



**AKATHIST
IN HONOUR OF
ST BOTOLPH OF IKEN**

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Kontakion 1

To thee our venerable father, and enlightener of our ancestors, we sing this hymn of praise. Extolling the splendour of thy virtues and the purity of thy life, we cry unto thee: Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Ikos 1

Our Lord and God and Creator, in His love for all creation, looked with mercy upon a desolate and untilled part of the earth. In His unbounded Love, He called unto thee, great Father Botolph, to be the candle of faith upon the candlestick of His Church, banishing the darkness of unbelief and shining with the radiance of our saving Faith. Thus we cry out to thee:

Rejoice, sower of the seeds of the True Faith.

Rejoice, dispeller of the darkness of pagan error.

Rejoice, thou who didst open the door into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Rejoice, angel in the flesh.

Rejoice, priest of God and channel of grace.

Rejoice, thou whose life was a hymn to the Most Holy Trinity.

Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 2

By virtue of thy birth, O Father Botolph, thou couldst have enjoyed worldly privilege and power, but the glamour of this life held no attraction for thee. Dedicating thy life to the service of Christ, thou didst willingly embrace the rigours of the ascetic life. Thanking God for His gift to us we sing: Alleluia.

Ikos 2

Even status in the Church was not for thee, holy Father Botolph, for thou didst seek to labour for Christ as a humble monk, purifying thyself of all the vestiges of self-will, egotism and pride so as to be found worthy of the Bridechamber of Christ. Marvelling at the abundance of thy love for Christ we cry out to thee:

Rejoice, emulator of the Fathers of the Egyptian desert.
Rejoice, ascetic of the watery wastes of the River Alde.
Rejoice, scourge of demons from the realms of darkness.
Rejoice, preacher of the Word of God.
Rejoice, adornment of Iken and beacon of monastic piety.
Rejoice, thou whose prayer arose to Heaven as fragrant incense.
Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 3

Inspired by our holy Father Columbanus and the Irish pilgrims for Christ, thou didst travel across the Channel to St Fara's monastery in Brie to complete thy monastic training. For our wayward generation, thy sojourn in Gaul is a timely lesson to us all by teaching us the spiritual benefit of pilgrimage, the virtue of obedience to our fathers in God, and the necessity of apostolic witness. For sending thee to us, most honoured one, we cry out to God: Alleluia.

Ikos 3

The severity of Celtic monastic discipline shaped thy life of service, O holy one, leading thee to surrender the wholeness of thy being into God's Fatherly solicitude with implicit trust in Him. Now, as we struggle through our earthly pilgrimage, with love and devotion we sing to thee:

Rejoice, inspired teacher of our holy and saving Faith.
Rejoice, thou who didst dwell in the purity of the Gospel.
Rejoice, all-praised example to mankind.
Rejoice, thou who didst instruct by both words and deeds.
Rejoice, signpost guiding us from earth to heaven.
Rejoice, conscience of kings and radiance of our land.
Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 4

At Rendlesham's court, King Onna received the entreaties on thy behalf of his pious daughters, Saethyrth and Aethelburga, O holy Botolph, and secured a grant of land for thy monastery, that the radiance of the True Faith might illuminate the land, softening the hearts of all who were formerly ensnared by the enemy that they might be enabled to sing: Alleluia.

Ikos 4

Fortified by the Power of the Spirit, thou wast untiring in bringing sacramental grace and spiritual healing to all the people, setting them on the path to salvation. Succeeding generations have praised thee with words such as these:

Rejoice, celebrant of the life-giving and sacred Mysteries.

Rejoice, bringer of sacramental grace to all the faithful.

Rejoice, founder of churches and bringer of light.

Rejoice, untiring champion of Christ's Holy Gospel.

Rejoice, thou who wast found worthy of the joys of Heaven.

Rejoice, true father to all who honour thy sacred memory.

Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 5

Not even the violence and hatred of the evil Penda could deflect thee from the apostolic path, despite the ravages of the enemies of Christ. The martyrs' blood flowed freely and God's sanctuary was defiled, yet thou wast undaunted, O Father Botolph, and remembering the example of thy missionary witness by land and sea, we cry out: Alleluia.

Ikos 5

Whilst outwardly humble, Iken's temple became a spiritual powerhouse under thy fatherly solicitude, bringing light and life to all pilgrims. We today have come together that we may honour and glorify thee with these words:

Rejoice, thou who wast unsparing of thyself for the love of God.

Rejoice, valiant opponent of the crafty one and his minions.

Rejoice, for with the Cross in thy hands thou didst proclaim Christ.

Rejoice, thou who wast endowed with authority from on high.

Rejoice, great ascetic and traveller on the road of abstinence.

Rejoice, thou who didst prize the salvation of souls above all things.

Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 6

Confronted by thee, and the power of the Cross, the demons and agents of darkness wailed in pain because, for the first time, their power was challenged. Knowing that

they could not endure the light shed by the truth of the Gospel of Christ, they shrank back into the pit from whence they came. Thus in gratitude we cry out to God: Alleluia.

Ikos 6

Dedicating thy life entirely to the service of Christ, thou didst accept the call to apostolic witness amongst the suffering nation of the East Anglians who had languished in their ignorance of the True Faith. Being besieged by the foulness of demons, the people were defenceless without thy fatherly protection. Wherefore, we sing thy praises with these words:

Rejoice, angel in the flesh.

Rejoice, athlete of Christ spurning the luxury of rest.

Rejoice, bestower of wisdom and heavenly blessings.

Rejoice, fount of Living Water.

Rejoice, ikon of God's grace to spiritual orphans.

Rejoice, guide to the way of salvation.

Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 7

The clarity of thy teaching and the strictness of thy rule inspired many to follow thee. Pilgrims, following the example of Abbot Ceolfrith of Jarrow, travelled great distances to ask thy blessing and spiritual counsel, O Father Botolph. As the trumpet of God, thou didst push back the frontiers of heathendom with the power of the Gospel. In wonder and in awe we cry out: Alleluia.

Ikos 7

Idols fell and their benighted worshippers recoiled at the power of thy prayers, great Father Botolph. We glorify thee, asking God to grant us boldness in the face of falsehood, error and unbelief that we too may become beacons of the Triune Deity, the Most Holy Trinity. Wherefore, in faith we honour thee:

Rejoice, zealot among priests by thy confession of faith.

Rejoice, untiring missionary and servant of the Most High.

Rejoice, model of repentance and teacher of humility.

Rejoice, channel of the grace of God bringing hope for all.

Rejoice, great intercessor before the Throne of God.

Rejoice, rain of blessings, showered upon the faithful.

Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 8

Confronting the fetid waters of thy marshy wilderness, holy Father Botolph, thou didst bring the pure and living waters of baptism to save the souls of the people, defending them from the forces of evil. In gratitude for so great a tower of spiritual strength and inspiration to every generation we cry out to God: Alleluia.

Ikos 8

As a fruitful olive tree in the garden of the Lord, O Father Botolph, thou didst nourish the people with the spiritual bounty of thy words and example, bringing them nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven. As in the Egyptian Thebaid, the remoteness of thy monastery proved that no corner of God's earth should be neglected, that the truth of God's Word should ring out everywhere. Thus in gratitude we cry to thee:

Rejoice, great servant of Christ and enlightener of our eastern coasts.

Rejoice, loving champion of Church discipline.

Rejoice, thou who didst embrace the cloister for the love of Christ.

Rejoice, thou who didst lead the angelic life upon earth.

Rejoice, glory of monastics and pillar of fortitude.

Rejoice, thou who dost now sing God's praises in Heaven.

Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 9

No effort was too great for thine attempts to bring salvation to all East Anglia, great Father Botolph. By fasting and prayer, by vigils and abstinence, thou didst become both the glory of monastics and an apostolic teacher. Therefore praising God for thee, we sing: Alleluia.

Ikos 9

Standing before thy sacred countenance we offer thee our devotion and praise. As thou wast invincible in the strength of thy spirit and resolute of purpose, we pilgrims offer to thee our hymn of praise, asking for grace to follow in thy footsteps, and sing to thee:

Rejoice, example of constancy and purity to all Christian souls.

Rejoice, godly treasure beautifying Christ's Holy Church.
Rejoice, spiritual guide to all who seek thy tireless intercession.
Rejoice, thou who didst pour forth streams of theology.
Rejoice, bringer of the Triune Light of our saving Faith.
Rejoice, emulator of the Fathers of the Egyptian Thebaid.
Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 10

We pour forth our praises to thee, thou treasury of virtues, begging that we may be given clarity of vision and strength of purpose to proclaim the Gospel to a generation grown weak in faith and lacking in piety. By thy holy prayers, O saint of God, may this country once more joyfully sing: Alleluia.

Ikos 10

As an inspired initiate of our holy and saving Faith, O Botolph, thou didst shine with the radiance of Christ our God, bringing light to the poor souls in heathen darkness. We praise and bless thee, honouring thy sacred memory with our hearts and our voices by chanting unto thee:

Rejoice, loving shepherd of spiritual sheep.
Rejoice, thou who dost shame us by thine all-embracing love.
Rejoice, joy of the angels with whom thou dost now worship in Paradise.
Rejoice, challenger of ungodliness by the Power of the Spirit.
Rejoice, model of chastity and lover of poverty.
Rejoice, preacher of the way of truth and righteousness.
Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 11

Raising our voices in sacred melody and sanctifying this blessed day, we call to mind the abundance of thy wisdom in pastoral care and thy limitless patience in tending the flock entrusted to thee. Take us by the hand and lead us now that we stray not from the way of righteousness and join with our ancient ancestors in singing: Alleluia.

Ikos 11

Thou wast truly an equal of the Apostles, O our Father Botolph. Caring nothing for

thine own comfort, thou didst embrace the dual obediences of asceticism and missionary endeavour. Thus, lauding thine example and blessing thy precious memory, we cry unto thee:

Rejoice, thou whose life was a hymn to the All-Holy Trinity.
Rejoice, bearer of the treasures of the Kingdom of Heaven.
Rejoice, revealer to all of the glorious Source of Living Water.
Rejoice, summit of godliness and adornment of Christ's Holy Church.
Rejoice, vanquisher of shadows, falsehood and lies.
Rejoice, morning star and heavenly intercessor for us all.
Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 12

As a second Aristobulus, O holy Father Botolph, thy name is justly known in remote and distant lands to the North, South, East and West where thy memory is truly honoured and thine intercession is sought. Ever pray for us that we may be worthy of our calling and always sing unto the Lord: Alleluia.

Ikos 12

Always vigilant, thou didst confront the works of darkness in whatever form they sought to trouble thee, challenging them in the name of Christ and by the power of the Cross. Come now to our aid, that the rising tide of darkness may be dispelled by the Light of Christ, as we cry to thee:

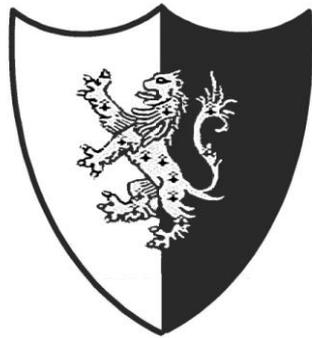
Rejoice, fragrant offering to our Lord and Saviour.
Rejoice, towering pillar of the priesthood showering blessings upon all.
Rejoice, unwavering giant of spiritual gifts and graces.
Rejoice, heavenly star leading us to Christ.
Rejoice, godly fire burning up the thorns of sin.
Rejoice, mighty tree bearing the fruits of salvation.
Rejoice, holy Father Botolph, Enlightener of those in darkness.

Kontakion 13

O all-honourable Father Botolph, though we know not how to praise thee worthily, we implore thee to accept the love of our hearts, despite our feeble words. By thy God-pleasing intercession may we be spared to labour for Christ all the days of our life. Alleluia. **(Thrice & then repeat Ikos 1 and Kontakion 1)**

Prayer to our Holy Father Botolph of Iken

Our holy and God-bearing Father Botolph, glory of Iken and Enlightener of those in darkness, as once thou didst expel the tyranny of Satan from our land, so now protect all who call upon thee from the cruel assaults of the demons and the temptations that surround us on all sides. To all who bow down before thy holy ikon, grant the same serenity of soul, and peacefulness of heart which so gladdened our ancestors, that we too may become partakers of the Divine Nature, radiantly transfigured with the Light of the All-Holy Trinity. Through thy fervent prayers may the seeds of our holy and saving Faith be sown once more into the soil of this land, soaked by the tears of thy love for Christ and tilled by the rigours of thine ascetic struggle. Grant our pastors the same wisdom and patience with which thou didst comfort all who were confused, ignorant and downhearted, that by thine intercession, this land may once more ring out with the confession of the True Faith. Grant unto thy servants [N] ... all their requests that may lead them unto salvation and the enjoyment of Eternal Life, that we too may one day join chorus with thee in singing the praises of our Thrice-Holy God. Falling down at thy feet, we ask thee, before the end, to transform what is lacking within us, that by thy prayers, and inspired by thy angelic way of life we may be delivered from the deception of worldly cares and so obtain the mercy of Christ our God, to Whom be the Glory, the Honour, the Adoration, the Power and the Worship, with His Unoriginate Father and His All-Holy, Good and Life-Creating Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.



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