

:: Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev ::
On Prayer, Part XXI: The Practice of the Jesus Prayer

The Jesus Prayer: "Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God: Have mercy upon me, a sinner."

Let's talk about the practical aspects of the Jesus Prayer. Some people set themselves the task of repeating the Jesus Prayer over the course of the day, say, one hundred, five hundred, or one thousand times. To count how many times they have said the prayer, they use a prayer rope, which may have fifty, one hundred, or more knots. Pronouncing the prayer in their mind, people use a prayer rope. But if you are just beginning the ascetic struggle of the Jesus Prayer, then you should pay more attention to quality, rather than quantity. It seems to me that one should begin with a very slow pronunciation out loud of the words of the Jesus Prayer, ensuring that that heart participates in the prayer. You pronounce: "Lord... Jesus... Christ..." – and your heart should, like a tuning fork, respond to every word. And do not seek immediately to say the Jesus Prayer many times. Just say it ten times, but if your heart responds to the words of the prayer, that will be enough.

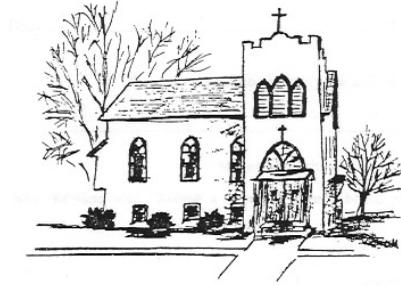
Man has two spiritual centers: the mind and the heart. With the mind is connected intellectual activity, the imagination, and thoughts; with the heart is connected emotions, and experiences. When saying the Jesus Prayer, the center should be the heart. That is why, praying, you should not try to represent anything in the mind – for example, Jesus Christ – but should try to keep your attention in the heart.

The ancient ecclesial ascetic writers developed a technique of "guarding the mind in the heart," whereby the Jesus Prayer was connected with the breathing: when you inhaled, you said "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God"; and when you exhaled: "have mercy on me, the sinner." One's attention was, as it were, naturally transferred from the head to the heart. I do not think that everyone should practice the Jesus Prayer in this way; it is enough to say the words of the prayer with great attention and reverence.

Start your morning with the Jesus Prayer. If during the day you have a free minute, recite the prayer a few more times; in the evening, before sleep, repeat it until you fall asleep. If you learn to wake up and fall asleep with the Jesus Prayer, this will give you enormous spiritual support. Gradually, to the extent that your heart becomes more responsive to the words of this prayer, you can reach the point that it becomes unceasing – moreover, the main content of the prayer will not be in pronouncing the words, but in the constant feeling of God's presence in your heart. And if you began by saying the prayer out loud, you will gradually reach the point that you will say it only in your heart, without the involvement of the tongue or lips. You will see how the prayer will transform your entire human nature and all your life. This is the special power of the Jesus Prayer.

Source: www.pravmir.com

*Any announcements for the Sunday bulletin? Please submit by Wednesday each week to Fr. Andrew, by email or phone.
If you are not on the church's email list and would like to be, please let Fr. Andrew know.*



St. George Orthodox Church of Spring Valley

211 E. Minnesota St., Spring Valley, IL 61362
www.stgeorgeorthodox.org
815-664-4540 (church office)

Pastor: Father Andrew Kishler
frandrew@stgeorgeorthodox.org
773-575-3272 (cell)
815-663-8701 (home)

Sunday, October 26, 2014 – St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki

Matins (Morning Prayer), 9:00 AM :: Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM

Today's Holy Bread: Richard and Bette Malooley

Next Week: Matt and Ollie Rowan

Troparion of the Resurrection (Tone 3):

Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad, for the Lord hath done a mighty act with His own arm. He hath trampled down death by death, and became the first-born from the dead. He hath delivered us from the depths of Hades, granting the world the great mercy.

Troparion of St. Demetrios of Thessaloniki (Tone 3):

Verily, the inhabited world found thee a great help in tribulations and a vanquisher of nations, O fight-bearing one. Wherefore, as thou didst demolish the arrogance of Lahosh, and on the battlefield didst hearten Nestor, beseech, Saint Demetrios, Christ God to grant us great mercy.

Troparion of St. George the Great Martyr (Tone 4):

Since thou art a liberator and deliverer of captives, a help and succour of the poor and needy, a healing physician of the sick, a contender and fighter for kings, O great among martyrs, the victory-clad George: Intercede with Christ God for the salvation of our souls.

Kontakion to the Theotokos (Tone 2):

O undisputed intercessor of Christians, the mediatrix unrejected by the Creator, turn not away from the voice of our petitions, though we be sinners. Come to us with aid in time, who cry to thee in faith, with assistance, for thou art good. Hasten to us with intercessions, O Theotokos, who dost ever intercede for those who honor thee.

St. George is a parish of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese
The Most Reverend Metropolitan JOSEPH
The Right Reverend Bishop ANTHONY, Diocese of Toledo and the Midwest
www.antiochian.org

Scripture Readings

The righteous shall rejoice in the Lord. O God, hear my prayer.

The Reading from the Second Epistle of St. Paul to St. Timothy (2:1-10)

Timothy, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier on service gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to satisfy the one who enlisted him. An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules. It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will grant you understanding in everything. Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David, as preached in my gospel, the gospel for which I am suffering and wearing fetters like a criminal. But the word of God is not fettered. Therefore, I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain salvation in Christ Jesus with its eternal glory.

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. Luke (8:26-39)

At that time, Jesus arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is opposite Galilee. And as He stepped out on land, there met Him a man from the city who had demons; for a long time he had worn no clothes, and he lived not in a house but among the tombs. When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell down before him, and said with a loud voice, "What hast Thou to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beseech Thee, do not torment me." For Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. [For many a time it had seized him; he was kept under guard, and bound with chains and fetters, but he broke the bonds and was driven by the demon into the desert.] Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. And they begged Jesus not to command them to depart into the abyss. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside; and they begged Jesus to let them enter these. So He gave them leave. Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. When the herdsmen saw what had happened, they fled, and told it in the city and in the country. Then people went out to see what had happened, and they came to Jesus, and found the man from whom the demons had gone, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. And those who had seen it told them how he who had been possessed with demons was healed. Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gadarenes asked Jesus to depart from them; for they were seized with great fear; so He got into the boat and returned. The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with Jesus; but Jesus sent him away, saying, "Return to your home, and declare all that God has done for you." And he went away, proclaiming throughout the whole city all that Jesus had done for him.

Announcements and Upcoming Events

For a full calendar of events and services at St. George, see our website, www.stgeorgeorthodox.org.

Upcoming events and services:

- **Wednesday, Oct. 29:** Evening Prayer and Bible Study, 6:00 PM
- **Saturday, Nov. 1:** Vespers, 5:00 PM
- **Next Sunday, Nov. 2:** Matins, 9:00 AM; Sunday School, 9:15 AM (downstairs); Divine Liturgy, 10:00 AM

Children and Youth

St. George's **Church school program** will continue every Sunday through the fall and winter. We will continue our lessons on each Sunday's Gospel to open our children's minds and hearts to the readings of Holy Scripture during Liturgy. Please see Khouria Patty if you have any questions. Thank you to Patrice Nimee and Kh. Patty for agreeing to lead this ministry!

Coffee Hour Schedule

The new Holy Bread and Coffee Hour schedule for 2015 is available downstairs. Please look over the names already listed on it and sign up for any additional weeks as your family desires. Signing up for a week entails a donation for the Holy Bread, and providing the food for coffee hour. On your week, please also make sure you provide Father with an updated list of family prayer requests (living and deceased).

The season of Advent

Our Orthodox Advent season is a fasting season to prepare our souls and bodies for the celebration of Christmas. Advent begins 40 days before Christmas, on November 15. Please do not neglect the traditional disciplines of fasting (at least from meat), prayer (a good time to begin attending our Wednesday or Saturday night services!) and almsgiving. All coffee hour food during that time should be meatless. Please see Fr. Andrew if you have any questions about this.

Pastoral Needs

Fr. Andrew will be available before and after most of our services and church events for confession, prayers for healing, traveling blessings, etc. Also feel free to call, email, or text to request an appointment or a pastoral visit.