

THE AKATHIST TO SAINT SEBASTIAN OF JACKSON

Kontakion 1

As the golden-rayed Sun, O our father Equal-to-the-Apostles, you shine upon us from Mounts Eternal and illuminate the chosen People with the Divine Truth, summoning to Eternal Life all who with love glorify you and with joy sing to you:

Rejoice, O Saint Sebastian Equal-to-the-Apostles, Heaven-revealed praise of Orthodoxy!

Ikos 1

O, divine preacher of the Risen Christ, Sebastian of Jackson, the God-revealed Saint, you witnessed untiringly the True Life through your life and deeds, and as an angel, you summoned all the people of the world into the embrace of the Holy Church and transferred into the Heavenly Abode, wherefrom you announce the Life Eternal and intercede never-silently that together with you we may be partakers of Eternal Love and with infinite joy we may ever sing to you:

Rejoice, good shepherd, for you served the Lord with immortal love!

Rejoice, dweller of the Heavenly Abode, you proclaimed to us the Divine Love of the Most Holy Trinity!

Rejoice, O God-like, for you guided God-loving souls to Christ!

Rejoice, the treasured adornment of the Church, for you have illumined everything with the golden-rayed Truth!

Rejoice, O holy father Sebastian of Jackson, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlightener of all America!

Kontakion 2

The holy seed of Saint Sava from ancient Sasovići, by Herceg Novi in the Kotor Bay, having been transplanted to California's San Francisco, where you were born and raised, bore invaluable fruit in you, the virtuous youth, and from earliest childhood you flourished in Christ within God's Church, absorbed the True Life at the Fountain of Immortality, and in the New World became your kin's greatest missionary, O glorious Saint, and summoned all to the union with the Most Holy Trinity – God of Eternal Love, whilst living for God a life most holy and unceasingly glorifying God with the song: Alleluia!

Ikos 2

As a herald of the Lamb of God, you were named after Saint John the Baptist, your family's Patron Saint and Slava, and from an early age already, you joyfully treaded after the Good Shepherd, regularly went to Divine Services wherein you read and chanted, attended church school, only desiring to serve Holy Service to your God, Who made you His saint, sealed you with the pre-eternal gift of His Love and inspired the hearts of the faithful to sing to you:

Rejoice, for with your blazing love you guided all people to the knowledge of the Truth!

Rejoice, for with the thirst of Christ you sought after the people of God!

Rejoice, abundance of virtues, for you humbly glorified God!

Rejoice, flaming beacon of Orthodoxy, for into your heart you enclosed the Holy Church!

Rejoice, O Saint Sebastian Equal-to-the-Apostles, Heaven-revealed praise of Orthodoxy!

Kontakion 3

As a chaste youth, living angelically, the Divine Services of the Church you loved with all your heart, invariably praising God with song, and as a young teacher of the faith, you were zealous to glorify Him everlastingly: Alleluia!

Ikos 3

To faraway Alaska, the cradle of American Orthodoxy, as a servant of the Holy Church, you were sent to the people of God, and to both the newcomers of your ancestry and the Tlingit natives, you witnessed Christ equally and pure-heartedly, hence the Lord inextinguishably ignited the apostolic flame within you and made you a fervent torch of Orthodoxy, that we may sing with joy to you:

Rejoice, for with light of the words divine, you rescued people from the darkness of ignorance!

Rejoice, for those who searched for worldly gold, you enriched with the golden Truth!

Rejoice, whilst building churches to God, you edified temples in the souls of the faithful!

Rejoice, whilst directing people to the True Church, unto Christ our God you ascended angelically!

Rejoice, O holy father Sebastian of Jackson, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlightener of all America!

Kontakion 4

Being a young theologian in Tsar's Saint Petersburg and holy Kiev, offering yourself as a present to the Lord, you received monastic tonsure on the Feast Day of the Holy Martyr Sebastian of Milan and Rome and after him you were named, thereon becoming a hierodeacon on Christmas, with a meek and humble heart, you took on the light burden of Christ, crucified yourself for Christ and in Eternity embraced your Lord with the song of thanksgiving: Alleluia!

Ikos 4

O, golden-mouthed messenger of glad tidings of the Gospel of Christ, in the Cathedral church in your hometown, you were the first to preach Christ in the native English language and sacredly you pleased God, Who swiftly, on the Feast of the Dormition of the Most Holy Mother of God, dignified you with the priestly rank, delighting the Holy Church to sing to you:

Rejoice, having put on the full armor of God, you gloriously fought arduous battles for the Lord!

Rejoice, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, you continuously proclaimed the Gospel of peace!

Rejoice, armed with the sword of the Spirit, you baptized with the Word of God as with fire!

Rejoice, for you took up the helmet of salvation and for eternity united yourself to Christ the Lord!

Rejoice, O Saint Sebastian Equal-to-the-Apostles, Heaven-revealed praise of Orthodoxy!

Kontakion 5

Being a loyal servant of His, the Lord answered your prayer and entrusted you with the missionary work in the New World, making you a great successor to the Apostolic work, so that you may reveal the Church as the Holy Will of God and gather as one the dispersed children of God, so they would, with one heart and with one mouth, glorify God with the song: Alleluia!

Ikos 5

With the fear of God, faith and love, you performed Apostolic work, having been a true man, in the Truth you abided and revealed the Living God as the Truth, and to the Church as the ever-living union of God with people, you tirelessly summoned and saved from eternal death those who sing to you:

Rejoice, for everywhere you wearilessly sought after the lost sheep of Christ's flock!

Rejoice, for you witnessed of Christ the Savior as the True Church!

Rejoice, for you rescued the Orthodox faithful from the temptation of heresy!

Rejoice, for you shared the abundance of Life in Christ with your neighbor!

Rejoice, O holy father Sebastian of Jackson, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlightener of all America!

Kontakion 6

As a monk of Christ, our venerable father, breathing the air of Eternity and having renounced yourself, the Life of Christ you lived, co-crucified yourself with Christ and with Christ you rose, who enkindled within your heart the desire to carry His easy yoke courageously and to manifest Christ in every place, to deliver people from sin and eternal death, revealing the everlasting covenant of God's Love through the communion of the Church and gathering in Christ all who in their hearts sing to you: Alleluia!

Ikos 6

O, God-chosen Saint Sebastian, as a light-winged angel, all over the field of the Lord you advanced, with your modesty and missionary fervor the saints alike you amazed, such as Nikolai of Ohrid and Žiča /Zhicha/, Tikhon of New York and Moscow, and Nicholas of Japan, and as a wondrous champion of Orthodoxy, you cured people from infernal self-love, for together with your brethren in the Church you were discovering the God-granted fullness of Life in Christ, calling all to the Table of Life Eternal, hence we sing to you:

Rejoice, rich in God's grace, for with meek love you conquered all!

Rejoice, champion of Orthodoxy, for you fortified the Church of God on Earth!

Rejoice, partaker in the Kingdom of Heaven, for you were inspirited by the Age to Come!

Rejoice, for you enlightened people with the true knowledge of God as Life in the Church of God!

Rejoice, O Saint Sebastian Equal-to-the-Apostles, Heaven-revealed praise of Orthodoxy!

Kontakion 7

You were a sacred seedling of Saint Sava's Serbian Orthodox Church and in California's small town of Jackson, together with the poor miners you built the first Serbian Orthodox temple in the New World and dedicated it to Saint Sava, whereafter many other parishes, in Los Angeles, Chicago, Alaska, Montana, Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Pennsylvania, Indiana and elsewhere you founded, thus embedding the living stones into God's Heavenly Temple and therein praising God forevermore by singing: Alleluia!

Ikos 7

The Most Holy Mother of God bestowed the divine blessing upon the church of Saint Sava, for it was consecrated on her Feast of the Entrance into the Temple of Jerusalem, wherefore she presented the children of this temple into the Holy of Holies and united them with the Son of hers and of God, the One Who Is, and adorned the temple with her icon sent from Holy Mount Athos, having made it the wondrous Protectress of the people of God and having glorified her through many miracles as the Jackson Icon of the Mother of God, so that we may sing to her:

Rejoice, for you sent, from the Monastery of Saint Panteleimon on Holy Mount Athos, your Icon most holy to the church of Saint Sava!

Rejoice, for with your most holy Jackson Icon, the New World you embraced!

Rejoice, for through the Icon of yours, with heavenly love you heartened the faithful people!

Rejoice, for with her you blessed Saint Sebastian, the God-shining ray of light, hence we sing to him:

Rejoice, O holy father Sebastian of Jackson, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlightener of all America!

Kontakion 8

Through the multitude of your books that you, O Saint inspired by God, wrote for the advantage of the holy mission, the Spirit of the Wisdom of God exuded the gentle fragrance, enlightening the faithful, teaching the truths of the Orthodox Faith and compelling all to sing to you: Alleluia!

Ikos 8

Using your own modest means, you published edifying and rare books, and through words full of grace, you inscribed into the hearts of the faithful the divine law of life-giving virtues, for you loved your mission and embraced Christ's Church, therefore we sing to you:

Rejoice, for you illumined the path to Christ for all by translating the Divine Liturgy to the native tongue!

Rejoice, for you initiated the first Serbian church newspaper in America, thereby glorifying God!

Rejoice, for you preached Christ with light-radiating words and communed the faithful with the Heavenly Wisdom!

Rejoice, for you incessantly summoned the faithful people to the communion of God's Love and fervently prayed for all!

Rejoice, O Saint Sebastian Equal-to-the-Apostles, Heaven-revealed praise of Orthodoxy!

Kontakion 9

The Angels in Heaven marveled and made the Heavens dance with hymns of praise, O Saint Sebastian, when the Russian Bishop Nicholas, with whom you consecrated Jackson's church of Saint Sava, honored you in recognition of your devout missionary labor and decorated you with a pectoral golden cross! Alleluia!

Ikos 9

The godly work of your mission soon became ever-widely known, hence the holy Tsar of Russia Nicholas II honored you with the Order of Saint Anne and Prince Nicholas of Montenegro awarded you the Order of Prince Daniel, while awards of distinction also came from the King of Serbia and the Patriarch of the Holy City of Jerusalem, and soon thereafter you were elevated to the rank of archimandrite and, from Saint Tikhon the Confessor, who had wished to consecrate you a bishop, out of respect and love, you received his miter, but the Lord sent you sufferings also and through them made you worthy of His Cross, as we humbly sing to you:

Rejoice, the Lord merited you with the greatest suffering of the soul, for you were inflicted with slander of being an enemy of your Church!

Rejoice, the wreath of life you attained through adversity, for to those who afflicted injustice upon you, with love you recompensed!

Rejoice, for you embraced with compassionate love those who despised you and turned the serpent of Hades into dust!

Rejoice, unassailable soldier of Christ, for through forgiveness you defeated death and with Christ rose in Eternity!

Rejoice, O holy father Sebastian of Jackson, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlightener of all America!

Kontakion 10

Indistinguishably, those who dwell on Earth were astonished by you, O Saint Sebastian, when, first having auctioned off all your personal possessions so you could aid the ailing and the needy, you went to the war-torn Balkans with the blessing of the Church, to assist your Fatherland that was fighting for freedom and honor as the Prophet and King David had against Goliath, by serving as chaplain in the Serbian army, for you were a true servant of God! Alleluia!

Ikos 10

The final years of your life you spent in the land of your forefathers, in the capital city of Belgrade, in your ancestral Bay of Kotor, and in Saint Sava's Žiča /Zhicha/ Monastery, where you reposed with the Holy Bishop Nikolai by your side, who thereupon officiated the funeral service and buried you, and having enthused God's people to holiness, impressing them deeply with your ascetic feats and gracing their souls with your holy prayers, they rightly sing to you:

Rejoice, modest monk, for you had no salary of your own and lived on people's donations, which you shared with the war-anguished people of your demolished Fatherland, especially for the education of youth!

Rejoice, for you undertook many travels as a poverty-stricken sufferer in favor of exalting people with the Lord!

Rejoice, vehement beacon of Christ's Church, for you indefatigably labored for the fulfillment of the Kingdom of Heaven!

Rejoice, for at the end of your life, you desired nothing but the Kingdom of Heaven!

Rejoice, O Saint Sebastian Equal-to-the-Apostles, Heaven-revealed praise of Orthodoxy!

Kontakion 11

O, the first Serbian and altogether the first Orthodox monk and priest born in America, of all the divisions among people – in the Lord Christ you were liberated and toward the Heavenly Kingdom unwaveringly you soared, singing to God: Alleluia!

Ikos 11

O, Holy God-seer, traversing the New World far and wide, you organized the Church life, erected holy temples and consecrated churches in order to carry out the greatest mission on Earth and serve the Divine Liturgy in places big and small, ingraining God's people into the Eternal Communion with God who is Love, hence we joyfully sing to you:

Rejoice, for you knew the Holy Church as the presence of Christ, in which you, with devotion to Christ, served untiringly!

Rejoice, for you believed in mankind with faith divine and in all discerned the icon of God!

Rejoice, for you delighted in your neighbor as in God, and as an angel you savored the Age to Come!

Rejoice, for you constantly fought for the communion in Christ with all!

Rejoice, O holy father Sebastian of Jackson, Equal-to-the-Apostles and Enlightener of all America!

Kontakion 12

O, Heaven-revealed Saint Sebastian, Serbian most glorious missionary, with Saint Mardary of Libertyville together canonized, praiseworthy intercessor of God's flock, Patron Saint and Slava of families and of parishes, your all-glorious mission has lived on in the Church enduringly and has been revived miraculously through the successors of yours, inspiring all to celebrate your undying work with the never-ending song: Alleluia!

Ikos 12

Never abandoning your holy labor, you progressed your mission through your holy relics, which were transferred by God's Providence from the Žiča /Zhicha/ Monastery to the church in Jackson, there to emerge as the confluence, solace, remedy, encouragement and edification for all pious souls yearning for God, from all corners of America and the entire World, and thus you beseeched God to grant you a blessing to praise Him in the fullness of the Holy Church for all time to come, and to summon to God through prayers all people of the World, so we cry to you:

Rejoice, O true man, for you attained to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ!

Rejoice, for you made your relics, heavenly fragrant, to be a wonderworking source of God's Love!

Rejoice, for you ever more gather the dispersed children of God into one!

Rejoice, for you declare through the Holy Church the truth of the Age to Come!

Rejoice, O Saint Sebastian Equal-to-the-Apostles, Heaven-revealed praise of Orthodoxy!

Kontakion 13

O, Holy all-praiseworthy Saint Sebastian the Newly-revealed, to you, for whom Christ the Lord was the only relevance in life, and who witnessed to all the Resurrection of Christ and for all cleared the pathway to the Heavenly Abode, who, through Christ within you, reconciled and embraced the East and the West, effacing all corrupt divisions of this World and bridging all distances, to you, O Saint, we plead earnestly: despise not this small supplication of ours and urge the Lord to grant us peace within and around us, angelic chastity, humility and zeal, love sincere and warm, unfading joy of Resurrection, and true salvation, so that we may be one in Christ our Lord and find ourselves in the Heavenly Kingdom together with you and all the Saints. Amen. Alleluia!

This Kontakion is read three times, followed by Ikos 1, Kontakion 1.

Ikos 1

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Prayer = Troparion to Saint Sebastian of Jackson, Tone 8

Apostle and Enlightener, born in San Francisco,
First born in America to become a priest,
Fiery preacher of Christ's word among the peoples of America,
You traveled throughout the country preaching the truth and love,
Confirming many souls in the Orthodox Faith,
And erecting many churches to the glory of God,
Poor in body but rich in the Spirit,
O Father Sebastian of Jackson and Apostle of All America,
Pray the Lord whom you served with your whole heart,
To grant us your last spoken wish:
The Kingdom of Heaven without end!

*Akathist, to the Glory of God, composed by nun Olimpijada (Kadić),
and translated to English by Zorana Bjeličić*

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