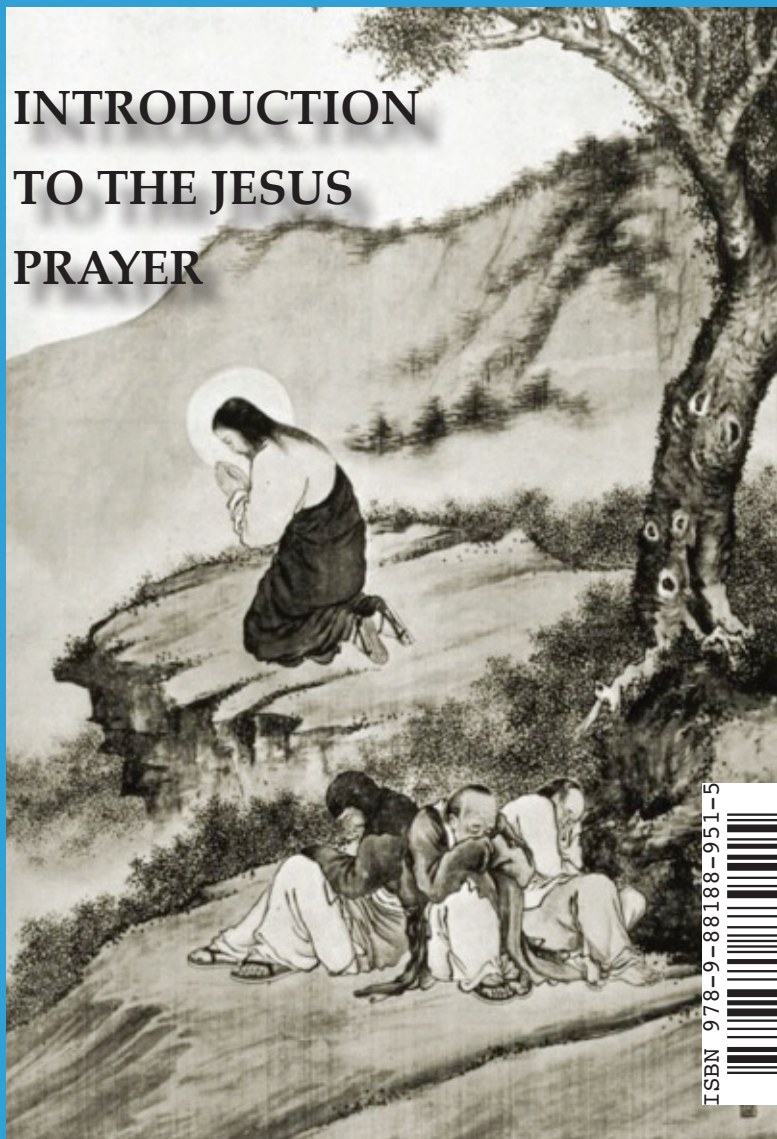


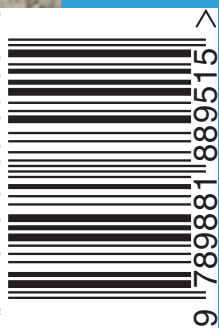


Missionary Leaflets

INTRODUCTION TO THE JESUS PRAYER



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Orthodox Brotherhood
Of Apostles
Saints Peter And Paul



Orthodox Fellowship of
ALL SAINTS OF CHINA







Missionary Leaflets

INTRODUCTION TO THE JESUS PRAYER

**by H.R.H. Princess Ileana of Romania
(later Mother Alexandra
of the Holy Transfiguration Monastery)**

Orthodox Brotherhood Of Apostles Saints Peter And Paul
Orthodox Fellowship of All Saints of China
2010





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

I have often read the Jesus Prayer in prayer books and heard it in church, but my attention was drawn to it first some years ago in Romania. There in a small Monastery of Sâmbata, tucked away at the foot of the Carpathians in the heart of the deep forest, its little white church reflected in a crystal-clear mountain pond, I met a monk who practiced the “prayer of the heart”. Profound peace and silence reigned at Sâmbata in those days; it was a place of rest and strength—I pray God it still is.

I have wandered far since I last saw Sâmbata, and all the while the Jesus Prayer lay as a precious gift buried in my heart. It remained inactive until a few years ago, when I read *The Way of a Pilgrim*. Since then I have been seeking to practice it continually. At times I lapse; nonetheless, the prayer has opened unbelievable vistas within my heart and soul.

The Jesus Prayer, or the Prayer of the Heart, centers on the Holy Name itself. It may be said in its entirety: “*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner*”; it may be changed to “*us sinners*” or to other persons named, or it may be shortened. The power lies in the name of Jesus; thus “Jesus,” alone, may fulfill the whole need of the one who prays.





The Prayer goes back to the New Testament and has had a long, traditional use. The method of contemplation based upon the Holy Name is attributed to St. Simeon, called the “New Theologian” (949-1022). When he was 14 years old, St. Simeon had a vision of heavenly light in which he seemed to be separated from his body. Amazed, and overcome with an overpowering joy, he felt a consuming humility, and cried, borrowing the Publican’s prayer¹, “*Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me.*” Long after the vision had disappeared, the great joy returned to St. Simeon each time he repeated the prayer; and he taught his disciples to worship likewise. The prayer evolved into its expanded form: “*Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner.*” In this guise it has come down to us from generation to generation of pious monks and laymen.

The invocation of the Holy Name is not peculiar to the Orthodox Church but is used by Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Protestants, though to a lesser degree. On Mount Sinai and Athos the monks worked out a whole system of contemplation based upon this simple prayer, practiced in complete silence. These monks came to be known as “Quietists”².

St. Gregory Palamas (1296-1359), the last of the great Church Fathers, became the exponent of the Hesychasts. He won, after a long drawn out battle, an irrefutable place for the Jesus Prayer and the Quietists within the Church. In the 18th century when tsardom hampered monasticism in Russia, and the Turks crushed Orthodoxy in Greece, the Neamtzu monastery in Moldavia (Romania) became one of the great centers for the Jesus Prayer.

¹ Luke 18:13

² in Greek:
“Hesychasts”





³ John 16: 23, 24

⁴ 1. Thess. 5:17

⁵ Matt. 6:6

⁶ Luke 6:45

The Prayer is held to be so outstandingly spiritual because it is focused wholly on Jesus: all thoughts, striving, hope, faith and love are out-poured in devotion to God the Son. It fulfills two basic injunctions of the New Testament. In one, Jesus said: *“I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full”*³. In the other precept we find St. Paul’s injunction to pray without ceasing⁴. Further, it follows Jesus’ instructions upon how to pray (which He gave at the same time He taught His followers the Lord’s Prayer): *“When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly”*⁵.

And Jesus taught that all impetus, good and bad, originates in men’s hearts. *“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh”*⁶.

Upon these and many other precepts of the New Testament as well as the Old, the Holy Fathers, even before St. Simeon, based their fervent and simple prayer. They developed a method of contemplation in which unceasing prayer became as natural as breathing, following the rhythmic cadence of the heart beat.

All roads that lead to God are beset with pitfalls because the enemy (Satan) ever lies in wait to trip us up. He naturally attacks most assiduously when we are bent on finding our way to salvation, for that is what he most strives to hinder. In mystical prayer the temptations we encounter exceed





all others in danger; because our thoughts are on a higher level, the allurements are proportionally subtler. Someone said that “mysticism started in mist and ended in schism”; this cynical remark, spoken by an unbeliever, has a certain truth in it. Mysticism is of real spiritual value only when it is practiced with absolute sobriety.

At one time a controversy arose concerning certain Quietists who fell into excessive acts of piety and fasting because they lost the sense of moderation upon which our Church lays so great a value. We need not dwell upon misuses of the Jesus Prayer, except to realize that all exaggerations are harmful and that we should at all times use self-restraint. “Practice of the Jesus Prayer is the traditional fulfillment of the injunction of the Apostle Paul to ‘pray always:’ it has nothing to do with the mysticism which is the heritage of pagan ancestry.”

The Orthodox Church is full of deep mystic life which she guards and encompasses with the strength of her traditional rules; thus her mystics seldom go astray. *“The ‘ascetical life’ is a life in which ‘acquired’ virtues, i.e. virtues resulting from a personal effort, only accompanied by that general grace which God grants to every good will, prevail. The ‘mystical life’ is a life in which the gifts of the Holy Spirit are predominant over human efforts, and in which ‘infused’ virtues are predominant over the ‘acquired’ ones; the soul has become more passive than active. Let us use a classical comparison. Between the ascetic life, that is, the life in which human action predominates, and the mystical life, that is, the life in which God’s action predominates, there is the same difference as between rowing a boat and sailing it; the oar is the ascetic effort, the sail is the mystical pas-*





sivity which is unfurled to catch the divine wind." The Jesus Prayer is the core of mystical prayer, and it can be used by anyone, at any time. There is nothing mysterious about this (let us not confuse "mysterious" with "mystic"). We start by following the precepts and examples frequently given by our Lord. First, go aside into a quiet place: "*Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile*"⁷; "*Study to be quiet*"⁸; then pray in secret—alone and in silence.

⁷ Mark 6:31

⁸ I. Thess. 4: 11

The phrases "*to pray in secret, alone and in silence*" need, I feel, a little expanding. "Secret" should be understood as it is used in the Bible: for instance, Jesus tells us to do our charity secretly—not letting the left hand know what the right one does. We should not parade our devotions, nor boast about them. "Alone" means to separate ourselves from our immediate surroundings and disturbing influences. As a matter of fact, never are we in so much company as when we pray "... *seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses...*"⁹. The witnesses are all those who pray: Angels, Archangels, saints and sinners, the living and the dead. It is in prayer, especially the Jesus Prayer, that we become keenly aware of belonging to the living body of Christ. In "silence" implies that we do not speak our prayer audibly. We do not even meditate on the words; we use them only to reach beyond them to the essence itself.

⁹ Hebrews 12:1

In our busy lives this is not easy, yet it can be done—we can each of us find a few minutes in which to use a prayer consisting of only a few words, or even only one. This prayer should be repeated quietly, unhurriedly, thoughtfully. Each thought should be concentrated on Jesus, forget-





ting all else, both joys and sorrows. Any stray thought, however good or pious, can become an obstacle.

When you embrace a dear one you do not stop to meditate how and why you love—you just love wholeheartedly. It is the same when spiritually we grasp Jesus the Christ to our heart. If we pay heed to the depth and quality of our love, it means that we are preoccupied with our own reactions, rather than giving ourselves unreservedly to Jesus —holding nothing back. Think the prayer as you breathe in and out; calm both mind and body, using as rhythm the heartbeat. Do not search for words, but go on repeating the Prayer, or Jesus' name alone, in love and adoration. That is ALL! Strange—in this little there is more than all!

It is good to have regular hours for prayer and to retire whenever possible to the same room or place, possibly before an icon. The icon is loaded with the objective presence of the One depicted, and thus greatly assists our invocation. Orthodox monks and nuns find that to use a rosary helps to keep the attention fixed. Or you may find it best quietly to close your eyes—focusing them inward.

The Jesus Prayer can be used for worship and petition; as intercession, invocation, adoration, and as thanksgiving. It is a means by which we lay all that is in our hearts, both for God and man, at the feet of Jesus. It is a means of communion with God and with all those who pray. The fact that we can train our hearts to go on praying even when we sleep, keeps us uninterruptedly within the community of prayer. This is no fanciful statement; many have experienced this





¹⁰ Hebrews
12:1

life-giving fact. We cannot, of course, attain this continuity of prayer all at once, but it is achievable; for all that is worthwhile we must "... *run with patience the race that is set before us ...*"¹⁰.

I had a most striking proof of uninterrupted communion with all those who pray when I lately underwent surgery. I lay long under anesthesia. "Jesus" had been my last conscious thought, and the first word on my lips as I awoke. It was marvelous beyond words to find that although I knew nothing of what was happening to my body I never lost cognizance of being prayed-for and of praying myself. After such an experience one no longer wonders that there are great souls who devote their lives exclusively to prayer.

Prayer has always been of very real importance to me, and the habit formed in early childhood of morning and evening prayer has never left me; but in the practice of the Jesus Prayer I am but a beginner. I would, nonetheless, like to awaken interest in this prayer because, even if I have only touched the hem of a heavenly garment, I have touched it—and the joy is so great I would share it with others. It is not every man's way of prayer; you may not find in it the same joy that I find, for your way may be quite a different one—yet equally bountiful.

In fear and joy, in loneliness and companionship, it is ever with me. Not only in the silence of daily devotions, but at all times and in all places. It transforms, for me, frowns into smiles; it beautifies, as if a film had been washed off an old picture so that the colors appear clear and bright, like nature on a warm spring day after a shower. Even despair has become attenuated and repentance has achieved its purpose.





When I arise in the morning, it starts me joyfully upon a new day. When I travel by air, land, or sea, it sings within my breast. When I stand upon a platform and face my listeners, it beats encouragement. When I gather my children around me, it murmurs a blessing. And at the end of a weary day, when I lay me down to rest, I give my heart over to Jesus: “*(Lord) into thy hands I commend my spirit*”. I sleep—but my heart as it beats prays on: “JESUS”.









恐惧与喜悦、孤独与友谊，它们曾经与我相伴。并不仅仅是在每日投入的寂静中，而是无时无刻的。它使我改变，紧锁的眉弓变成了微笑；它美化一切，就像一层薄膜被清除掉后，老照片的色彩再次清晰明亮起来，像大自然雨后温暖的春天。就连绝望也开始减弱，悔改达到了它的目的。

当我清晨醒来，它就开始了我充满喜悦的一天。当我在天空、陆地或者海上旅行时，它在我的胸膛歌唱。当我站在讲台上面对我的听众时，它给我鼓励。当我聚拢我的孩子时候，它低声的给予祝福。当疲惫的一日结束时，当我躺下休息时，我把我的心交于耶稣（主）在你的手中我赞美你」。我睡了——但是我的心仍火热的祈祷：「耶稣」。





这是一个连接上帝和所有祈祷者的方法。实际上我们可以训练我们的心不断的祈祷，即使当我们睡着的时候，保持我们始终处于祈祷者的团体中。这不是虚幻的声明；有很多这种赋予生命事实的经验。当然我们不可能立即达到这种不间断祈祷，但它是可以做到的。尽管如此那是值得的我们必须「……奔那摆我们前头的路程……」。

我有一个最直接与所有那些祈祷者连续交流的证据，那是当我最近遭受外科手术的时候。在我麻醉后长久的躺着。「耶稣」成为了我最后神志清醒的意识，也是我醒后嘴唇中的第一个词。这是不可思议的无法用言语来表达的，尽管我对自己身上所发生的一切全然不知，但我从来没有失去对别人为我祈祷和我自己祈祷的认识。在有过如此的经历之后，一个人就再也不会对那些伟大的灵魂将他们的一生都投入到专心的祈祷中而感到惊奇了。

祈祷对我来说一直都是真正重要的，在儿时养成的早晚祈祷的习惯从未离开过我；但在实践耶稣祷文上我还是个初学者。我愿意，虽然如此，就像唤醒对这个祈祷的兴趣因为，即使我只是触摸到天国衣服的衣褶，我摸到了它——这是那么巨大的喜悦，我愿意将它与其他人一起分享。这不是每个人的祈祷方式；你也许在其中找不到与我一样的喜悦，对你的方式可能是完全不同的——但是却有相同的给予。

致希伯来人

书 12:1





的、不慌不忙的、仔细的的反复诵念。每个思维都应该专注于耶稣，忘记其它的一切，无论是快乐的还是悲伤的。任何走神，不管是善意的或虔诚的，都会成为障碍。

当你拥抱一个你所爱的人时，你不会停下来思考该怎样或者为什么你会爱——你只是全心全意的去爱。这和当我们在精神抓住耶稣基督在我们心中是一样的。如果我们听从我们爱的程度与质量，这就意味着我们全神贯注与我们自己的反应，而不是将我们自己全然的交于耶稣——毫无保留。把你的祈祷想做你的呼吸的进和出；利用心跳的节奏使思想与身体都平静下来。不要去找寻字句，只是不断的重复祷文，或者单单耶稣的名字，在爱与崇拜中。这就是全部！奇异的是——在这小小之中却多得超越一切。

最好是有固定的时间用于祈祷，无论何时可能都隐退到同一房间或地点，有可能时最好在圣像前。圣像充满了对其所描绘内容的客观在场。东正教的修士与修女们发现使用一个玫瑰园（圣像）可以帮助我们保持注意力的集中。也许你会发现最好的平静是闭上你的眼睛——聚焦于内在。

耶稣祷文可以用来敬拜和祈求；就像求情、乞求、爱慕、与感恩一样。这是一个依靠它我们可以把我们心中的一切，为了上帝和人，都放置在耶稣脚下的方法。



被动，用来展开并接住神性的风。耶稣祷文是神秘祈祷的核心，它能被任何人在任何时候使用。关于这点没有什么「神秘的」（在这里我们不要搞混「神秘」与「神秘主义」）。我们从我们的主经常给予我们的诫命和例子开始。首先，来到一处寂静的地方：「你们来，同我暗暗的到旷野地方去歇一歇」⁶；「立志作安静人」⁷；然后暗暗的祈祷——独自一人且安静无声。

我觉得对短语「暗暗的祈祷，独自一人且安静无声」需要一点扩展。「暗暗的」应该按照圣经中使用的意思去理解，比如耶稣告诉我们，我们要暗暗的行善事，不要让左手知道右手所行的。我们不应该炫耀我们的爱心，更不能吹嘘它们。「独自一人」意味着要把我们自身与我们当前的环境和烦恼的影响隔绝开来。事实上，当我们祈祷的时候，周围会前所未有地出现很多陪伴者⁸：……我们既有这许多的见证人，如同彩云围着我们……⁹。做见证的是所有的祈祷者：天使、天使长、圣人与罪人、活人与死人。在祷文中，尤其是耶稣祷文，我们应该敏锐的知道我们是属于基督活着的身体的。「安静无声」暗示着我们的祈祷是不发出声音的。我们甚至不会沉思于文字；我们使用它们仅仅是为了达到超出它自身本质的地方。

在我们繁忙的生活中这是不容易的，但是它却可以做到的——我们每个人都可以通过找到几分钟用于只包含有几个词，甚至只有一个词的祈祷。这样的祈祷应该平静

⁶ 玛尔克福音

／可／谷 6:31

⁷ 致德撒洛尼

基人书一／

帖前／得前

4:11

⁸ 致希伯来人

书 12:1





因为那是他所最努力去阻碍的。在神秘的祈祷中我们所遇到的诱惑是最大的危险；因为我们的思想处在更高的水平，而诱惑也相应的更加狡猾。有人说到「神秘主义起源于薄雾，结束于分裂」；这个愤世嫉俗的评论出自一个无信仰者之口，但它里面有一定的道理。神秘主义只有当它实行绝对清醒时，才具有真正的灵性价值。

曾一度引发了一场有关某些静修主义者的争论，因为他们失去了教会认为意义重大的自我节制常识而陷入过分的虔敬和斋戒行为。我们不必谈对耶稣祷文的滥用，除了认识到一切的夸大都是有害的，同时我们应该一直保持自我自制。「实践耶稣祷文的习惯是履行使徒帕弗罗关于恒久祷告的戒命的传统：它与我们异教的祖先遗传而来的神秘主义毫无关系。」

东正教充满了深深的神秘的生活，她用传统准则的力量守护和保卫着它；因此她的神秘很少会误入歧途。「苦修生活」是一种里面含有「努力获得的」美德的生活，这种美德产生于个人的努力，与之相伴的是上帝所给予的每一件善意与成功的普遍性的恩典。「神秘生活」是圣灵的礼物主导着人类的努力的生活，「被注入」的美德主导着「努力获得」的美德；灵魂变得更加被动而不是积极。让我们引用一个经典的对照。在苦修生活中，是人的行为占主导的生活，神秘生活，是上帝的行为占主导的生活，这就像是划船和用帆航行之间一样的不同；桨是苦修的努力，是神秘





这个祷文拥有如此卓绝的灵性地位，是因为它全然关注在耶稣上：所有的思想、努力、希望、信仰与爱全部都倾注献给了子上帝。它履行了新约的两大基本指令。

其一，耶稣说：「我实实在在地告诉你们，你们若向父求什么，他必因我的名赐给你们。向来你们没有奉我的名求什么，如今你们求就必得着，叫你们的喜乐可以满足。」²。另一条规诫我们可以在圣帕弗罗要不住地祈祷的指令中找到，³。此外，它也遵照耶稣关于如何祈祷的教训（就是他在教导他的信徒们主祷文的同时给出的）：「你祈祷的时候，要进你的内屋，关上门，祷告你在暗中的父，你父在暗中察看，必然报答你」⁴。

耶稣教导说一切的推动力，好的与坏的，都源自于人们的心中。「善人从他心里所存的善就发出善来；恶人从他心里所存的恶就发出恶来；因为心里所充满的，口里就说出来」⁵。

圣西麦翁，甚至是他以前的圣教父们，正是基于这些和许多新约和旧约中其它的规诫，才进行着热诚而简单的祈祷。他们发展了默祷的方法使不间断的祈祷变得如同呼吸一般自然，跟随着心脏跳动有节奏的韵律。

所有通往上帝的路都被陷阱所包围，因为敌人（撒旦）埋伏在那里等待着绊倒我们。当我们专心于寻找自己的得救之路时，他会很自然的去攻击那些最恳切者，

² 约安福

音 / 约 / 若

16:23, 24

³ 致德撒洛尼

基人书 /

帖前 / 得前

5:17

⁴ 玛特泰福音

／ 太 / 玛 6:6

⁵ 路喀福音 /

路加 6:45





祷文可以追述到新约时代，一直长久的一贯的使用着。在圣名基础上沉思的方
法来自于称为「新神学家」（949-1022年）的圣西麦翁。当他14岁的时候，圣西麦
翁看到天国之光的景象，在这光里，他好像从自己的身体里脱离出来一样。在惊奇
与战胜了无法抵抗的喜悦之后，他感觉到强烈的谦卑，哭泣着，并借用税吏的祈祷：
「主耶稣，怜悯我！」。在景象消失后很久，每当圣西麦翁重复这个祈祷时巨大的喜
乐便会重新回到他身边；于是他便教导他的弟子也这样敬拜。祷文慢慢的发展成了
扩展的形式：「主耶稣基督，上帝之子，怜悯我罪人」。祷文以这种形式在虔诚的修
士与世人中一代又一代的流传下来。

圣名的祈祷不是东正教所独有的，罗马天主教，英国圣公会和新教也同样使用，
只是使用程度比较少而已。在西奈山和阿托斯山上的修士们总结出了一整套基于这
个简单祷文的默祷方法，尤其是完全的沉默。这些修士们被称为是「静修士」¹。

圣格里高利·帕拉玛斯（1296-1359年），最近的伟大教父之一，成为了静修士
的辩护者。经历了一场旷日持久的斗争后，他在教会中为耶稣祷文和静修主义赢得
了一个无可辩驳的地位。当18世纪沙皇限制了俄国的修道院制度，土耳其人在希腊
挤压东正教时，摩尔达维亚（罗马尼亚）的捏阿姆朱修道院成为了耶稣祷文的一个
重要中心。

¹ 希腊语

[Ἡσυχαστής
Hesychasts]





主耶稣基督，上帝之子，怜悯我罪人。

我经常在祈祷书中读到耶稣祷文，在教堂里听到它，但是我的注意力第一次被它所吸引是几年前在罗马尼亚的事情。在喀尔巴阡山脉脚下茂密的树林深处隐藏着 一间小小的名叫桑巴达的修道院。它的小小的白色教堂映在水晶般透明的山间池塘里，在这我遇见了一名熟知「心祷」的修士。那个时候深深的平和与寂静统治着桑巴达；这是一个休息与增强力量的地方——我祈求上帝它仍旧如此。

自从我最后一次看见桑巴达之后，我就迷茫了很久，但耶稣祷文始终是一份埋藏在我心间的珍贵礼物。它一直保持沉寂直到几年前当我读了《朝圣者之路》一书。从此我在寻求不断的实践它。有时候我会退步；但是，这个祈祷已经在我的内心与灵魂中开启了一副难以置信的景色。

耶稣祷文，或叫心祷，重点在于圣名本身。作为一个整体可以这样说：「主耶稣基督，上帝之子，怜悯我罪人」；它也可以改成「我等罪人」或者其他人的名字，或者可以短一些。力量在于是以耶稣之名；因此「耶稣」，单独的，就可以实现祈祷者全部的需要了。







要取得相关信息的，请和香港圣彼得圣保罗教堂主持司祭迪奥尼西·波兹德尼耶夫神父联系。地址如下：

香港湾仔轩尼诗道邮政局邮政信箱20462号

联系电话：+852 9438 5021

传真：+852 2290 9125

e-mail: church@orthodoxy.hk

网页：www.orthodoxy.hk

若你在北美，你也可以与正教会中华诸圣会的主席 Mitrophan Chin 联系。

联系电话：+1-857-829-1569

传真：+1-763-431-0511

e-mail: mitrophan@orthodox.cn

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本译文经正教会中华诸圣会翻译委员会审核通过

耶稣祷文简介

罗马尼亚伊莲娜公主殿下 著
季·米·罗曼诺夫、约安·徐 中译

香港圣彼得圣保罗教堂
正教會中華諸聖會
2010







集揚宣信正

耶穌禱文簡介



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正教會中華福音會

