

Engaged Catholic Prayer Put on the Life Savior

Below you'll find a new form of prayer on which to build up to 20 minutes of prayer as a household this month. *The Jesus Prayer* is our prayer of the month of November!
The Jesus Prayer

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

The Jesus Prayer, *O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner*, is a wonderfully versatile prayer! It can be prayed as a way to connect with God throughout your busy day, to be aware of His Presence, and to open yourself to His comfort and strength.

The Jesus Prayer is a mantra, meaning that it is *repeated*. Fifteen centuries ago, this is how the desert fathers and mothers suggested we pray, by breathing over and over again, "*O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner*". One way to pray it is to inhale on the first part, and exhale on the last 6 words.

The Desert Fathers believed that invoking the name of Jesus keeps the mind in the constant presence of God, and prepares the heart for meditation and the gift of contemplation. So where did the Desert Fathers get these words? They come from Scripture in the words of the tax collector in the parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee in Luke 18:13)

The words themselves hold deep meaning: I recognize that Jesus is my Savior and Lord, my need for God's mercy in my sinfulness, and I avail myself to the power of Jesus' name. When I pray the Jesus prayer, it is on my mind and lips here and there throughout my day. And when I pray it repeatedly, I find myself thinking more about Jesus, how grateful I am, and how much in need of Him I am.

The more the Jesus Prayer is prayed, the more it *deepens* in meaning, and it becomes a place of inner *peace*. I pray the Jesus Prayer while getting dressed, showering, waiting, and throughout my day. What a beautiful spiritual habit! It is a way to "pray without ceasing"! (1 Thess. 5:17)

For further information on this prayer: www.integratedcatholiclife.org/2011/01/kreeft-the-jesus-prayer

Enjoy the graces of praying the Jesus Prayer!

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