

Canon of Supplication to the Holy Martyr Varus
TO WHOM THE GRACE WAS GIVEN TO PRAY
FOR THOSE DECEASED ANCESTORS OF CLEOPATRA
WHO HAD NOT BEEN VOUCHSAFED
TO RECEIVE HOLY BAPTISM

Canon, in Tone VIII—

Ode I

Irmos: The staff of Moses, once working a wonder, striking the sea in the form of the Cross and dividing it, drowned the mounted tyrant Pharaoh, and saved Israel who fled on foot, chanting a hymn unto God.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

O Lord, be Thou entreated by Thy holy martyr Varus, and clothe Thyself in mercy and compassions! Lo! they will be poured out even unto hades, O Thou Who lovest mankind, and, through Thy rich lovingkindness will bring pity unto NN., for whom we pray.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

O great martyr of Christ, be thou mindful of the afflicted and helpless NN. who sit, unenlightened, in the gloom of darkness; and do not cease to fall down before the compassionate Lord, until He comfort them with His rich lovingkindness.

Glory...: Thou wast able to make entreaty for the family of the wondrous Cleopatra, O glorious passion-bearer; wherefore, rendering aid today, thou art likewise able to free from torments NN., who are remembered by us, if it is fitting for thee to pray to the Lord for them: for the Master will comfort them with His rich lovingkindness for thy sake.

Now & ever...: O good helper and Mistress, look down from thy glory upon the helpless who are in the gloom of hades, and behold the misfortunes of the pitiful NN. whom we remember to thee; and cease thou never to entreat thy Son, the compassionate Lord and Master, in their behalf, until He comfort them with His rich lovingkindness.

Ode III

Irmos: O Christ, Who in the beginning established the heavens in wisdom and founded the earth upon the waters, make me steadfast upon the rock of Thy commandments; for none is holy as Thee, O Thou Who lovest mankind.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Move thou the choir of the holy hosts of heaven to make supplication with thee, O martyr, and do thou a thing all-wondrous, great and honorable, which will bring even greater joy unto those who have no hope and consolation and are without expectation: our ancestors who died a bitter death outside the Faith, and NN., who are remembered with them, that the Lord may grant them forgiveness and great mercy.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

O excellent passion-bearer, beloved of Christ! Thou knowest how desirable and joyful freedom is for those in torment; wherefore, the joy of our kin and NN. with them, who have incurred everlasting torments because of their unbelief, will know no bounds if thou wilt ask the Lord to grant them forgiveness and great mercy.

Glory...: O Varus, right victorious athlete, be thou merciful to our entreaties, and look upon NN., who are in desperate need; and moved by pity, do thou thyself earnestly pray to the Master Who loveth mankind, that He grant them forgiveness and great mercy.

Now & ever...: O Mary our Mistress, thou hope of the universe, divinely acceptable habitation, our reconciliation with God: Accept the petitions of this present intercession, and cease not to beseech thy Son, the Lord of all, that for thy sake He grant forgiveness and great mercy unto the hopeless NN.

Sessional hymn, in Tone V—

Pray thou for the whole world, O great-martyr, and cease not to ask mercy for all sinners who have in divers ways grievously offended the Master and continue to offend him, who by mortal works have utterly done themselves to death and acquired nought, since they have wrought evil. And intercede also, O passion-bearer, for our departed kinfolk, NN., beginning as is possible; and cease not to pray and fall down before the Lord Who hath mercy on all, that He forgive and have mercy on those who sit in darkness and are embittered with exceeding great bitterness.

Glory...: Another sessional hymn, in Tone III—

O great Varus, dweller in everlasting joy and namesake of heavenly rest: With boldness thou darest to remember before the Lord the redeeming qualities of our forebears; for even though we cannot place thee in their graves, yet do we beseech thee to add thy prayers to our earnest supplications that they be granted pity. Wherefore, fall down and pray, for the Master will not reject thine intercession, but, inclined by His infinite goodness, will send deliverance and great mercy upon those who are embittered with exceeding great bitterness.

Now & ever...: Theotokion, in the same tone—

O all-radiant Lady, who art hymned above all and art continually magnified by the heavenly hosts, Mother of the King of all: Since thy glory and greatness are increased where and when He desireth, when thou helpst sinners and coverest the whole world with thy supplications, O Mistress, increase the majesty of thy sublimity, and by thy fervent supplications deliver from grievous torments our unbelieving and unbaptized kinfolk and NN., who are commemorated with them; and grant them deliverance and great mercy.

Ode IV

Irmos: Thou art my strength, O Lord, Thou art my power; Thou art my God, Thou art my joy, Who, without leaving the bosom of the Father, hast visited our lowliness. Wherefore, with the Prophet Habbakuk I cry unto Thee: Glory to Thy power, O Thou Who lovest mankind!

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Since thou lovest all who have recourse to thee with faith, O passion-bearer, thou hast won the love of those who make entreaty unto thee. What other thing, desiring to glorify thee, will He Who loveth mankind do if not to bestow the asked-for mercy upon the compunctionate, the eternal prisoners bereft of all joy, NN. As before, O valiant martyr, fail not in thy prayers for them.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Cruel winter, barren of salvation, and joyless lamentation lie upon the ungodly who have died, in the place where NN., whom we remember, are assigned. But haste thou, O passion-bearer, to unite them to the race of the righteous, and fail not in thy prayers for them.

Glory...: Let not the gloomy prison of hades forever hold our ancestors and kinfolk, and all who are remembered with them, NN. Since thou, the wondrous athlete,

hast set at nought the power of unbelief and the might of sin, so as before with the family of Cleopatra, fail not in thy prayers for them, that they may be forgiven, O martyr.

Now & ever...: Through thee, O all-pure one, have we come to know how to glorify the Creator of all things; through thee are we wont to magnify the true Savior Who came forth from thee bearing flesh. We praise and bow down before thee, the Mistress, and pray: Have mercy on the our kinfolk NN. who have died in unbelief, and fail not in thy prayers to thy Son, that He deliver them.

Ode V

Irmos: Wherefore hast Thou turned Thy face from me, O Light never-waning? And why hath a strange darkness covered me, wretch that I am? But turn me, and guide my steps to the light of Thy commandments, I pray.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Every gift and every mercy poured forth from the merciful Lord, though all-wondrous and all-marvelous, when brought to bear to accomplish the forgiveness of NN. who have died in impiety, impart excellent magnitude thereto. Wherefore, today also do thou make haste to entreat the Master, O martyr, that He work great things.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Turn not away from our compunction, O Lord, neither be Thou mindful of the multitude of our sins; rather, remember Thy mercies which are from of old, and in Thy compassions, and for the sake of the valiant athlete Varus, exhaust not the riches of Thine infinite lovingkindness, but pour forth Thy mercies and forgiveness upon NN., whom we remember.

Glory...: If the Master's love for mankind extendeth even unto those afar off at sea, O great-martyr, stand forth today and, falling down, beseech Him to have mercy on those far away from the Faith, our kinfolk who have died unbaptized, and NN., who are commemorated with them, that He may grant them forgiveness and great mercy.

Now & ever...: Intercede, O Mistress, for our weakness, and be thou constantly with us in time of need, helping us everywhere and always; for thou art the hope and expectation of Christians. Wherefore, reject not our petitions, but fulfill and perfect them by thine incomprehensible grace.

Ode VI

Irmos: Cleanse me, O Savior, for many are my transgressions; and lead me up from the abyss of evils, I pray, for to Thee have I cried, and Thou hast hearkened to me, O God of my salvation.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Let not the pride of the enemy rejoice, having siezed men's souls as plunder; but by thy fervent supplications do thou, O martyr, destroy his desires, entreating the Lord to forgive NN., whom we remember, and to deliver them and us from everlasting torment.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

The inspiration for our feat of prayer is the forgiveness of the family of Cleopatra, whence we have conceived the thought to move thee to make supplication. Disdain not NN., whom we remember, O great-martyr, and reject not their sinful state; but making haste, ask of Christ the Master that He grant them forgiveness and deliverance from bitter torments.

Glory...: Assuming boldness, O passion-bearer, ask of the King of heaven that He grant the joy of remission instead of dread punishment unto those who have met an evil end because of their unbelief, and whose hope of good things hath utterly perished

because they have angered God; and having led them up from bitterness, preserve them in the mercy of the Master.

Now & ever...: What evil can prevail over thy maternal supplications, O Mistress? For truly, if thou wilt stand forth today and make supplication for NN., for whom we ask thee to pray, thou shalt obtain for them joyous forgiveness, deliverance and great mercy.

Kontakion, in Tone IV—

Following Christ, O martyr Varus, and draining His cup, thou wast crowned with the wreath of martyrdom and joinest chorus with the angels. Pray thou without ceasing for our souls.

Ikos: Be thou mindful of our words, O splendid denizen of heaven, glorious Varus, great-martyr of Christ, namesake of everlasting rest, who by thy great sufferings didst obtain an impassable and splendid resting-place, far from inescapable imprisonment, unceasing retribution and want: Haste thou by thy God-pleasing supplications to deliver His compunctionate servants NN., for whose sake we entreat thee, standing before thee and crying out with earnestness: Fulfill our petitions, O holy one, and beseech Christ God unceasingly in behalf of our souls.

Ode VII

Irmos: Once, in Babylon, the fire stood in awe of the condescension of God; wherefore, the youths, dancing with joyous step in the furnace, as in a meadow, chanted: Blessed art Thou, O God of our fathers!

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

As Thou dost enlighten all like the sun, O Lord, and lettest rain fall in abundance upon all, and unceasingly bestowest mercy upon those who anger Thee, hearken now unto Varus, Thine athlete, and pour forth Thy mercy utterly upon our kinfolk who have been separated from Thee, and upon the unbelieving NN., whom we remember, O Thou Who lovest mankind.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Now as before, be Thou compassionate, O Lord, and allowing Thyself to be entreated, O Master, as Thou didst with Cleopatra, so do Thou deal with us, O Merciful One: Send forth Thy compassions and lovingkindness upon NN., whom we remember, for Thou art the inexhaustible Well-spring of mercy.

Glory...: The prophet, soaring aloft, hymneth Thy mercies, O Lord, unto the ages, and we also believe that Thou hast not diminished in Thy compassions, for the bounds of Thy lovingkindness are infinite. We entreat Thee to pour forth mercies from the abyss thereof upon NN., who have been drowned in the depths, and fill them therewith, for the sake of the martyr, O our Master.

Now & ever...: He who is most wise among the prophets calleth thee the mountain; and we believe him when he saith that from thee, without the interference of man, the Stone of the divine Offspring issued forth, from Whom we have received salvation and release from the depths of hades. O Mistress, lead up from hades NN., whom we remember today, that we may unceasingly magnify thee, the most merciful one.

Ode VIII

Irmos: When the musical instruments sounded and innumerable were those who worshiped the image in Dura, the three youths, refusing to obey the tyrant's command, hymned and glorified the Lord for all ages.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

Let Thine ancient words of mercy, which bespeak the hope that we will be lifted up, be fulfilled, O Lord, for Thou didst hearken to Thy saints when they besought Thee to have mercy on those who died in unbelief. And today we bring them before Thee, O Lord, to pray that for the sake of their entreaties Thou mightest have pity on NN., who have died outside of Orthodoxy, O Master, and have offended Thee, whether knowingly or unknowingly.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

O Lamb of God Who hast redeemed us by Thy precious Blood, Who didst hearken to the plea of Thecla and the blessed Gregory, who didst accept the petitions of Methodius, Macarius and many others, bestowing joy and deliverance upon those who died in wicked religions, and moved Chrysostom to write that we pray for them: Accept, O Master, with him the glorious Varus, and by their supplications forgive and have mercy on NN., whom we remember.

Glory...: Entreat joy for us, O great-martyr, for we will be filled with gladness if we find that our kinfolk NN. are delivered from everlasting torments; for the Master always listeneth to thy supplications and fulfilleth thy petitions. Wherefore, fail not therein, praying even now, that we may continually glorify thee.

Now & ever...: O all-immaculate Mistress, wondrous and unwedded Mother of the King, increase to abundance the multitude of thy lovingkindness and compassions for us who seek mercy. For where else may we find it if we do not make haste to fall down before thee? For thou gavest birth for us to the most abundant Torrent of delight, O all-blessed one.

Ode IX

Irmos: Heaven was stricken with awe, and the ends of the earth were amazed, that God hath appeared in the flesh, and that thy womb became more spacious than the heavens. Wherefore, the ranks of men and angels magnify thee as the Theotokos.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

O glorious Varus, in God thou art able by thy divinely acceptable supplications to obtain and pour forth mercies upon those who have been utterly separated therefrom. For there is but one Father of compassions and lovingkindness, and as Master all things are possible for Him. Unfailingly beseech Him, O athlete, that He forgive and have mercy on NN., whom we remember.

Refrain: O Varus, pray for our loved ones who are beyond!

O great-martyr, accomplish thou an all-wondrous deed attendant upon thy glory: Ask forgiveness from the Lord and the assuaging of His righteous anger for our ancestors, who are embittered because of their dark unbelief, and for NN., who find themselves in bitterness and the expectation of the most grievous of torments, that thou mightest raise them up to a deliverance free of fear, where are the mansions wherein the Master placeth the forgiven to live.

Glory...: What miracle is more wondrous than this, what glory more remarkable, what lovingkindness greater than when thou, O martyr, takest pity and entrest the

merciful Lord to remit the sin of impiety from NN., whom we remember, and to deliver them from grievous punishment?

Now & ever...: O merciful Mistress, who lovest mankind and art not mindful of evil: Accept the urgency of our petition, and unfailingly intercede for mercy with thy Son and Master, that He have mercy and forgive the sin of heterodoxy for our deceased kinfolk, and for NN. who are remembered with them, and that He bestow upon them remission and a place of mercy which shall not be taken away.

Exapostilarion—

O Lord and Master, may what Thou didst when Thou forgavest the ancestors of Cleopatra be right even today: Hearken unto the supplication of Varus, Thy great-martyr who intercedeth for us, the greatly sinful. Deliver from torments NN., who are remembered to Thee with pity. Make haste and speed, O Compassionate One, in that Thou art merciful, to have mercy on them, for Thou canst do whatsoever Thou desirest.

Glory..., Now & ever...: Theotokion—

Haste thou, O Mistress, to hearken to our supplication, which we offer unto thee in thy church; and do thou, O Theotokos, incline to mercy thy Son and Master, that He have mercy and release from his just anger our deceased ancestors and our other kinfolk, NN. Wherefore, haste thou. O greatly merciful one, to deliver them; for thou art merciful, who desirest mercy for all.

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