seraphim; ever a virgin, you gave birth to God the Word, O true Mother of God, we magnify you.

†Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Now and for ever and ever. Amen. Lord, have mercy. (3)

† Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God have mercy on us. Amen.