

THE JESUS PRAYER

(Adapted from some jottings of unknown authorship)

(Phil 2, 9 – 11) “God raised him to the heights and bestowed on Him the NAME above all names, that at the **Name of Jesus** every knee should bow – in the heaven, on Earth, and in the depths – and every tongue confess that ‘**Jesus Christ is Lord**’, to the glory of God the Father”

Introduction

- ✓ *The Jesus Prayer is a **mantra prayer** of great appeal to people.*
- ✓ *Basically it consists of the **repeated invocation of the NAME OF JESUS.***
- ✓ *In biblical thought the invocation of the divine name has a **quasi-sacramental value.** It is an effective sign of God’s presence and action.*
- ✓ *This invocation is commonly done using a formula inspired in a Gospel passage such as Mk 10, 46, Mt. 9, 27. For instance: “**Lord Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner**”.*
- ✓ *No exertion of body, mind or imagination is required.*
- ✓ *Any a position that helps us to focus our awareness on the loving presence of the Lord will do.*
- ✓ *It will prove very effective if we repeat the formula articulating it slowly and keeping a fairly uniform rhythm of recitation*
- ✓ *The Jesus prayer is vocal; yet at the same time mental as we focus the mind on what the lips are saying, namely, on the Lord Jesus Himself.*
- ✓ *By God’s grace, as time goes on, our affections will grow intense and spontaneously.*
- ✓ *Eventually, the sound of our words may cease as the Name of Jesus is invoked silently*
- ✓ *As we recite the Jesus Prayer with faith, attention and devotion, hidden to our conscious experience, the Spirit of Jesus is working in our heart.*

Procedure: It can be practiced in Two Ways:

First way: Formal Jesus Prayer

- Quiet down.
- Decide how much time you will spend in the Jesus Prayer (5 minutes, 10, 20 or more)
- Concentrate for a certain length of time on the plain recitation of the name of Jesus to the exclusion of any other activity. **Je-sus, Je-sus, Je-sus..**
- Next rhythmically, start reciting Jesus mantra: “**Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner**” or equivalent.
- To keep the rhythm it may help to synchronize the recitation with your breathing.
- The use of a rosary or prayer beads facilitates attention as well as rhythm.
- To suit your spiritual needs, you can shorten the formula, or lengthen it at will, provided, the name of Jesus is never omitted.

Second Way: Free, Informal Jesus Prayer:

You may recite The Jesus' Prayer' as a kind of 'background music' when you engage in any customary semi-automatic activity like dressing or walking or traveling or any other manual work or occupation.

Appendix: Invocations Suitable for the Jesus Prayer.

- **Jesus**, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner!
- **Jesus**, where shall I go? You have words of eternal life!
- **Jesus**, my God, my all!
- **Jesus**, I need you,!
- **Jesus**, make me your servant!
- **Jesus**, your will be done!