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Akathist Hymn

to Saint Xenia the Holy

Fool for Christ

Kontakion 1

O God Almighty, forgive our transgressions both known and unknown to us, whether flagrant or subtle, whether from long-ago years or in this very moment, for we cry out to You even as Your marvelous saint, the Holy Fool Xenia, trusted in You for all mercies and blessings. Therefore, in meekness and gratitude, we declare:

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Ikos 1

O Saint Xenia, you roamed the streets of St. Petersburg, Russia, commiserating with the poor and the disenfranchised, regarding everyone as better than yourself, and finding solace in the anonymity of your life of prayer. We turn to you in our need for respite from toil and for rescue from worldliness. Henceforth, in unity of purpose, we offer you these words of admiration:

Praise God, glad welcomer of the Gospel.

Praise God, great wellspring in the ghetto.

Praise God, sanctifier of hectic cities of the lost.

Praise God, sympathizer with remote streets of longing.

Praise God, reliable cornerstone of true counsel.

Praise God, ready contributor of two coins.

Praise God, wisely treasured by the Holy Church.

Praise God, always trusted by little children.

Praise God, honorable widow in the peace of Christ.

Praise God, holy wanderer in the presence of God.

Praise God, fruitful tree of indisputable wisdom.

Praise God, fiery torch of undeniable wonders.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 2

Let us listen to the words of the Apostle Paul. "For the message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it

is the power of God.” Glory to the God Who enlightened His servant Paul, and Who blessed His handmaid Xenia to understand that Christ Crucified is superior to all the viewpoints of the worldly. May we also receive the Gospel and say: Alleluia.

Ikos 2

Human explanations of life often promote intellectualism and defend carnality — which are in conflict with the suffering of Christ and His death on the Cross. But in your holy foolishness, Saint Xenia, you patterned your lifestyle after the preaching of Paul and not according to the pride and vanity of false-thinkers and pleasure-seekers. Thus, given our weaknesses, we are all the more thankful to bow before you and say:

Praise God, for you wandered by faith and not by sight.

Praise God, for you rejected the biases of the worldly-experienced.

Praise God, for you walked forward on your path of prayer.

Praise God, for you avoided the abyss of foul temptations.

Praise God, for you found abundant life in the Crucified Christ.

Praise God, for you acquired true purpose in the preaching of Paul.

Praise God, for you rid your flesh of all sensuality.

Praise God, for you cleansed your mind of every delusion.

Praise God, for you pursued wisdom in simple foolishness.

Praise God, for you followed Christ in profound discipleship.

Praise God, for you offered your entire being to the Divine.

Praise God, for you dedicated your life to the will of God.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 3

When your husband died, Saint Xenia, you were only twenty-six years old. You remained the wife of one man for all time, for thereupon Christ called you forth to the streets of St. Petersburg where you

died to your old self and were born again into the wisdom of foolishness. You appeared outwardly insane according to society's standards, but you were inwardly illuminated with prayer and the everlasting message of the Gospel. To all inhabitants of the city you therefore said: Alleluia.

Ikos 3

Oh, to be young and to respond to Christ wholeheartedly, to have ears to hear, to be in the world but not of the world, to seek the Kingdom first, to walk on the straight path, and to be a light in the darkness. Saint Xenia, you lit your candle and thereby gave encouragement to others. That flame continues to glow, so that each generation may take up their cross and emulate your holiness:

Praise God, humble woman.

Praise God, holy wanderer.

Praise God, wise fool.

Praise God, wondrous friend.

Praise God, radiant light.

Praise God, righteous love.

Praise God, life invigorated.

Praise God, lesson illustrated.

Praise God, true devotee.

Praise God, trusted disciple.

Praise God, docile penitent.

Praise God, dear protector.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 4

O Christ our Savior, show us the way, even as you directed the steps of Saint Xenia through unforeseen streets of prayerfulness, thus fashioning within her soul an inward chapel. Strengthen us, even as you fortified Saint Xenia to fulfill all holiness as she wandered during the day and prayed throughout the night. Awaken us, and may the night be like the day, and may we see our way forward and say: Alleluia.

Ikos 4

O Saint Xenia, our holy mother, teach us to be obedient children under all circumstances and to trust in the goodness of Christ, just as you gladly followed Him according to His claim on your life. We were purchased for a price, and therefore we

have been honored above all imagination, beyond all human comprehension, exceeding all ideologies, and transformed into Christians with a capacity to exclaim:

Praise God, for you detached from worldly satisfactions.

Praise God, for you refrained from delusory enticements.

Praise God, for you encountered God and found your true self.

Praise God, for you discovered the Pearl of Great Price.

Praise God, for you were not persuaded by the sophisticated.

Praise God, for you were not discouraged by the ignorant.

Praise God, for you separated yourself from extravagance.

Praise God, for you dissociated yourself from indulgence.

Praise God, for you underwent a mystical rebirth.

Praise God, for you cherished the ways of the Divine.

Praise God, for you transcended all worldly nonsense.

Praise God, for you heeded the call to Christ-like sobriety.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 5

The Apostle Paul said, “But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” We know that the Holy Spirit is one with God the Father and God the Son, and that Paul was guided not by sight but by faith and revelation. Saint Xenia also received this spiritual discernment as her foundation, and then she wisely said: Alleluia.

Ikos 5

Brethren, may we not become prideful in our subjective opinions, or become vain in our crafty arguments, but pray for discernment of that which is sanctified by God for our development and benefit. All that we hope for, everything we long for,

all that we need is offered to us in Christ and through the Holy Spirit. Let us learn this essential truth from the Apostle Paul and apply it to our own lives, beginning with these sincere words of veneration to Saint Xenia:

Praise God, indigent wanderer who knew the way to blessedness.

Praise God, homeless woman who sheltered others with her prayers.

Praise God, penniless worshiper who gained the riches of spirituality.

Praise God, unpaid worker who sacrificed comfort for serenity.

Praise God, virtuous Christian amid the conceits of the self-assured.

Praise God, patient cross-bearer among the troubles of the destitute.

Praise God, safe cradle of love alongside the dark edifices of man.

Praise God, golden crucible of the teachings of the holy elders.

Praise God, invincible tower of righteous words and deeds.

Praise God, splendid temple of belief in the authority of Christ.

Praise God, enduring trust in the mysterious ways of the Father.

Praise God, faithful traveler guided in piety by the Holy Spirit.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 6

When you roamed the streets of St. Petersburg, the people ridiculed you for your odd appearance and your peculiar ways. They regarded you not as a holy fool, but as a lunatic and a disgrace. Yet, it was they who were perishing and you who were being saved by the grace and power of God. It was you who were wise in your foolishness and they who were foolish in their assumptions about the Church and the life of prayer. Nonetheless, in your life of prayer, Saint Xenia, you prayed for those who mocked you, and you said: Alleluia.

Ikos 6

Pray for us, too, O Holy Fool for Christ, that we may learn humility and not become arrogant because we are baptized into the True Church,

because we recite the Nicene Creed, because we study the Three Hierarchs, because we carry icons in procession, and because we cross ourselves from our right to our left. Pray for us, that we might see the value and potential of each person whom God places on our path, and that we approach you in purity of heart:

Praise God, mocked on earth, rewarded in Heaven.

Praise God, insulted by citizens, acceptable to God.

Praise God, different from others, kindred of saints.

Praise God, unlike the hypocrites, witness to strangers.

Praise God, void of pride, abundant in virtue.

Praise God, empty of vanity, overflowing with piety.

Praise God, sorrowful for sins, joyful for salvation.

Praise God, mournful over defects, glad for deliverance.

Praise God, enemy of depravity, friend of repentance.

Praise God, foreigner to bitterness, giver of kindnesses.

Praise God, stripped of pretense, chapel of prayer.

Praise God, loosed from burdens, sanctuary of peace.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 7

God strengthened you, Saint Xenia, to wander meaningfully and to pray devotedly, and the Holy Spirit nourished and invigorated you on your journey of deification. We therefore implore you to have mercy upon us who are crippled by inadequacy and unable to arise, who are blinded by prodigality and exist in darkness, and who are deafened by worldliness and have failed to flourish. Have mercy, today and always, that everyone may say now and throughout the ages: Alleluia.

Ikos 7

We beseech you to take us back to the Gospel for daily meditation on Christ, lead us back to the Church to worship faithfully and receive Holy Communion, and turn us back to our icon corner for daily prayer and single-mindedness. Saint Xenia, see and hear each one of us among the multitudes who love you. We wish to wander with you in holiness of life, and so we gather before you and say:

Praise God, grand intercessor for sin's captives.
Praise God, gifted helper across diverse cultures.
Praise God, sacred advisor to pious households.
Praise God, superb guide to anxious job-hunters.
Praise God, efficient healer of emotional damages.
Praise God, endless light on the saddest days.
Praise God, fearless guardian of young believers.
Praise God, fervent upholder of prayerful brothers.
Praise God, quiet presence to contemplative sisters.
Praise God, quick responder to genuine seekers.
Praise God, holy partner to vigilant families.
Praise God, hallowed companion to zealous fishermen.
Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 8

Let us listen again to the Apostle Paul. "Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may

become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, 'He catches the wise in their own craftiness.'" May we not fall prey to thieves of spirituality or to self-flattering tendencies, but understand rightly and proceed humbly, always saying: Alleluia.

Ikos 8

Paul offered the foolishness of preaching Christ Crucified, and the Holy Fool likewise gave no consent to any knowledge that did not involve the qualities of holiness and purity, salvation and renewal, and preparation for eternity in the Kingdom of Heaven. O Blessed Xenia, you did not deceive yourself in order to defend any sickness of desires or entertain any fantasies of fame, but you sought only to glorify Christ and build His Holy Church. We stand in awe of your wisdom and we say:

Praise God, for you worshiped only the God Who gave you life.

Praise God, for you served only the Church that Christ established.

Praise God, for you roamed the city for the sake of righteousness.

Praise God, for you endured everything for the purpose of humility.

Praise God, for your heart and mind were sanctified.

Praise God, for your disposition was formed by the Gospel.

Praise God, for you chose spiritual progress over false concepts.

Praise God, for you were led by the Holy Spirit and not by pride.

Praise God, for you pursued the beauty of life transfigured.

Praise God, for you rested on a foundation of apostolic tradition.

Praise God, for you were being prepared for the hour of death.

Praise God, for you were readied to join the saints in Heaven.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 9

O Christ our King, You are the Ruler of All, and You offer us life without end in the Heavenly Kingdom. Yet, the world tries to dominate us with impurities and in opposition to true happiness. The world resists You because Your Kingship conquers all that the disobedient find gratifying, including their own justifications and rationalizations of sin. We therefore pray for liberation from lies and deliverance from destruction, and we truly say: Alleluia.

Ikos 9

O Saint Xenia, you are the embodiment of holy foolishness, and you offer us help, blessings, and wonders so that we may encounter God in everyone we meet and in everything we study. Pray for us, for you were chosen by God to renounce all forms of covetousness, to be renewed into foolishness according to the world and into wisdom according to spiritual stability. In gratitude for your obedience and example, we respectfully honor you:

Praise God, morning sunray.

Praise God, midnight serenity.

Praise God, spiritual richness.

Praise God, sacred revival.

Praise God, ancient flower.

Praise God, apostolic follower.

Praise God, fortunate pauper.

Praise God, firm pathway.

Praise God, hidden benefactor.

Praise God, helpful being.

Praise God, benign neighbor.

Praise God, bountiful nurture.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 10

Your wanderings were initiated when you put on your departed husband's army jacket and called yourself by his name, Andrew. Truly, you put off your old self and put on the armor of God, counting all material loss as profit to your soul, discarding outward attractiveness for inward beauty in the eyes of God, and exchanging human weaknesses for spiritual victories through Christ Crucified. Saint Xenia, Holy Fool, O New Andrew,

you caused the city of St. Petersburg to say:
Alleluia.

Ikos 10

Oh, to grow old in a way pleasing to God, to become spiritually beautiful in His sight, to be victorious over worldly influences, to say and do everything to the glory of God, to utilize His gifts to the benefit of mankind and to the glory of the Kingdom, and to be wise fools according to His will. Saint Xenia, we are all inhabitants of St. Petersburg, though spread across lands and over oceans, and we turn to you and say:

Praise God, for you were a soldier for Christ.

Praise God, for you engaged in spiritual warfare.

Praise God, for you expelled the forces of pride and vanity.

Praise God, for you conquered the armies of confusion and lies.

Praise God, for you put off the superficiality of society.

Praise God, for you put on the armor of Godly-mindedness.

Praise God, for you cared not for status and recognition.

Praise God, for you preferred to be concealed in Christ.

Praise God, for you exercised discernment in all matters.

Praise God, for you soared beyond the wisdom of mortals.

Praise God, for your prayers save many from seduction.

Praise God, for your ways guard us from enticement.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 11

“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things.” Yea, brethren, let us use discernment in our activities and relationships, and ask the Holy Spirit for inner conviction of rightness. May we not stray into

defilement of heart or torment of mind, but focus on those things that enrich our life in Christ, and say: Alleluia.

Ikos 11

O Saint Xenia, in your holy foolishness, you combined prayer with good works. When a church was under construction in the Smolensk Cemetery, you assisted the builders by carrying bricks to the worksite during the night when nobody was looking. You carried their burdens, so that they might sleep at night in the peace of Christ and then awake in the morning to life transfigured. Since you offer kindnesses to us also, we run to you and say:

Praise God, solitary worker in the cemetery.

Praise God, saintly widow under the stars.

Praise God, diligent example of appropriate demeanor.

Praise God, dutiful encourager of acceptable deeds.

Praise God, personal helper in the darkness of night.

Praise God, perpetual hope of the distressed and needy.

Praise God, constant provider of sacred purpose.

Praise God, capable preparer of straight paths.

Praise God, wondrous interior of silence.

Praise God, worthy intercessor for sinners.

Praise God, profitable life of repentance.

Praise God, persistent love of righteousness.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 12

Those who scorned you later revered you. Those who regarded you as an idiot eventually went to you for counsel and advice. Those who ignored you later turned to you for prayers and blessings. Saint Xenia, steadfast follower of Christ, the people of St. Petersburg began to notice your spirituality and your kindly disposition. This transformation of their attitude meant a shift in your calling, as your spirituality was no longer a secret but a direct source. Everyone therefore praised God and said: Alleluia.

Ikos 12

We who are not worthy of you love you. We who are lame and blind wish to wander with you and to encounter God everywhere. We who are mired in bad habits and distractions, in error and misunderstanding, in self-importance and self-promotion, only want to change our course and renounce all ungodliness. Strengthen us, Saint Xenia, to put on our army jackets and carry our bricks, and to offer heartfelt words to you:

Praise God, dead to impurity, risen in Christ.

Praise God, finished with sin, alive in mercy.

Praise God, ragged in apparel, beautiful in disposition.

Praise God, lacking in domicile, gatherer of souls.

Praise God, jobless on earth, worker of wonders.

Praise God, childless in marriage, mother to multitudes.

Praise God, alone in prayer, lover of humanity.

Praise God, never in despair, always with God.

Praise God, last in avarice, first in meekness.

Praise God, far from security, forever in blessedness.

Praise God, outdoors in winter, warmed by the Holy Spirit.

Praise God, renouncer of sleep, finder of stillness.

Praise God, Saint Xenia, Holy Fool blessed with true wisdom.

Kontakion 13

You fulfilled your purpose on earth, loving Christ and those around you, until you departed this life at the age of seventy-one. You are a marvel of Christian womanhood: kindhearted and courageous, devoted and wise, and filled with generosity toward all who seek your aid. Saint Xenia, you attend to us even when we are not aware of it, for you have never lost anyone whom God gave you to watch over, and you have never held back from giving all that you had to give. Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

(Repeat Kontakion 13 three times.)

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