

Eastern Christian Prayer; Rosary; Jesus Prayer

Q *We have daily prayers to God the Father, to the Holy Spirit, to the Virgin Mary. Why don't we have a meaningful daily prayer to Jesus? The Jesus Prayer is too short and very one-dimensional: ... "have mercy on me a sinner" and all it does is 'ask'- repeatedly. I crave for a prayer that is more than that, where I can glorify, praise, thank, and worship Jesus as our teacher, our saviour, and our resurrection. Jesus is more than someone to go to just for mercy. If we have a prayer like that, please give it to me.*

Prayerfully Pondering

A Dear Prayerfully Pondering,

I would recommend to you a very simple and accessible resource available from the Religious Education Center (UCREC) rel.ed@sasktel.net . It is a book of prayers entitled *Beneath the Mantle of Your Mercy: A Devotional Prayer Book*. (Published by the Edmonton Eparchial Catechetical Commission, Compiled by Fr. Peter Babej, 2010). This book offers perhaps a bit deeper understanding of the Jesus Prayer—"Lord Jesus Son of the Living God have mercy on me a sinner"—than understanding it as mere prayer of petition (p. 239). Rather, the prayer contains:

1. The proclamation of Christ as my Lord and my God. It is a personal appropriation of this statement and acknowledgement that we are not the Lord of our lives—Jesus is.
2. It is also a statement that Jesus is the Christ and so our personal saviour.
3. He is the Son of the "living God", so not a God that perhaps was Creator but takes no active ongoing interest in our lives, but rather a God who is alive and who sustains and takes an active interest in His creation.
4. All these acknowledgements are profound acts of reverence and worship. They also are statements of not only profound humility—I am a sinner—but also reflect the reality that I need God's mercy if every aspect of my life.

However, if you find the Jesus Prayer is still not for you I would suggest that you look through the book to find some other prayers that might be more suitable

Such as the Arrow Prayers that are found on p. 250. An example of these are the prayers of Adoration (251):

My God I love You!
 Jesus my God above all else I love You!
 My whole heart is yours Jesus!
 Jesus, I know that you love me.
 “My Lord and My God” Jn. 20:28

Other prayers you might like to try, also found in the book are the Akathist Hymns to Jesus found also in the book pgs. 315-353. There are also the prayers of the Hours and the Morning and Evening Prayers which can be found in the Book.

If you find yourself in a place where the traditional Rosary is being prayed you can make it even more “Christ centered” by remembering that:

1. The “Our Father” is the way Jesus himself taught his disciples to pray;
2. That Jesus is at the heart or center of “Hail Mary” and Mary’s role is always to point us to her son, and finally;
3. When we are praying the Rosary and say the name of Jesus we can mentally remember or even proclaim out loud the mystery—so for example if we are praying the first Joyful Mystery the Hail Mary could be said like this:

Hail Mary full of Grace
 The Lord is with you,
 Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit
 of your womb,
Jesus, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
 Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and
 at the hour of our death, Amen.

And you would simply do the same for each of the mysteries which all relate to the actions of Christ for our salvation.

Another short prayer from the Divine Liturgy that I often pray is as follows:

“Let us commend ourselves, each other and our whole life to Christ our God” or as I will often say it “I entrust myself, all my relationships and my whole life to you Christ my God.”

Perhaps try, “Jesus, help me live for you and not for myself.” I also pray portions of the prayers that are said after receiving Holy Communion at other times of the day.

Another short prayer of worship suggested in our Catechism *Christ our Pascha* is:

Come, let us bow in worship before the King, our God.

Come, let us bow in worship before Christ the King, our God.

Come, let us bow in worship and fall down before the very Lord, Jesus Christ, our King and God.

We as Ukrainian-Greek Catholics have such a rich tradition of prayer and there are so many resources please do not hesitate to talk to the Sisters at the Religious Education Center for other things they may be able to offer you. God bless you for wanting to deepen and grow in the way of prayer.