



SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2009

EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS PARISH

Українська Католицька Парафія Воздвиження  
Чесного Хреста

СЛАВА ІСУСУ ХРИСТУ!  
GLORY BE TO JESUS CHIRST!

СЛАВА НА ВІКИ!  
MAY HE GLORIFIED ALWAYS!

## Father Janko's Message

Dear parishioners, friends and visitors of Holy Cross Parish!

I have the honour and privilege to address you with a few words in the new cycle of the Newsletter and also for the new Liturgical Year. Of course, we all need to try to continue to be faithful followers of our Lord, and together as a good Christian family, grow in love, patience, understanding and forgiveness. Are we not called to do that by the virtue of our Baptism?

As we begin our church activities - our programs with youth, parish organizations, catechetical education, etc... we want to be successful, right? We also want to do our best to succeed. But, can we succeed without being faithful? The word "success" never appears in the Bible. There are parables and other references to being faithful stewards, or being found faithful, but not to our being successful. Apparently, being successful is not ours to determine but God's. "We are called not to be successful but faithful", said Mother Teresa.

To be truly successful in God's eyes means to be faithful. It means a cross. "Let him who would come after me," said Jesus, "deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

May our Lord, Jesus Christ, give us the power and strength to be faithful, as we glorify Him, His and our Mother Mary and all the saints!

Fr. Janko!

## Editor's Message

*P* we embark towards September, the days of summer slowly come to a close. We begin to wrap up our fun activities and we start looking forward to a new church and school year. The end of summer also puts us all in a flurry with school registration, sports enrollment, meetings resuming and courses beginning. Do you get the feeling that our lives are no longer centered around the church or God, but instead around the countless activities that society offers. We are always in a hurry to do this or that and we are constantly rushing to go here or there. Seldom do we honestly take the time to celebrate God and our family.

Do no squander away the countless opportunities that lay ahead of us in this new Church year. Slow down... and see what the Church has to offer. Slow down... and embrace the blessings of the Lord.

*"Slow down and enjoy life. It's not only the scenery you miss by going too fast - you also miss the sense of where you are going and why."*

Eddie Cantor

The Church also experiences such a change with the beginning of the new church year which occurs on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Let the beginning of the church year invite us to enter into the mystery of redemption. Let us look at September in the sense of a change of focus and a change of direction. As we enter this new church year let us look forward to the many opportunities that it will provide for us individually and as a church community. It is with hope that it will offer us not only spiritual growth and personal growth in our faith and love for one another, but above all else, allow us the opportunity of becoming true children of God.

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# The Liturgical Cycle

The Church divides the year into a number of important blocks of time, which is known as the *Liturgical cycle*. Consequently, we have the daily, weekly, yearly and Paschal cycles along with the various services and celebrations that are assigned to each one of the cycles.

## Daily Cycle

The first liturgical cycle is the daily cycle. This cycle encompasses all the services that re-occur throughout the day, every day of the year. These services include: Vespers, Hours, Complines, Nocturnes, Matins and Divine Liturgy.

## Weekly Cycle

The second liturgical cycle is the weekly cycle. It is dedicated to the general commemoration of certain individuals or important events.

*Sunday* – which is the first day of the Church week, is always dedicated to the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This is such an important day liturgically that it is always celebrated like a great feast.

*Monday* – is dedicated to the various ranks and orders of the Heavenly Bodiless Powers: Angels, Archangels, Seraphim, Cherubim, Hosts, Principalities, Dominions, etc.

*Tuesday* – is dedicated to St. John the Baptist and all other Prophets.

*Wednesday* – is dedicated to the Precious and Life-giving Cross and the betrayal of our Lord by Judas.

*Thursday* – we honour St. Nicholas the Wonderworker, Archbishop of Myra, and all other sainted hierarchs.

*Friday* – is dedicated to the Cross and Crucifixion of our Lord. This is a day of fasting.

*Saturday* – is set aside for the honour of the Holy Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, the Holy Apostles and all the Saints. Saturday is also dedicated for the remembrance of our faithful departed in commemoration of our Lord resting in the tomb on Saturday, the last day of the week, the original day of rest, at the completion of His great act of sacrifice and death.

## Yearly Cycle

The yearly cycle is comprised of fixed or immoveable feasts. These feasts always fall on the same calendar date every year. These include all of the

great feasts of Our Lord and the Mother of God. It also includes the great feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross.

<i>The Nativity of the Theotokos</i>	September 8
<i>The Elevation of the Holy Cross</i>	September 14
<i>The Presentation of the Theotokos</i>	November 21
<i>The Nativity of the Lord</i>	December 25
<i>The Theophany of Our Lord</i>	January 6
<i>The Presentation of Our Lord</i>	February 2
<i>The Annunciation</i>	March 25
<i>The Transfiguration</i>	August 6
<i>The Dormition of the Theotokos</i>	August 15

The yearly fixed cycle also has four fasting periods:

*The Great Fast (Lent)* - begins 7 weeks before Pascha, which is obligatory.

*St. Phillip's Fast (Pylypivka)*—the 40 day fast preceding the Nativity of Christ.

*The Apostles Fast*— begins 8 days after Pentecost (not obligatory).

*The Dormition Fast (Spasivka)*—a 14 day fast preceding the Dormition of the Mother of God.

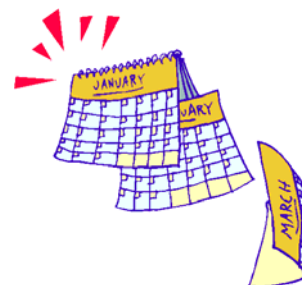
St. Philip's Fast and the Dormition Fast always fall on the same dates and last the same length of time each year.

There is also a yearly cycle of movable feasts—so called because they vary from year to year and are tied to the celebration of Pascha. The whole cycle of moveable feasts is extremely rich liturgically.

The Paschal cycle is a movable cycle dependant on the date of Pascha. It begins in late January or early February with the Sunday of the Publican and Pharisee and ends somewhere around the 31st Sunday after Pentecost, which usually falls near the end of January or early February depending on the date of Pascha the following year.

- Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Pascha)*
- Ascension (forty days after Pascha)*
- Pentecost (fifty days after Pascha)*

Every Sunday service falls within the Paschal cycle, there we see the name of the Sunday being called: “the Sunday of Pascha, or the #\_\_ Sunday after Pentecost, etc.



The birth and early life of the Virgin Mary is not recorded in the Gospels or other books of the New Testament, however this information can be found in non-scriptural books, in a work dating from the second century known as the Book of James or *Protevangelion* and supported by the Tradition of the Church.

The birth of Mary, who was to become the mother of Jesus, is one of the twelve important feast days of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

According to the story found in this book, Mary's parents, Joachim and Anna, who were an older couple, were childless for many years. They lived in Jerusalem where Joachim was an elder in the Temple. They were righteous and greatly devoted to God. Although they remained faithful to God, their prayers for a child remained unanswered. One day, when Joachim came to the temple to make an offering, he was turned away by the High Priest who chastised him for his lack of children. To hide his shame, Joachim retreated to the hill country to live among the shepherds and their flocks.

As Joachim was praying, his wife Anna was praying at the same time at their house in Jerusalem. An angel appeared to both of them and announced that Anna would have a

child whose name would be known throughout the world.

Anna promised to offer her child as a gift to the Lord. Joachim returned home, and in due time Anna bore a daughter, Mary—she was to become the Mother of Christ.

Although Mary is known as the Mother of God, she has been accorded numerous titles. They include, Mary, Mother of God, Blessed Virgin Mary, Theotokos, just to mention a few. Considered the Mother of Mothers and the Mother of all Mankind, she is venerated in a manner which helps to sanctify the role of motherhood and the preservation of the family.



**She also holds a secure place in the hearts of the faithful.**

She has been enshrined in the heart of the Church for over two thousand years. She is part of the Scriptures and the liturgy and a focus of the prayers of her earthly children. She also holds a secure place in the hearts of the faithful. She is the greatest of all saints, the closest to Christ. Mary serves as an outstanding example of virtue— of hope, faith and love for God and for others.

Having conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit, she nurtured the Son of God to adulthood and stood beside him throughout his ministry and fulfillment of the plan of salvation. She sorrowed at the foot of the cross as her son died, she joyfully received the fact of His Resurrection, and she awaited with the rest of the disciples the inspiring flame of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost.

At the end of her life, Mary was taken up into heaven, body and soul, where she continues to intercede for her children on earth as our spiritual mother and as a model for us the highest level of human sanctity.

The Church, at the Second Vatican Council, reminds us that we ought to revere the memory of Mary because it was through her that the Son of God came into our history, and it urged that all devotion to Mary leads to Christ.



## The Jesus Prayer

**"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."  
"Господи Ісусе Христе, Сину Божий, помилуй мене грішного"**

The *Jesus Prayer* is the foundation of the form of eastern spirituality called *Hesychasm* (quiet). The deepest expression of the *Jesus Prayer* (also called Prayer of the Heart) consists of the simple words:

**"Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."**

Your task is to draw nearer to God so that you can be your true self, filled with peace and joy. St. Isaac the Syrian says that it is impossible to draw nearer to God by any means other than increasing prayer.

We are called to pray "ceaselessly" (1 Thess 5:17), but the real question is, *how?* Trying to pray is the hardest of all human tasks because we are reaching for God, trying to connect with him and become like him. Abba Agathon tells us that "if we do not find prayer difficult, perhaps it is because we have not really started to pray."

*Continued on page 10...*

# Holy Orders of the Ukrainian Catholic Church

**The Ukrainian Catholic Church** consists of both clergy and laity. The three orders of the clergy are: Bishop Priest and Deacon

In the Sacrament of Holy Orders the sacred ministers receive the grace of the Holy Spirit for the service of the Church, to teach people the Christian faith, to perform services in church and at home and to direct the life of the Church.

## History

In the years following Christ's Ascension into Heaven, the Apostles instituted three orders in the priestly hierarchy: the episcopate, the priesthood and the diaconate. As the Church grew, the Apostles could not be everywhere they needed to be and so they appointed individuals to oversee communities and help guide and support the flock in their absence. This was the basis for the Episcopate we have today. In Greek, the word for overseer is *Episkopos*, from which we derive the English word Bishop.

These bishops inherited the Apostolic care of the Church, the Faith, and the Faithful. As the Church grew the bishop's role became busier and more complicated and they needed help. This is when the order of Deacon came to be.

The deacon's role was to help the bishop serve the faithful in their needs. As the Church developed so did the liturgical roles of both the bishop and the deacon. Soon, because of God's Grace, the Church would grow so much that an even further division of responsibilities became necessary – this was the birth of the Priesthood.

## Roles

### Bishop

The bishop is the head of the local Church and receives the highest degree of grace. In the Ukrainian Catholic Church, all bishops are equal in respect of the grace they have received although they are divided into various ranks according to their administrative responsibilities: Archbishop, Metropolitan or Patriarch.

He can perform all the sacraments of Church including the ordination of other bishops, priests and deacons, consecrate chrism and churches and direct church affairs in the parishes which are subject to them.

### Priest (Presbyters)

The priest is the bishop's representative when he himself cannot be present, just as the early Episcopate "filled in" for the Apostles. He could be described as a kind of bishop's "proxy." This is why when the bishop is not present, the priest is the celebrant of the Holy Mysteries but must stand aside in the presence of the bishop.

### Deacon

(Greek meaning "servant.") The role of the deacon did not change as his order was originally established to help the bishop and not for the priesthood. They assist bishops and priests in performing divine services.

Parallel to Trinitarian theology, we can say that the Bishop is the fountain of priesthood from which all others derive their priesthood. They represent the presence of Christ in the Church, and are called High Priest. However, it is Christ alone who is the Great High Priest, from whom all Grace and Love flows.



The Holy Mysteries can be celebrated without a deacon, but never without a priest or bishop. Deacons cannot perform the sacraments but can administer them—for example, once a priest or bishop consecrates the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the deacon can administer the sacrament to the faithful at the Divine Liturgy or, in case of the sick and elderly, to homes and hospitals.

The clergy may be married or celibate, except for the bishop, who according to a long standing practice, must be celibate. The deacons and priests must be married before ordination and once married cannot remarry.

The clergy are the *sacred* priesthood, whereby the laity are called the *royal* priesthood. One is not greater than the other but equal and distinct. Each play a very important role in the liturgical and administrative life of the Church. The clergy cannot conduct formal worship services without the participation of the laity nor can the laity perform the same services without the clergy to lead them in prayer.

*Continued on page 5...*

# The Simplicity of Prayer

*Prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy.*

**P**rayer is essential to Christian life. Prayer is listening to God's promptings in daily life. Prayer is our effort to be open to the presence of God.

Jesus Christ himself prayed and taught men to pray. No one who does not pray to God can be a follower of Christ. It builds a vital and personal relationship with God. It is essential to knowing God and growing spiritually, just as breathing is to living and staying healthy. Prayer the lifeblood of your faith; without prayer your faith will die. Your walk with God is only as strong as the communication between you and Him.

You might ask, "If God already knows what we need before we ask, why even bother praying?" If you read, Scripture makes a very strong case for prayer in the life of the believer.

## The Foundation of Prayer

- Love for God
- Desire to do His will
- Openness to change in your life

## Basic Attitudes of Prayer

*Prayer depends on your attitude of neediness before God.* This attitude is one of *humility* and of *basic faith*. It looks with confidence to God as the only source that can fulfill our needs and desires. We call this having *good dispositions* and *perseverance*. Without good dispositions we won't really be praying and without perseverance we won't keep praying. Our dispositions in prayer are what will either make us grow or stagnate in our faith life.

Perseverance is necessary for learning how to pray - it shows our commitment to loving God even if we don't feel any particular benefit. Develop these two basic attitudes and make them your own. Keep them before you constantly as you begin to pray. But you do need a basic commitment to love & follow the Lord. Faith comes from God, not from our own work. But we

have to consciously receive and nurture His gift of faith.

## How to Pray

Remember when you pray there isn't one set way of praying. Prayer is just talking with God. Make prayer a **natural** part of your daily life. (See page 3 - *The Jesus Prayer*.)

Learn your prayers by heart for this helps to prevent distraction. When you know them by memory you will have them with you at all times.

The quality of true prayer consists in the fact that the mind during prayer is attentive and the heart sympathizes with the mind.

You can pray anywhere and anytime.

You can share your deepest, most troubling feelings and know God will not be shocked or deaf to your requests.

You can pray alone or with other believers. You can pray silently, and wordlessly.

*Continued on page 8...*

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## Holy Orders continued...

In the Ukrainian Catholic Church we also have the laity perform what were once minor orders: lector and acolyte.

For centuries, the office of lector was one of the "minor orders," generally reserved to seminarians approaching ordination. Another minor order is that of subdeacon. Ordination to the sub deaconate and lectorate is done by a bishop during public worship but mostly outside the context of the Divine Liturgy.

### Lector

The lector's role was that of reader. His essential purpose was to read the Old Testament and Epistle during the Divine Liturgy and other services.

Today, in our Church, lectors are instituted not only as readers but they are also candle bearers, help the priest during the Divine Liturgy and other services and distribute the consecrated Eucharist to parishioners.

### Acolyte

Greek for "*akolouthos*" meaning attendant or follower. Therefore, acolytes or altar boys are attendants to the bishops or priests and help them help during the various services. During the Liturgy the acolytes represent the Angels that surround and assist Christ, in the same way as they surround and assist the Parish Priest. They were also known as taper-bearers (candle bearers.)



**HOLY CROSS PARISH  
PRAZNYK  
LITURGY AND DINNER**



Sunday, September 13, 2009  
Holy Cross Parish  
Pontifical Liturgy with Bishop David Motiuk  
09:00 a.m.



**Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross**

**September 14**

**O**n the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross we honour the Holy Cross by which Christ redeemed the world. This is a day that we, as parishioners of Holy Cross, duly celebrate with importance, as it is our Praznyk.



The public veneration of the Cross of Christ originated in the 4th century. St. Helen, mother, of the Emperor Constantine, found the true cross while on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 325 A.D. Relying upon the oral tradition of the faithful, St. Helen found the precious Cross together with the crosses of the two thieves crucified with our Lord.

The date of the feast, September 14, marks the day in the year 335 when the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was dedicated.

The true Cross on which Christ was crucified was elevated inside the Church on that day for all to venerate, hence the name of the feast: Universal Exaltation of the life-giving Cross.

This Feast also gives the Church an opportunity to relish the full glory of the Cross as a source of light, hope and victory for Christ's people. Christians "Exalt" the Cross of Christ as the instrument of our salvation. The cross represents the One Sacrifice by which Jesus, obedient even unto death, accomplished our salvation. It is a symbolic summary of the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection of Christ – all in one image.

*He who does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake shall find it.*  
(Mt 10:38,39)

We remember Our Lord's words:

The Cross – because of what it represents – is the most potent and universal symbols of the Christian faith. It has inspired both liturgical and private devotions: The crucifix is a constant reminder and witness of Christ's ultimate triumph, His victory over sin and death through His suffering and dying on the Cross.



You can't expect people to look eye to eye with you if you are looking down on them.  
- Anonymous

# Jesus Teaches About Prayer



For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Luke 11:10 (NIV)  
 The puzzle is based on Luke 11:1-9 (NIV).

P R A Y Y B S L E F X E B P H  
 U K I N G D O M L T S P D Q A  
 A Y Z A U B Q Q S E E E R X L  
 U Q B S B U R W F Z A A E G L  
 O R R K P U J I U R Z D C K O  
 O N E O L F N P I P I A Q H W  
 T A A P X A A F V I X E M M E  
 E M D E D M F T W T F S N U D  
 M E C N H R D O H N L F B D W  
 P P K K R N E G R E S M Y Y U  
 A V N I I Q I C C G R T C D Y  
 T N O F U N J C E S I N S A O  
 I J C W D K S D G I J V Q I A  
 O Q K I F B E K P I V J E L A  
 N M M W N M J J P V W E M Y P

FIND SEEK MIDNIGHT SINS	PRAY FATHER DAILY KINGDOM	OPEN NAME TEACH HALLOWED	TEMPATION KNOCK LEAD FORGIVE	FRIEND RECEIVE BREAD ASK
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## The Protection of the Mother of God

October 01

An apparition of the Mother of God in the tenth century at Constantinople commemorates the Feast of the Protection of the Mother of God on October 1<sup>st</sup>.

In 911 AD, Constantinople, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, was under military threat and the people were praying for God's help in the Blachernae Church in the suburb of the city.

According to tradition, the Holy Virgin appeared, accompanied by St. John the Forerunner, St. John the Evangelist and several saints. She approached the center of the church, knelt down and prayed for a long time. Her face was covered in tears.

Afterwards, she arose, took her veil off and spread it over the people as a sign of protection.

From this veil, which in Slavonic is called "pokrov", the feast got its name: "Pokrov Presvyatoyi Bohordoytsi" (The veil (or Protection) of the Most Holy Mother of God). The veil became the symbol of protection and intercession of the Blessed Virgin. After the appearance of the Mother of God, the danger of barbarian invasion was averted and the city was spared from bloodshed and suffering.



*"Today the Virgin stands in the midst of the Church, and with choirs of Saints she invisibly prays to God for us. Angels and Bishops venerate Her, Apostles and prophets rejoice together, since for our sake she prays to the Eternal God!"*

## Prayer continued...

### The Principles of Prayer

- ✚ **Pray in Faith:** Simply and completely trust in God's commitment to your best interests and in His power to act on your behalf.
- ✚ **Pray Reverently:** Keep in mind God's holiness and greatness. Pray with genuine respect and humility.
- ✚ **Pray Sincerely:** The words don't matter as much as what is in your heart.
- ✚ **Pray with Purity:** Don't let prayers be hindered by any known sin in your heart or life: we could have unfinished business with God, our neighbor or a family member.
- ✚ **Pray according to God's Will:** Submit your personal desires to God's greater glory and purposes.
- ✚ **Pray with Thanksgiving:** It helps to recall God's past goodness and His faithful character and then surround every new request with thanksgiving and praise.

The Bible identifies several different types of prayers we can pray. We can divide prayer up into the acronym = "A.C.T.S."

- A: Adoration** (Worship)
- C: Confession** (Of Specific Sins)
- T: Thanksgiving** (Gratitude)
- S: Supplication** (Specific Requests)

#### Adoration:

To adore God, to worship Him and fulfill the commandment to love Him with all of our heart, mind and soul. Jesus essentially taught us the same thing in the Lord's Prayer, which begins, "*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name*". This puts things in perspective for us.

#### Confession:

Allows us to clear away the things in the relationship between you and God which are displeasing to Him. All of us have sinned. St John writes in his epistle "*If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*" The closer we draw to God, the more we sense our own sinfulness. This is, once again, modeled in the Lord's Prayer. we find, "Forgive us our trespasses."

#### Thanksgiving:

Our immediate response after confession is thanksgiving. We should be thankful that God would

indeed cleanse and forgive us. We need to be constantly thanking God for his blessings because He deserves our praise. Psalm 118:1 says, "*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For his mercy endures forever.*"

#### Supplication:

Finally we come to ask God for our needs and the needs of others. If we are faithful in the first three steps, the last step will not degenerate into some spiritual shopping list. Too often in prayer, we cut to the chase instead of spending time in adoration, confession, and thanksgiving first. Yet, God does want to hear our needs and requests. Scripture tells us, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6-7). We are also promised, "And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Dear Lord

So far today, I'm doing all right.

I have not gossiped, lost my temper, been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish or self-indulgent.

I have not whined, complained, cursed or eaten any chocolate. I have charged nothing on my credit card.

But I will be getting out of bed in a minute and I think that I will really need our help then.

Amen



## On the Lighter Side....

A Church-goer wrote a letter to the editor of the newspaper and complained that it made no sense to go to church every Sunday.

"I've gone for 30 years now," he wrote, "and in that time I have heard something like 3,000 sermons. But for the life of me, I can't remember a single one of them. So, I think I'm wasting my time and the pastors are wasting theirs by giving sermons at all."

This started a real controversy in the "Letters to the Editor" column, much to the delight of the editor. It went on for weeks until someone wrote this clincher:

"I've been married for 30 years now. In that time my wife has cooked some 32,000 meals. But for the life of me, I cannot recall the entire menu for a single one of those meals. But I do know this:

They all nourished me and gave me the strength I needed to do my work. If my wife had not given me these meals, I could be physically dead today. Likewise, if I had not gone to church for nourishment, my spiritual life could have ended up the same way!"

**HUNGRY..??**

**I used to be indecisive.  
Now I'm not sure.**

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07-15-2003

STAFF MEETING

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Thanks to Earl Brightup (See Matthew 6:9-13)

08-17-2001

**NO, I DID NOT SAY "THY KINGDOM.COM"**

### The mistakes to avoid:

- Remorse over yesterday's failures.
- Anxiety over today's problems.
- Worry over tomorrow's uncertainty.
- Waste of the moment's opportunity.
- Procrastination with one's present duty.
- Resentment of another's success.
- Criticism of a neighbour's imperfection.
- Impatience with youth's immaturity.
- Skepticism of our nation's future.
- Unbelief in God's providence

*Don't give up. Hope in God.*

*Walk by faith, not by sight.*

*Take time out for a good laugh.*

*Use the Bible as a window to see your world*

*Never trouble trouble until trouble troubles you.*

*Make choices based on God's Word.*

*Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.*

*Ask for God's strength to get you through.*

*Stop and enjoy the moment.*

*Pray as if everything depended on God -it does.*

### Jesus Prayer continued...

The advocates of this form of prayer call the practitioner to move from oral prayer, through the prayer of the mind to prayer of the heart.

The first half of the Jesus Prayer stresses the **Name of Jesus**. Jesus is always present, but we are not naturally aware of his presence. We say his Name so that we become aware of his presence and share in his power. The second half of the Jesus Prayer stresses **mercy**. Mercy in Hebrew, means "loving kindness" or "everlasting love." When we ask for mercy, we ask to be loved.

When we ask the Lord for mercy we appropriate the love that is always there for the asking.

### **How To Pray the Jesus Prayer**

The believer begins, according to the advice of Theophan, as if he or she had never prayed properly before. Recite the Jesus prayer slowly, gently and quietly, Inhale while saying: "**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,**" deeply breathing in God's name. Then, rest slightly at "**Son of God**" before breathing out and saying: "**have mercy on me, a sinner.**"

**“Господи Ісусе Христе, Сину Божий, помилуй мене грішного”**

Next, stand or sit still and to confine your thoughts to the one word being uttered at that moment. Your mind is to be emptied of all images, and become aware of the presence of Jesus. The ideal is to achieve a state in which the believer prays day and night awake and asleep with the beat of the heart and thereby fulfilling the command to "pray without

ceasing." The spiritual direction of the hesychasts is contained in a book called the *Philokalia*. An introduction to this prayer is found in the charming anonymous account of a Russian pilgrim of the 19th century, *The Way of the Pilgrim* and the *Pilgrim Continues His Way*.

The Jesus Prayer is recommended in the morning, following our prayer rule, for some period of time, perhaps 10 or 15 minutes. You can also use the prayer at any other time of the day, or night while driving, doing dishes, exercising, or when trying to fall asleep. The Jesus Prayer is notably useful in times of extreme concern or upset.

Tradition dictates that the use of Chotki or prayer ropes help one to concentrate on saying the prayer. For each knot or bead one repetition of the prayer is recited. Each repetition may also be accompanied by prostrations and the sign of the cross, signalled by beads strung along the prayer rope at intervals.

In prayer, we discover that Jesus stands within us at the door of our hearts, always knocking until we open the door of our heart to him. St Theophan tells us to keep our "mind *in* the heart" at all times. Heart means our innermost chamber, our secret dwelling place where God lives. The heart is Christ's palace. There, Christ the King comes to take His rest.



### Parish Priest

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