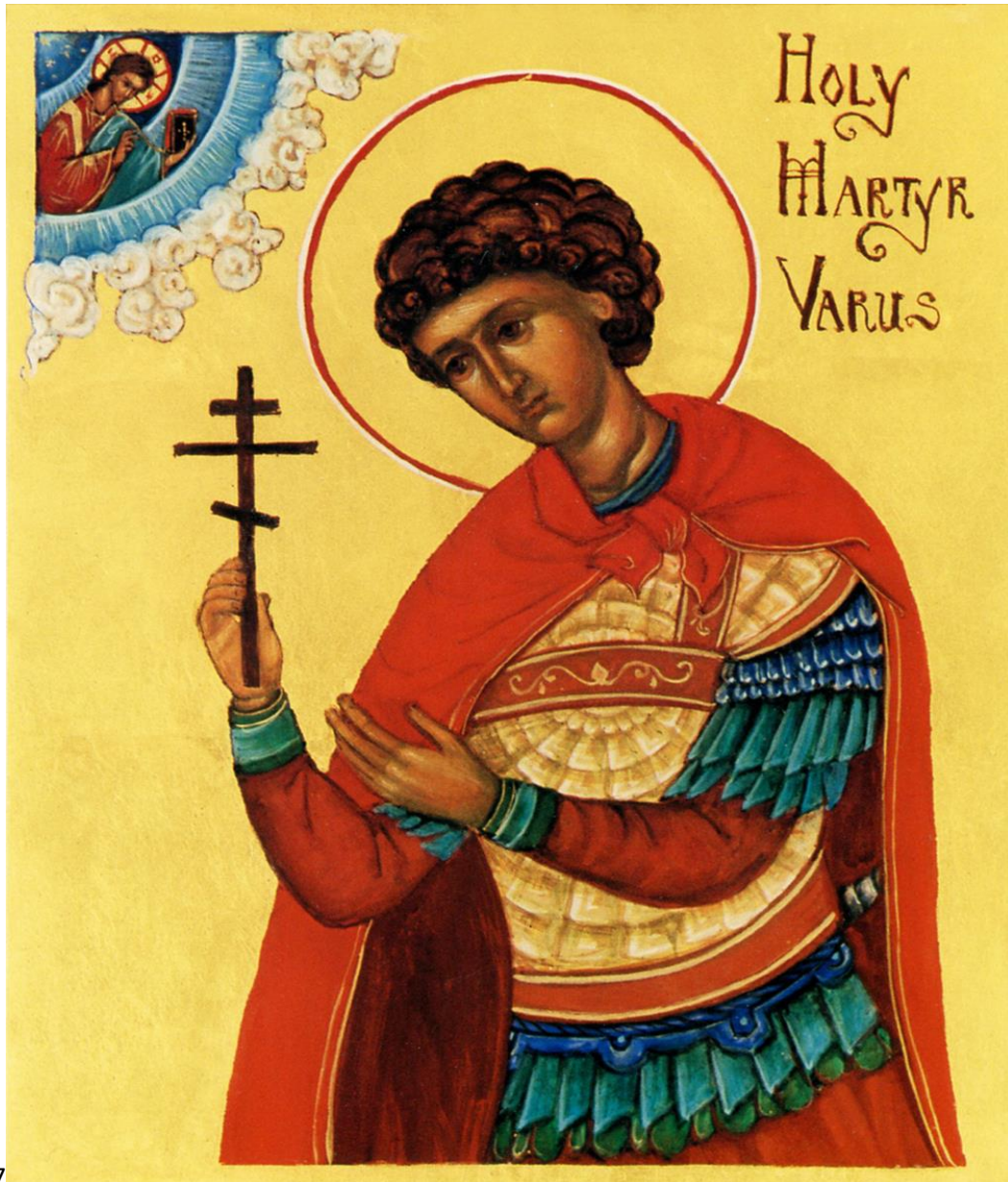


Akathist to Martyr Varus
and the Blessed Cleopatra and John



Holy Intercessor for Family Members who Departed
Outside the Orthodox Faith

Kontakion I

Unto you, the courageous companion of Christ, do we, the faithful, chant hymns of praise; for by your mighty intercession, you deliver us from evils, O glorious one. As you have boldness before the throne of God on high, from all misfortunes free us, that we may cry aloud to you:

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Ikos 1

A soldier in the Army of an earthly king were you, yet your true allegiance to the Almighty King of heaven Whose armies are the host of angels who, beholding your suffering the pangs of diverse tortures for the sake of Christ, stood in awe, crying out to you such things as these:

Rejoice, you are like a resplendent lamp in your piety;
Rejoice, you are replete with the loyalty of mercy!
Rejoice, you shine forth with the radiance of the Christian virtues;
Rejoice, you minister to those imprisoned for the sake of the Lord!
Rejoice, you freely give alms for the relief of the poor;
Rejoice, you bind the wounds of those who bore witness to the truth!
Rejoice, for you guard our souls against the enemies of the King;
Rejoice, for you defend us against their malicious assaults!
Rejoice, for you drive the darkness of despondency far away from us;
Rejoice, for you repel the demonic hordes that beset us!
Rejoice, you earnestly intercede for us in prayer;
Rejoice, you pray for ones who have passed from this life!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion II

Beholding the purity of the witness of the holy confessors, the holy Varus besought them humbly, saying: “Pray for me O venerable teachers, for I fear I lack the fortitude to follow you in your path of suffering. How then, will I be found worthy to chant unto God: **Alleluia?**” (People sing Alleluia)

Ikos II

Seeing the goodly disposition of the young soldier’s soul, the confessors of the Lord spoke mercifully to him as he treated their wounds and stripes: “If you will suffer with Him, you shall be glorified with Him: wherefore, do not be afraid.” And since he took to heart their godly counsel, we cry out to him thus:

Rejoice, you lose the bonds of the fettered;
Rejoice, you apply the balm of mercy to our bruises!
Rejoice, you cover our stripes with the salve of loving kindness;
Rejoice, you with the salt of divine wisdom rid us of corruption!
Rejoice, you with spiritual strength break the chains that bind us;
Rejoice, you set free those who are held in thrall by satan!
Rejoice, you point the way for us to new life in our Deliverer and God;
Rejoice, you enroll us in the choir of the saints.
Rejoice, your brave confession fills us with awe;
Rejoice, you are imbued with the power of the Almighty!
Rejoice, you put the feeble reasonings of idolaters to shame;
Rejoice, you enlighten the thoughts of all the faithful!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion III

The power of the Most High overshadowed the glorious Varus when, one of the seven confessors of Christ dying of his wounds, he chose to join the others, to share their sufferings and martyric death, that with them he might cry out to God: **Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia)**

Ikos III

Having conceived in his soul the steadfast resolve to confess the peerless Christian faith before the heathen, the holy Varus put aside his fear and renounced all attachment to the things of this world; wherefore praising his courage and dedication to our Savior, we cry out to him:

Rejoice, beloved son of our heavenly Father;
Rejoice, true child of His Holy Church!
Rejoice, faithful laborer in the vineyard of Christ;
Rejoice, with your own blood you did irrigate the field of the Lord!
Rejoice, you reap for your Master an abundant harvest of grace;
Rejoice, by your witness you have summoned the faithful to the Bridegroom's feast!
Rejoice, you sow the seeds of piety in Christians;
Rejoice, you plant compunction in the furrows of men's souls!
Rejoice, you cut down the tares that choke our goodly intentions;
Rejoice, you clear away the stones that harden our hearts!
Rejoice, welcome token of God's goodwill towards us;
Rejoice, for you intercede with boldness before the throne of God!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion IV

A tempest of doubts raging within him, Varus was troubled, knowing the weakness of his flesh; wherefore, he besought the holy teachers of the Faith to pray that he be granted the strength to prevail in his struggle, that, having triumphed, he might chant with the martyrs and the Angels: **Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia)**

Ikos IV

The confessors hearkened to the plea of the pious Varus, and reminded him that the athlete who is unwilling to suffer can never obtain the wreath of victory; whereupon they enrolled him in angelic hosts.

Wherefore, we praise his valor, crying:

Rejoice, worthy of the Lamb of God;
Rejoice, guardian of the flock of Christ!
Rejoice, you drive away the noetic wolves with the staff of prayer;
Rejoice, you keep the fold of the church safe with the sling of your intercession!
Rejoice, for you regard with pity those who honor you on earth.
Rejoice, for you unite the faithful with the angels in heaven!
Rejoice, undaunted witness to God in the face of the ungodly;
Rejoice, invincible martyr, whom no tortures could break!
Rejoice, rampart of defense for those who believe in Christ;
Rejoice, recipient and imparter of His radiant grace!
Rejoice, you by whom Hades is deprived of its prey;
Rejoice, you who by your mediation clothe us in glory!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion V

Looking upon the seven holy confessors as a consolation of brilliant stars, the devout Varus was illumined with the brilliance of the grace that shone from them; and bearing the light thereof in his soul, he boldly confessed the name of Jesus before the ungodly tribunal, urging the Empire's governor to cry out to Christ the true God: **Alleluia.**

(People sing Alleluia)

Ikos V

The rulers of the Romans worshiped false gods, graven images wrought by the hands of men; but the blessed Varus, understanding that there is but one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, who in his love for mankind had taken on the form of a servant, bravely denounced their foolish belief; wherefore, we cry out to him:

Rejoice, dutiful servant of the merciful Master;
Rejoice, you were faithful in a little but have been given much!
Rejoice, you strengthen those who worship the Trinity.
Rejoice, you expose the delusion of the heathen;
Rejoice, you who rebuke the cruel tyrant;
Rejoice, you preach Christ the God man!
Rejoice, you deliver souls from everlasting fire;
Rejoice, you snatch the grieving from the jaws of despair!
Rejoice, you mock the worship of idols;
Rejoice, you did not surrender to the weakness of the flesh!
Rejoice, sure guide to heaven for the faithful;
Rejoice, boast of Christians in every generation!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion VI

As God bearing heralds, the holy confessors foretold the martyr's glorious end; and when their prophecy had been fulfilled, and Varus had proclaimed the true God until his soul departed, they were beheaded by the tyrant, chanting the while unto Christ: **Alleluia.**
(People sing Alleluia)

Ikos VI

Shining with the light of the Truth, by his confession the martyr dispelled the darkness of falsehood, and unable to bear the might of his preaching, the ungodly cast his body out to be devoured by dogs; but the blessed Cleopatra, having beheld his sufferings, took it up by night and committed it to the earth, crying:

Rejoice, paragon of piety;
Rejoice, you put our enemies to headlong flight!
Rejoice, you set at nought the pagan falsehood;
Rejoice, you expose the folly of idolatry!
Rejoice, sea wherein or wicked foes are drowned;
Rejoice, stream of piety moistening a parched and arid land!
Rejoice, the beacon guiding those lost in the darkness of their souls;
Rejoice, torch illuminating us with the heavenly light!
Rejoice, by your supplications you give us spiritual bread;
Rejoice, you fill the sorrowful with delight!
Rejoice, you lead the loss to the heavenly homeland;
Rejoice, true loadstone for those astray!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion VII

When the pious Cleopatra pondered how to transfer the precious body of the martyr to her native land, she petitioned the governor of Egypt for permission to depart thence, the holy relics being disguised as the remains of her deceased husband. Wherefore, marveling at her artful sagacity, we cry out to God: **Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia)**

Ikos VII

Departing from Egypt into Palestine with the body of the martyr, like as Joseph long before had borne the body of Jacob his father to bury it with his forebears, Cleopatra interned the incorrupt relics in her family tomb, among the bones of her ancestors; and with her we cry out to the saint:

Rejoice, blossom of incorruption;
Rejoice, treasure that cannot decay!
Rejoice, surety of the resurrection of the body;
Rejoice, your soul now dwells with the Angels!
Rejoice, source of divine food sustaining the faithful;
Rejoice, tree of abandoned foliage whose boughs cover many!
Rejoice, your prayers, like leaves, shelter us from the storms of life!
Rejoice, you are like a lofty cedar growing on the mountain of God;
Rejoice, your greatness overshadows Mount Tabor;
Rejoice, fountain washing away our many transgressions!
Rejoice, abyss of mercy, deeper than an ocean;
Rejoice, you save those who flounder in the sea of life!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion VIII

Seeing the devout Cleopatra going daily to the tomb of the martyr to pray, the Christians of Edras and all the region around Tabor, likewise began to entreat the intercession of the martyr; and word of the boldness he possesses before the Most High spread far and wide, so that for his sake all the faithful cried out to the Lord: **Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia)**

Ikos VIII

Filled with joy that the people of God were availing themselves of the prayers of the martyr whose precious body she had rescued, the blessed Cleopatra undertook to build a temple fit to entomb the sacred remains, wherein the martyr might be hymned with such praises as these:

Rejoice, receptacle of the grace of God;
Rejoice, ewer pouring forth His lovingkindness!
Rejoice, phial holding the antidote to unbelief;
Rejoice, ocean curing the doubts of the faithful!
Rejoice, disciple of Him who is enthroned on the glorious cherubim;
Rejoice, minister of Him who rides upon the six wing seraphim!
Rejoice, earthly warrior who now serves your King on high;
Rejoice, you laid down your life out of love for Him!
Rejoice, those whose transgressions were washed away in your blood;
Rejoice, you to whom the gates of the Kingdom were opened by your sacrifice!
Rejoice, you, dying on a tree, now dwells in paradise by the tree of life:
Rejoice, you delight in the good things prepared for the righteous!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion IX

When the temple of the saint was completed, the blessed Cleopatra summoned hierarchs, priests and monastics to concentrate it unto God, and to transfer with due solemnity the sacred relics of the martyr Varus and entomb them beneath the altar, chanting praises and singing:

Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia)

Ikos IX

When all had been accomplished, and a sumptuous feast with laid, John, the only child of Cleopatra, fell sick of a fever and suddenly died; then, overcome with grief, his mother berated the martyr for thus repaying her devotion. But the saint appeared to her with her son, shining with the inevitable light and glory that the intercession of the martyr had secured for him; and in awe the pious woman cried out in praise:

Rejoice, ark of wisdom;
Rejoice, embodiment of the divine will!
Rejoice, you show forth the worldly minded as fools;
Rejoice, you reveal the working of God's providence!
Rejoice, you treat sinners with kindness of heart;
Rejoice, you purge transgressors of their iniquities!
Rejoice, you who escort the souls of the departed up to heaven;
Rejoice, you fill the halls of its mansions with new inhabitants!
Rejoice, you draw men forth from the sea of ignorance;
Rejoice, you bring many into the light of understanding!
Rejoice, vessel bearing to safe harbor those who desire to be saved;
Rejoice, haven to which we steer among the billows of life!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!
Kontakion X

Gently chiding the grieving Cleopatra for her rebuke, the holy Varus recounted how he had ever made entreaty in her behalf and most especially how, having been interred among her ancestors, he had besought the Lord to forgive all their sins and pardon their iniquities, that with the righteous in heaven they might sing unto God: **Alleluia.**
(People sing Alleluia)

Ikos X

O the wonder! Christ our God, the Wellspring of the grace that rests in His saints was want to hearken to the mediation of the holy Varus, His favored one, and to extend His mercy onto the departed loved ones of the righteous Cleopatra! Wherefore, marveling at the power of his intercession, with her let us also cry out to him:

Rejoice, tower of strength for the pious;
Rejoice, bulwark of salvation for the Orthodox!
Rejoice, fortress defending us against the demons that besiege us;
Rejoice, you win for us the goodwill of our Redeemer!
Rejoice, you put malefactors to shame;
Rejoice, you set at nought the plots of malicious men!
Rejoice, you deliver us from the snares of the wicked;
Rejoice, you draw us forth from the pits they dig for us!
Rejoice, for like chicks we flee beneath the shelter of your wings;
Rejoice, for you defend us against the wiles of the serpent!
Rejoice, for with prayers, as with stones from a sling you fend off spiritual predators;
Rejoice, for you laid down your life for the Shepherd and His sheep!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!
Kontakion XI

Mindful of her many sacrifices for his sake, the holy martyr offered to restore the bereft mother's son to her; but seeing the divine splendor that suffused John's soul, and hearing him protest that he preferred to serve in the army of heaven rather than that of an earthly king, the blessed Cleopatra implored the saint to take her soul also that with them she also might cry out to the Master of all: **Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia)**

Ikos XI

Hearing the blessed Cleopatra's plea to depart this life, the holy Varus, knowing the mind of God, gently denied her request, letting her wait upon the good pleasure of the Savior until it was time for her to join them on high; and, reconciled to the will of God, she cried out to the martyr such things as these:

Rejoice, ray of the Sun of righteousness;
Rejoice, beam of His never waning light!
Rejoice, lightning flash illumining our benighted minds;
Rejoice, you are like a thunderclap which strikes fear in our enemies' hearts!
Rejoice, for you are arrayed in surpassing splendor;
Rejoice, like a river of God you pour forth great torrents of mercy!
Rejoice, ever flowing fountain of the love of God;
Rejoice, water of pity washing away the stain of our offenses!
Rejoice, laver wherein we cleanse our conscience of sin;
Rejoice, chalice brimming over with the wine of gladness!
Rejoice, full of spiritual delight;
Rejoice, joy of angels and of men!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion XII

No hymn devised by man can rightfully glorify the great compassion of the martyr Varus; no human mouth is able to utter words fit for his praise; yet as recipients of his manifold benefactions, we are constrained to cry to Christ, who has given him to us as a mediator:
Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia)

Ikos XII

Possessing her soul in patience, the blessed Cleopatra disposed of all her property and gave the proceeds to the poor; and making her abode by the church of the holy Varus, she lived a life of constant prayer and fasting until the martyr came with her son and the angels of God to accompany her to the mansions of heaven. Wherefore we cry aloud to him:

Rejoice, you stand in glory at the right hand of the Lord;
Rejoice, wellspring pouring forth entreaties for our sake!
Rejoice, font of mediation, ever flowing;
Rejoice, mighty cataract gushing forth supplications!
Rejoice, athlete who received the wreath of victory for your fortitude;
Rejoice, you wondrously prevailed in your trial!
Rejoice, pillar of strength for all the faithful;
Rejoice, mighty while fending off the savagery of barbarians!
Rejoice, you through whose entreaties our prayers are answered;
Rejoice, you free our kin to dwell in paradise!
Rejoice, you cure us by the power of Him by Whose stripes we are healed;
Rejoice, you rescue our souls from perdition!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion XIII

(To Be Read Three times)

O most lauded Martyr Varus, loyal servant of the Word Who is more holy than all the saints. Accepting this, our meager offering of hymnody, deliver from every peril and rescue from the torment which is to come, all of us who for your sake cry out to God: **Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia. (People sing Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.)**

Ikos 1

A soldier in the Army of an earthly king were you, yet your true allegiance to the Almighty King of heaven Whose armies are the host of angels who, beholding your suffering the pangs of diverse tortures for the sake of Christ, stood in awe, crying out to you such things as these:

Rejoice, you are like a resplendent lamp in your piety;
Rejoice, you are replete with the loyalty of mercy!
Rejoice, you shine forth with the radiance of the Christian virtues;
Rejoice, you minister to those imprisoned for the sake of the Lord!
Rejoice, you freely give alms for the relief of the poor;
Rejoice, you bind the wounds of those who bore witness to the truth!
Rejoice, for you guard our souls against the enemies of the King;
Rejoice, for you defend us against their malicious assaults!
Rejoice, for you drive the darkness of despondency far away from us;
Rejoice, for you repel the demonic hordes that beset us!
Rejoice, you earnestly intercede for us in prayer;
Rejoice, you pray for ones who have passed from this life!

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Kontakion I

Unto you, the courageous companion of Christ, do we, the faithful, chant hymns of praise; for by your mighty intercession, you deliver us from evils, O glorious one. As you have boldness before the throne of God on high, from all misfortunes free us, that we may cry aloud to you:

Rejoice, O Martyr Varus, fearless warrior of the Lord!

Prayer to the Holy Martyr Varus

O glorious and all praised Varus glorious and all praise Varus, valiant martyr of Christ, speedy helper, zealous intercessor and fervent advocate for all who have recourse to you with Faith! Standing forth with boldness before the throne of the Most High, entreat Him to grant us remission of all our iniquities, and that we may be delivered from the deadly pestilence, earthquake, flood, fire, the sword, civil strife and everlasting damnation. Entreat Him to take pity on this city, this temple and every land where Orthodox Christians dwell. Intercede with the Almighty, that He grant us triumph and victory over all enemies visible and invisible, and to our nation peace, tranquility, and an increase in faith and piety. And for us who honor your precious memory ask that we be strengthened in the doing of every good and virtuous work. Harken unto our earnest pleadings, and as you did free the souls of the ancestors of the blessed Cleopatra and secure for them a place in paradise, by the boldness you have with the Master of all, win likewise a place in paradise for our own kinfolk who have passed from this life; having found mercy through your supplications, they and we may all be accounted worthy to inherit His kingdom on high and may therein eternally glorify Him, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

This Akathist was composed and published at the request of Diaconissa Joannikia Dean in memory of her father Clifford, who, seeking to know the Truth Faith, reposed without the grace of Orthodox Baptism; as well for the souls of John, Lillian and Augustino.

She humbly requests prayers on behalf of Joyce, the mother of him who composed this Akathist, who likewise reposed without the grace of Orthodox Baptism. Through the intercession of the Holy Martyr Varus, and the added prayers of you, dear reader, may they find eternal rest in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This Akathist Hymn to the Martyr Varus should be used only at home for private prayer for one's non-Orthodox relatives.

Glorifying God through His Light.

Orthodox Mission Church

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