Discovering the inner Kingdom

by

Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia (Ware)

Transcribed by Priska Hasler and Reijo Oksanen from cassettes of recorded lectures delivered in March 1997 by Metropolitan Kallistos of Diokleia. The two tapes cover almost three hours of presentations, emphasizing the Jesus Prayer and its use in practice.

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Prayer of the Heart

The first talk of Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia (Ware)

Friends, let us begin this morning with an invitation from a 7th century writer St. Isaac the Syrian: (Born near Bahrain, Bishop of Nineveh, circa 660-680. St. Isaac died around the year 700):

Be at peace with your own soul,
then heaven and earth will be at peace with you.

Enter eagerly into the treasure
house that is within you.

And so, you will see the things that are in heaven,
for there is but one single entry to them both.

The ladder that leads to the Kingdom
is hidden within your own soul.

Free from sin; dive into yourself
and in your soul you will discover the stairs
by which to ascend.

Our aim and hope today is to listen together to Saint Isaac’s invitation, to listen and to respond. Enter eagerly, he says; into the treasure house that is within you, the ladder that leads to the Kingdom is hidden within your soul.

St. Isaac is telling us, that there exists, hidden within each one of us, a secret treasure house, an inner Kingdom, amazing in its depth and variety, a place of wonder and joy, a place of glory, a place of meeting and encounter.

How might we describe this inner Kingdom? We can call it the Kingdom of the heart. The word heart is a fundamental term in spirituality, whether Eastern or Western, weather Christian or non-Christian. A basic text for us Orthodox in the Christian East is the phrase in Proverbs 4:23: “Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.”

Father Ken, the fact that you have called your organisation “The One Heart Foundation” clearly shows that the notion of the heart is very important to you. But how far do we really understand what the word „heart“ signifies? I think, Father Ken that you do agree with me; it is not an easy word.

Another text we Orthodox Christians often use is from the Psalm 64, verse 6: “The heart is deep”. So then, this morning, let us consider together, what the heart signifies.
The late Duchess of Windsor entitled her autobiography *The heart has its reasons*. She was quoting Pascal, who says: “The heart has its reasons, which the reason knows nothing of”.

It is not very easy to understand what Pascal meant by the heart. However, by the heart the Duchess of Windsor meant feelings, emotions, affections; the somewhat wayward affections. Is that the true and proper sense of the word “heart” or should we look further?

One of my favourite books is *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, and there is one passage in the book that my spiritual father, who was a Russian priest, always used to recommend to me: “Good bye, said the fox, and now here is my secret, very simple: Only with the heart can one see rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye. I think the fox has taken us far deeper than the Duchess of Windsor. The heart is the place of inside, the place of inner vision.

Now let us turn to the autobiographical work of C.G. Jung: *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. He has in the course of this book a very interesting conversation with an American Indian, a discussion with Ochwiay Biano.

Ochwiay Biano said: “How cruel the whites look. Their lips are thin, their nose is sharp, and their face is furrowed and distorted by folds. Their eyes have a staring expression. They are always seeking something. The whites always want something. They are uneasy and restless; we don’t know what they want and we cannot understand them. We think that they are mad”.

I asked him why he thought that the whites were all mad. He answered: “They say that they think with their heads”. “Why, of course! What do you think with?” “We think here”, he said, indicating his heart.

Surely Ochwiay Biano is quite right: The heart is the center of thinking. It is the place of wisdom. It is very interesting that Ochwiay Biano does not accept any opposition between head and heart. Already, we have moved quite a long way away from the Duchess of Windsor!

Let us turn now to the Bible. We shall see that it agrees with the fox and with Ochwiay Biano. In the Old and New Testament there is likewise no contrast between head and heart. The heart, for Holy Scripture, is the spiritual center of the total person. Not just the emotions and feelings – in the biblical symbolic scheme for the human person, the emotions and feelings are located lower down, in the guts and the entrails. But the heart is the place of inside vision and wisdom. Take for example the very familiar words of our Lord Jesus Christ: “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”, words from the Sermon on the Mount, Matt 6:21.

There the heart is the place where we formulate our primary hope. The heart expresses our aim in life. The heart in that text is the moral centre, the determined of action. What we today call the conscience.

Again, consider the words in Luke 2:19; this is said just after the birth of Christ: “But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart”. There you see the heart as the seat of memory. The place where we ponder, the place of reflection, the place of self-awareness. But because of our
sinfulness, because of our fallen state, the heart is deeply ambivalent. Jesus says: “For out of the heart come evil thoughts” (Matt 15:19). And St. Paul writes: “Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts” (Romans 1:24). So the heart is among other things the place of evil thoughts, the place of sinful desires. It is the place where we come face to face with the power of wickedness. But it is also the place where we encounter God, where the divine presence is at work, it is the place of supra natural indwelling. “God searches the heart” (Romans 8:27). “God has sent the Spirit of his son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6).

So the heart is the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. We begin to appreciate what the heart means in the Scripture. Not just the emotions, the affections, the feelings, but the depths of the inner self, the depths. The heart means the human person, viewed as a spiritual subject, formed in the image and likeness of God.

A Roman Catholic Benedictine who lived in India (the Indian name he took was Abhishiktananda). He was a Frenchman, called Henri le Saux, and he writes of the heart: “It is the place of our origin, in which the soul is as it were coming from the hands of God and waking up to itself”. The heart then means the human person seen in its totality, seen as an undivided unity, what in Zen Buddhism is called the center of the lotus.

The heart is the inner being, the inner person (Ephesians 3:16). When Christ says “Love the Lord your God with all your heart” (Matt 22:37), what he means is: Love God with the totality of yourself.

When Ezekiel the Prophet talks of God: “Take the stony heart from within us and replace it with the heart of flesh”. When he talks of our gaining a new heart (Ezekiel Chapters 11 and 18), what he is referring to is an all-embracing spiritual renewal, the conversion and salvation of our whole self.

When it says in Proverbs 23-26 “My child, give me your heart”, God’s appeal there means: Give me your whole self. The words I mentioned earlier – “guard your heart with vigilance”. Keep watch over the entirety of your inner life. Know yourself, know yourself as God grounded, God sourced.

And in the words of the Psalmist “The heart is deep” signifies: The human person is a profound, an unfathomable mystery. I do not know, in any full or complete way, who or what I am. The bounds of personhood are very broad, reaching out beyond space into infinity, beyond time into eternity. So we begin to understand what the heart means in the Bible. It denotes the human person as God’s creation, coming from the hands of God, it denotes the human person waking up to itself, coming to itself.

In the story of “The Prodigal Son” the decisive change in his life occurs at the moment when he came to himself. And we could describe that moment, that he suddenly reestablished the contact with his heart.

The heart, more particularly, indicates the human person in its fullness, in its unity. Above all, the heart is a symbol of wholeness, of integrity, of integration. So when we speak of the Prayer of the Heart, what we mean is prayer of the total person, prayer in which the one who prays is all together taken up into the prayer. The prayer of the heart means not just the kind of prayer that I say, but the kind of prayer that I am, because that is what our broken world needs today, not persons, who say prayers from time to time, but persons who are prayer, all the time. Exactly prayer of the heart means, prayer that is me, prayer into which I am wholly taken up and transformed.
Now, if we turn to the Greek Fathers of the Orthodox Tradition, we find the same understanding of the heart. Let us look for example at The Ladder of Divine Ascent by St. John Climacus, which is a text that the orthodox monks and nuns are supposed to read at every year in Lent. Next to the Bible, it is the book most often quoted by Tsar Ivan the Terrible, but let us not dwell on that! So I quote from St. John of the Ladder: “I cried with my whole heart”, says the Psalmist. And what he means is, with my body and soul and spirit. The heart means the totality of the human person. It means the body, it is a physical organ but it is also the psychic and spiritual center.

Let us look at St. Gregory Palamas, Thessalonica, writing in the 14th century. He calls the heart “the innermost body within the body”; “the depths of myself”. He calls the heart, “the shrine of the intelligence and the chief intellectual organ of the body”. We think with our heart.

The Archbishop of Thessalonica agrees with Ochwiay Biano. He calls it “the ruling organ”, the heart is that what gives our human personhood purpose and direction. He calls it “the throne of grace”, the heart is the point of encounter with the living God.

So when St. Gregory Palamas and the other 14th century Byzantine Hesychasts (the Hesychast is one who seeks inner stillness), when they use such phrases, as they often do, such phrases as descend into the heart, find the place of the heart, unite your intellect with your heart, what they mean is: Enter into a relationship with your deep self, a chief integration, discover the dimensions of your personhood in God, realise yourself as created in the divine image.

Exploring the meaning of the heart let me quote one more text from the Homilies of Macarius. These are attributed to the 4th century by Macarius of Egypt, but their background actually seems to be Syria. Incidentally, the Homilies of Macarius were a text greatly loved within the Protestant Tradition by John Wesley. In his diary he writes: “I read Macarius and sang”. I will read some Macarius to you, although I don’t intend to sing in the end.

“The heart governs and rains over the whole bodily organism. It is the center, the ruling element. When grace possesses the pasturages of the heart, it rules over all the members and the thoughts, we think with our heart. For there, in the heart, is the intellect. No head-heart contrast. There are all the thoughts of the soul and its expectations. And in this way, grace penetrates to all the members of the body.”

When you read a passage like that, you have to remember, that our modern notion of the circulation of the blood only originates from the 17th century. Earlier authors did not think of the heart as a pump.

Macarius clearly sees the heart as a container, an empty vessel. He talks about the pasturages or the ranges, or the meadows of the heart. The heart for him is full of empty space of air, of light. He says that the heart rains over the whole bodily organism; he sees the heart as the physical center. There in the heart is the intellect, the place where we think. And he says that through the heart grace penetrates to all the members of the body. The heart is the place where grace is experienced. It is
the meeting place. The meeting place between the divine and the human, between the spiritual and the physical.

Let us read on in Macarius: “Within the heart there are unfathomable depths. There are reception rooms and offices in it, or some porches and many passages”. (It sounds like building here next door, in St. Sophia.) “In it are the workshop of righteousness and the workshop of wickedness”. (Here St. Sophia stops!) “In it is depth, in it is life, are unfathomable depths”, says Macarius. It includes the unconscious. It signifies the human person as a mystery. It signifies what we do not yet understand about ourselves. The heart is deep and the heart, as we see, is ambivalent in a fallen world, it is the workshop of righteousness and of wickedness, the place of depth as well as life; the moral center.

“The heart”, continues Macarius, “is Christ’s palace, where Christ, the King, comes to take his rest with the angels and the spirits of the Saints. And he dwells there, walking within it and placing his Kingdom there. The heart is but a small vessel. And yet dragons and lions are there and there are poisonous creatures and all the treasures of wickedness. Rough, uneven paths are there and gaping chasms. There likewise is God. There are the angels; there is life and the Kingdom, the light of the apostles, the heavenly cities and the treasures of grace. All things are there.”

So you see, Father Ken, when you called your work *The One Heart Foundation*, you were taking on quite a lot! All things are there. The heart is all inclusive. The heart signifies the human person as microcosm, as image of the universe in all its complexity. Rough uneven paths are there and gaping chasms. The heart, as I said, includes the unconscious. There, likewise, is God. The heart is the place of divine indwelling, the palace. It is the place of self-transcendence; the place where we come face to face with the Holy Trinity. So we see, the heart is open, to both below and above. The heart is open below to the abyss of the unconscious. It is open above to the abyss of divine glory. The heart is the point of meeting between body and soul, between soul and spirit, between the subconscious and the conscious, between the conscious and the supra-conscious, between human freedom and divine grace, between the comprehensible and the incomprehensible, between the created and the uncreated. It is the absolute center.

All of this is applied by the Greek Fathers in a particular way. They see the heart as the place of the baptismal indwelling. Here I appeal to an author in the *Philokalia* the first volume, *St. Mark the Monk*, or Mark the Ascetic, early 5th century. Mark’s central message is this: “Through Baptism Christ and the Holy Spirit enter the innermost secret and uncontaminated chamber of the heart”, as Markus puts it.

Notice that he says that there is an uncontaminated secret inner room within the heart. From Baptism, as Mark understands it, there is an inner chamber, a central shrine where grace dwells and which evil cannot reach. From baptism there is within each of us a point or spark that belongs entirely to God. That is the pure glory of God in us.

In the words of Thomas Merton: “It is like a pure diamond blazing with the invisible light of heaven”. It is in the people all around us. And if we could see it, we would see these billions of points of light coming together in the face and blaze of a sun that would make all the darkness and cruelty of life vanish completely. The gate of heaven is everywhere. Actually, the words “gate of heaven” are written just up here: This is the gate of heaven. Well perhaps the Church where the Holy Mysteries are celebrated, are the gate of heaven, but the gate of heaven is also everywhere. Because there are points of light, sparks of glory in all the humans around us, in the innermost chamber of the heart.
St. Mark continues: “By the good treasure of the heart, scripture means the Holy Spirit which is hidden in the heart of the faithful through Baptism”. Notice the word „hidden”. Initially, the grace of Baptism, the indwelling presence of Christ and the Holy Spirit is present secretly in our heart; unconsciously, what Mark calls „mystically“. Through obedience, through the practice of the commandments, this secret grace and presence are then revealed actively, consciously with energy. So the journey of the heart is a journey for the Christian from baptismal grace of presence secretly in the heart to baptismal grace, experienced in the heart with full conscious awareness. What St. Mark says about Baptism can be equally said about the Holy Communion.

Now, all of this is a part, a very small part of the meaning of the heart. The heart is deep, yes indeed; the exploration of the Kingdom of the heart is a task to occupy us throughout our entire life; a task indeed, not for this present life only, but a journey that continues unendingly into eternity from glory to glory. In the words of J. R. R. Tolkien: “Roads go ever, ever on”. That is undoubtedly true of the journey of the heart.

Let me now indicate a few of the decisive stages on this journey, only very few. First, the journey begins with the awakening of the heart, spiritual awakening. All of the traditions, religions, Christian and non-Christian agree that the first step on the spiritual journey is to wake up. Ephesians 5:14 says: “Awake you who sleep and rise from the dead and Christ shall give you light”.

Not so long ago in a lecture I was giving in Oxford I was unwise enough to talk sitting down, and I am afraid I went to sleep in my own lecture. So if some of you have dropped off, I’m not going to be too hard on you. I could hear a voice drowning on as I sank deeper and deeper into sleep. Suddenly I realized that the voice was my own. And I had no idea what I was saying. I had to appeal to my audience: Where have I got to? I must say that they had not fallen asleep; they were watching me, hawk-eyed with keen interest. So then – our first task is to wake up.

Let me give you two images of awakening. I would like you to please keep these in your mind during the rest of the day. My first image is from the Old Testament on Exodus chapter 3 “Moses at the burning bush”. Moses, walking through the desert, sees a bush burning, burning but not consumed; this arouses his curiosity. He turns aside to look. And then, the voice of God speaks to him.

And God says two things to Moses. First of all he says: “Remove your shoes”. The Greek Fathers understand that in a symbolical way. Shoes, they say, are made of leather from the skin of dead animals. So spiritually shoes signify what is lifeless, dead. This way God’s command at the burning bush means strip off the deadness of boredom, of overfamiliarity, come to yourself. Free yourself from what is lifeless, from the trivial, the mechanical, and the repetitive. Open your eyes, cleanse the doors of your perception. Look and see, listen. That is how they understand removing your shoes.

Then God says a second thing to Moses: “The place on which you are standing is Holy ground”. What happens, when you come to yourself and take off your shoes and walk barefoot? The first thing that happens is that you renew your sense of wonder. In the words of Plato: “The beginning of truth is to
wonder at things”. When you walkabout barefoot, you become sensitive in a way you were not until then, to the reality of the earth under your feet, you feel the blades of grass. So the effect of taking off your shoes is that you come alive, the earth comes alive, you experience the environment as vital and living; you experience the world around you as holy. Each person, each thing mediates the divine presence. It becomes a sacrament, a mean of communion with the living God. If we take off our shoes spiritually, then we see that the world around us is no longer dead matter, but living presence. Here then is one image for us of what it means to wake up. Take off your shoes, the place where you are standing is holy. God is here.

Let us set ourselves before the second icon: New Testament, John 4: “Christ at the well, Christ with the woman of Samaria”. The woman goes out from the city to draw water. This would have been for her something that had to be done every day; a task which is familiar and repetitive. She rounds the corner as she approaches the well. She rounds the corner of the pathway that she knows so very well. But today everything is different. As she comes around the corner, there, beside the well is the Son of God. In the midst of her familiar daily work there is Christ. But at first she does not realize who it is. So Christ says to her: “If you knew the gift of God, if you knew who it is who is saying to you „give me a drink”, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.”

We do not ask, we do not recognize who it is that is speaking to us, and so we miss the living water of eternity. Here is our problem. Not that we are deliberately cruel and malicious. That I am sure all of you are sometimes, I am too, but our problem much more is, that we are bored, inattentive, blind, and dead; we go about the world from day to day using only a very small part of our inner energies. We do not explore the inner Kingdom. We are not aware of the depths of our heart. So, prayer, true prayer, Prayer of the Heart, means this first of all: Wake up, come alive, and rediscover the sacramental nature of reality. The whole cosmos is one great burning bush. We are defined Christ, present in all persons, in all things, in every daily task. The Christian is the one, who, where ever he or she looks, sees everywhere Christ and rejoices in him.

In one of the so called “Agrapha”, the unwritten sayings of our Lord, words attributed to Jesus by the early Christians, which are not recorded in the Gospels, there is this saying: “Lift a stone you will find me, cut a wood in two and there am I”. That is the beginning of the journey of the heart. Prayer of the Heart transfigures. It changes a piece of desert shrubbery so that it becomes incandescent with the divine energies. It changes ordinary water so that it becomes the water of eternal life.

And now a second stage of the journey of the heart. To discover the heart means: Be present where you are. Dwell in the here and now. To illustrate this let me recall from the life of the apostle of America, the Orthodox apostle of America, St. Herman of Alaska. Herman was a Russian who lived on Spruce Island just off the Alaskan coast.

One day a Russian ship arrived and the officers invited him on board to share their midday meal. As they ate together, they began to talk about what each of them thought was most important in life, what each of them wanted most and hoped for.
Some of them spoke of their career, how they hoped for promotion, to become captain of their own ship. Others spoke of their family at home and how they hoped to come back home safely to their wife and children.

Finally they turned to Saint Herman and asked him what the most important thing in life was. And he replied: “From this day, from this hour, from this moment - let us love God above all.” Notice the immediacy of his appeal. We are to love God, here and now, in the present moment. Behold, as St. Paul says: “Now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

This is part of what the Prayer of the Heart means; it means maximizing the present moment. Prayer is to take hold of the moment of opportunity, the decisive moment. Prayer is to practice the sacrament of the present moment. So the heart is closely linked to what Father Ken used several times in his introduction: “This day, this day!”

The devil says to you and me: “yesterday!” or “tomorrow!” But the Holy Spirit says to us: “today!” In an Oxford story Alice in Wonderland, Alice is told that she can have jam only tomorrow, jam after every day, but never jam today. But Prayer of the Heart means: Christ offers you and me jam today!

And then a third thing: The journey of the Prayer of the Heart means:

1. Awakening
2. Dwelling in the present moment
3. Learning to listen, learning to enter into silence

That great Danish prophet from the 19th century, Søren Kierkegaard wrote: “If I were a doctor and would be asked for my advice, I would say: Create silence!” Is not our present day greatly in need of such a doctor?

Silence is hard to achieve. Yet it is one of the most profound sources of our being; as persons we are what we do with our silence. Without silence we are not truly human. Yes, but what does silence mean? It is not just negative, an absence, a cessation of noise, a pause between words. No, silence is affirmative. Not an absence, but a presence. Not a void, an emptiness, but communion with another. Silence is presence and the heart of it is God.

As he says in the Psalms: “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10)

True silence, true stillness of the heart means God awareness. True silence of heart is openness receptivity, listening. When we embark on with the spiritual path, when we seek to pray, a crucial challenge faces us. How am I to stop talking and to start listening?

My favourite radio program when I was a student at University was The Goon Show; I don’t know how far that is part of the culture of Los Angeles. On The Goon Show I remember a particular dialogue. The telephone rang. One of the characters, I think it was Harry Secombe, lifted the receiver. “Hello”, he said, “who is speaking, I can’t hear you? Who is speaking?” And the voice in the other end said: “You are speaking!” “Ahh”, he said, “I thought the voice sounded familiar!” And he put the receiver down.
Alas! That is a parable of all of us when we try to pray inwardly. We hear the sound of our own voice! But we don’t seem to be able to listen to hear the voice on the other end of the spiritual telephone line. How are we to learn to listen?

Let me end by underlining this word “how”. Thomas Carlyle, great Victorian, came one day home from the Church on a Sunday morning in a bad temper and he said to his mother: “I cannot think why they preach such a long sermon. If I were a minister, I would go up into the pulpit and say no more than this: Good people, you know what you ought to do, now go and do it!” “Aye, Thomas”, said his mother, “and would you tell them, how!”

How shall I wake up? How shall I learn to dwell in the present moment? How shall I acquire creative silence, silence that is communion and listening.

Our purpose today joining the rest of our meeting together is to explore some of the answers given to the question “how”. Different speakers will suggest to you various answers then, to the question “how”. There are various doors of entry and ways into the Kingdom of the heart.

May God bless you in your explorations!

Thank you!

Bishop Kallistos
Word and Silence

The second talk of Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia (Ware) on the same day

The Good Shepherd

I have called my second talk “Word and Silence” in the practice of the Jesus Prayer. There are three reasons why I find special value and meaning in the invocation of the holy name Jesus as a way of prayer.

First, it is old, yet new, traditional, yet contemporary. It is old; it has roots in the Old Testament, in the reverence felt by the Jewish people “The secret name of God”. It is rooted also in the New Testament. In his discourse of the Last Supper, John 16:23-24, Jesus teaches his disciples to pray in his name; this is evidently a decisive turning point: “As until now you have not asked anything in my name”.

Although it is old, it is also contemporary. It is probably used today more than ever in the past. That is certainly reassuring; we do not usually think of the end of the 20th century as an era of spirituality. Ours is not only a time of secularism and apostasy, there are shafts of light in the darkness.
In the past, certainly in the Orthodox Church, the Jesus Prayer was limited to certain monastic circles, but in our day it is being used and loved every day more and more, by lay people as well. There is the first reason, old, yet new.

Secondly, I see the Jesus Prayer as a bridge building prayer. It is part of my own heritage as an Orthodox Christian. Yet it is a prayer widely practiced, especially from the 12th century onwards by Western Christians. So I believe that the Jesus Prayer can serve as a powerful aid in Christian reconciliation.

Thirdly, Jesus Prayer is flexible and resilient. It is a prayer for all seasons. It requires no special knowledge, no elaborate preparation. Yet it is a prayer that reaches into the deepest mysteries of contemplation. It is a prayer of inner stillness, but a prayer that can be offered in conditions of tension, distraction or pain, physical and mental. It is a prayer that can be prayed when other, more complex forms of prayer are impossible. It is a prayer, which is especially suited to our present age of anxiety.

What do we mean by the Jesus Prayer? It is a short invocation, frequently repeated, an invocation addressed to Christ as Saviour, using the human name given to him at Bethlehem; the name given to him by Mary, his mother, and Joseph, his foster father, name Jesus.

In Eastern Orthodox Tradition the standard form of the Jesus Prayer is this: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have Mercy on me.” In English that makes ten words. In the original Greek, it has only seven words; although the words have more syllables: “Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ἔλεησόν με”. In Slavonic, again seven words: “Господи Иисусе Христе, Сыне Божий, помилуй мя грешнаго”. (See Appendix 1 – Jesus Prayer in many different languages). This prayer as you see, is based on the prayer of the blind man, Bartimaeus in Luke 18:38. He says: “Jesus, son of David, have Mercy on me”. But we know Jesus not only as son of David, but as Son of God; we know him as Lord and as Christ. When we offer the prayer of Bartimaeus, we offer it in a fuller form.

Prayer is a conversation, a dialogue, living, personal, personal words, addressed by one living subject, a human being, to another living subject, God – or more exactly to three subjects, the Holy Trinity. Because prayer is a personal conversation, freedom is fundamental. Discipline is also fundamental, but Christ tells us that he came to make us free. “You will know the truth”, he says, “and the truth will make you free”.

So in all forms of prayer, and also in the Jesus Prayer, there is no uniformity. The sequence of words can vary. We can make the Jesus Prayer longer; we can say at the end: “have Mercy on me, a sinner.” Actually in Greek it is not a sinner, but the sinner. “Have Mercy on me, the sinner”, the only one. When we say it like that, we bring out more the penitential aspect of the Jesus Prayer. And we make the Jesus Prayer closer to another prayer, in Luke chapter 18 of the publican: “God, be Merciful to me, a sinner.”

We can also make the Jesus Prayer shorter. Many, especially as they advance in the invocation of the Holy Name, find the standard form too complex. So we might say: “Lord Jesus Christ, have Mercy on me.” “Jesus, have Mercy”. “Jesus”. If we wish: “my Jesus”. Even we might say the Holy Name on its own: “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus…” That was common in the medieval West. It is, however, rare in the Christian East. In the Orthodox East, it is felt that Jesus, the Holy Name evoked alone, is too highly charged, too powerful; it needs to be, so to say, diluted with other words. Again, we might wish to
say at the end of the prayer “us”. This way we would be emphasizing the communal nature of the Jesus Prayer. None of us ever prays alone. We always pray in the fellowship, in the community of prayer. If we say “have Mercy on us”, we are, of course, following the pattern of prayer given to us by our Lord himself. In the Lord’s Prayer we say “us” five times, “our” three times, “we” once, but never in the Lord’s Prayer do we say “me”, “mine”, “I”.

When I say the Jesus Prayer in the form “have Mercy on us”, I think sometimes of a story in Dostoyevsky’s The Brother Karamazov, a story about an old woman and an onion. I am sure many of you already know it; nonetheless I will retell it in my own way. I heard it when I was a boy aged about ten and I’ve always remembered it.

Once upon a time there was an old woman, very respectable, very regular in her attendance at Church and strict in her fasting. She died and she found herself in a lake of fire. This surprised her very much. So when she saw her guardian angel walking on the bank, she called out and said there has been some mistake. I am a respectable old lady. I should not be here in this lake of fire. Ahh, said the angel, do you remember any occasion when you helped somebody else? She thought for some time and said: Yes, once when I was gardening, and a beggar came by, I gave an onion to the beggar. The angel produced the onion and gave one end of it to the old lady. She reached out for it and said: It is my onion! When she said „It’s mine, it is my onion”, the onion broke in two and she fell back into the lake of fire and there, I guess, she still is…. That is Dostoyevsky’s story.

If only the old woman had said „it is our onion!” …It would have been strong enough to pull all of them out of the lake of fire. But when she said „It is mine not yours”, she denied her essential humanity in the image of God as the Holy Trinity. We are made in the image of a God who is mutual love and we can only be ourselves by sharing, by entering into relationship, by saying: „Not I, but we!”

So if we like, we can say in the Jesus Prayer “have Mercy on us”. When we are offering the Jesus Prayer we are sharing together our spiritual onion.

The heart of the Jesus Prayer is the holy name Jesus. That is what gives unity to the Jesus Prayer, beneath the many variants. On principle any prayer centered on the name of Jesus can be called a Jesus Prayer. And the name in the Jesus Prayer is seen as possessing sacramental force. The Jesus Prayer is not magic, but there is a grace given connection in the Jesus prayer between the name and the one who is named. The name mediates to us the presence of the person. It makes the person present. And so, the Jesus Prayer is to be seen as a prayer of personal presence, a prayer of personal encounter and meeting with Jesus. Now, the Jesus prayer uses a dynamic powerfully charged technique; the discipline of repetition. And the effect of the repetition is to gather a person together, to unify. The repetition focuses us upon a center. And so the Jesus prayer can be seen as a form of “centering prayer”.

Also, and here I take up what I was saying in my talk earlier this morning, the Jesus Prayer is a prayer that leads us into silence, into listening. Yes, it is a prayer in words, but because the words are few and simple, regularly repeated, it is a prayer that leads us through words into silence. It is a prayer that enables us to find a silence that is hidden within the words. We speak, but at the same time we listen. So, the prayer of Jesus helps us to overcome Harry Secombe’s problem that he could hear his own voice at the telephone. It is a prayer of listening, of waiting on God, of gazing.
There is a story told from 18th century France of an old man who used to go for a long time each day into Church. His friends asked him: “What are you doing all the time in Church?” “I’m praying”, he said. And they answered: “You must have a great many things to ask God, if you take such a long time praying?” With indignation he responded: “I’m not asking God for anything!” “Well”, they said, “what are you doing all that time in Church?”

And he replied: “I just sit and look at God and God sits and looks at me”.

That is one of the best definitions that I know of prayer. And it sums up the Jesus Prayer in particular; it is a way of sitting and looking at God!

Let us now consider a little the inner meaning of the Jesus Prayer. In the Sermon of the Mount Christ says: “When you pray do not use vain repetitions”. Don’t heap up empty phrases as the heathen do thinking that they will be heard because of their many words. Does then the Jesus Prayer come under Christ’s rebuke? Certainly it is a repetition, but it is not a vain repetition if it is said with faith and with love. Within the Jesus Prayer every word has weight, every word has meaning. It is not verbosity, but the Jesus Prayer is on the contrary, a precise and eloquent confession of faith.

Let us explore then a little of the meaning of the Jesus Prayer. In that very attractive 19th century Russian text; attractive, but also in some ways misleading: The Tales of a Pilgrim. It is said, that the Jesus Prayer contains the whole of the Gospel; all embracing. In what way? First, the Jesus Prayer contains the two poles, the two moments of Christian experience. And these two moments are: adoration and penitence, or glory and forgiveness. There is in the Jesus Prayer a circular movement, a double movement of assent and return. First we ascend to God in adoration “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God” and then we return to ourselves in penitence “have Mercy on me the sinner”.

Now, the gulf, the abyss between the divine glory and our human brokenness is bridged in the Jesus Prayer by two words “Jesus” and “Mercy”. In this connection we need to recall the literal meaning of the name Jesus. It means: Salvation! As the angel says before the birth of Christ (Matt 1:21): “You shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sin”.

First of all then, the gulf between glory and sin is bridged by Jesus, who is salvation. Then the other bridge building word in the Jesus Prayer is the word “Mercy”, Eleos in Greek. What does the word “Mercy” mean to you? For me it means love in action, love poured out to heal, to reconcile, to renew. Sometime people say to me that the Jesus Prayer is a rather gloomy prayer. I don’t experience it in that way. I see it as a prayer full of light and hope, because it speaks of Salvation and Mercy.

Here are some words of St. Hesychias of Sinai from the Philokalia: “Truly blessed is the person whose mind and heart cling as closely to the Jesus Prayer and to the ceaseless invocation of the name as air to the body or flame to the candle. The sun rising over the earth creates the daylight and the venerable and Holy Name of Jesus shining continually in the mind, gives birth to countless thoughts radiant as the sun.”

When I pray the Jesus prayer it is like an experience of the rising sun. That then is one way in which the Jesus Prayer is all embracing, glory and forgiveness. But then we might ask: „Does it speak to us of the Holy Trinity?” Surely, for the Christian there is no prayer without the Trinity. The Holy Trinity is the heart of our life. It is true, that the Jesus Prayer is not expressively Trinitarian; it is a Christ
centered prayer, but Christ is invoked as the Son of God. He, who speaks of the Son, he thinks also of the Father. Also, though he is not named, the Holy Spirit is part of the prayer.

One of the New Testament texts, which the Orthodox writers continuously quote, is 1 Corinthians 12:3: “And no one can say, Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit”. So, the Holy Spirit is as it were the atmosphere, the air in which we invoke the Holy Name.

The Jesus Prayer is Trinitarian. But it is above all Christ centered, it is a prayer that speaks to us of the two natures of Jesus our Savior. It speaks to us of his divinity, for he is called Lord and Son of God. It speaks to us of his humanity. He is invoked by the human name Jesus, the name given to him at his incarnation. It speaks to us of him as Saviour.

So in this way we pray to God in Jesus Prayer. Not just as rhythmic syllables, which we intone with grounding and relaxation. No, the Jesus Prayer is far more than that.

It is a confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Son of God and Savior. Not just a technique, not just a mantra whose meaning we dot understand, but an invocation addressed specifically to another person. It is personal words to a personal Saviour. We speak to Jesus Christ, Son of God, Son of Mary, the Virgin. We speak to Jesus Christ transfigured for me, crucified for me, risen for me, ever living in me, my Lord and my God.

Without this personal confession and faith there is no true Jesus Prayer.

There are indeed similar methods of prayer used in Yoga and in Zen. And these parallels are well worth exploring, but we should never lose sight of the fact, that the Jesus Prayer is addressed specifically to Christ. In the movements that came from the East, which reached its height in the late 60 and 70, one of them was known as “Transcendental Meditation”. People were given a short rhythmic phrase to repeat, a mantra. The guru used to say that this mantra is unique to you personally and it is secret, you must not tell anyone what your mantra is. But the person repeating the mantra did to know what meaning the syllables had, if indeed they had any meaning. What the teachers in TM did, was to give to people as Mantras usually the names of lesser Gods and Goddesses in the Hindu pantheon, but the Christians who were practicing Transcendental Meditation didn’t normally know that.

The Jesus Prayer is quite different, which is why I personally don’t ever call it a mantra. In the case of the Jesus Prayer we know whom we are invoking. At least we know in part. As Paul says: “through a glass darkly”.

Let us pause now and pray the Jesus Prayer. I think the easiest thing will be for me to say the prayer aloud and for you to say it inwardly in your hearts, but not aloud. The trouble is that with so many people here we should all get louder and louder. That would partly destroy the stillness, which the Jesus Prayer aims to produce.
So let us follow the practice of the Orthodox Monastery, where I sometimes go in Britain, the Monastery of St. John the Baptist in Essex, founded by Father Sophrony, the disciple of Starets Silouan (Icon on the left).

There in the evening and in the morning for about two hours the brothers and sisters meet in Church and they say the Jesus Prayer, but they say it in turn, not all together, but first one person says it a hundred times, then another takes it up, and then another and another.

So I will say it and you follow it in your heart:

\[ \text{Lord Jesus Christ – Son of God – have Mercy on us} \]

\[ \text{Lord Jesus Christ – Son of God – have Mercy on us ...} \]

Let us look now at the practice of the Jesus Prayer. The Jesus Prayer can be used in two main situations. And these I shall call “free” and “structured”.

**First: The free use.** We can use the Jesus Prayer during all the odd moments of the day, which might otherwise be wasted. When performing mechanical tasks, or when waiting for something to happen, we can say it once or a number of times while we are dressing, while cleaning the room, washing up, walking from one point to another. As I don’t drive a car, I practice it when waiting for a bus. I don’t know about Los Angeles, but the bus system in my home city of Oxford gives plenty of opportunities for prayer. I find the Jesus Prayer very useful for committee meetings. I use the Jesus Prayer sometimes when I am counseling or when I am hearing confession. I don’t use it in these situations of counseling and confession all the time, as I should listen when in these activities. But sometimes when you have a meeting with another person, one has a certain feeling of heaviness; the conversation does not seem to make through to the level of meaning. Neither the other nor I myself seem able to say what is really on our hearts. And in such moments as that, if I will say the Jesus Prayer invertly, secretly, just a few times, suddenly the conversation is transfigured. I have found that again and again in personal experience.

We can say the Jesus Prayer in times of physical pain, insomnia, acute anxiety, and extreme nervousness. Sometimes when I’m waiting for someone to see me I hear their steps and their arrival at my house. I know that in a few seconds they will ring the bell and I go and answer the door. And often that’s a moment of a certain anxiety for me. What shall I say to this person? I know, perhaps they will ask me for something I’m not able to agree to. Or they will bring to me troubles and sadness – and will I be able to find words of healing? Just in those few seconds before the doorbell rings, just in those few seconds before you actually reach the door and open it – and how much better to invoke the Lord Jesus on the person who is coming to rather than to worry.

The aim then of this free use of the Jesus Prayer is to unite our prayer time with our work time, to make our work also into prayer.
In the words of St. Theophan the Recluse (Icon on the left): “The hands at work, the mind and heart with God”.

The purpose of this free use of the prayer is to bring Christ into all that we do to make the secular sacred. But if we bring prayer into each passing moment, into each familiar task we need a prayer that is immediately at hand and instantly available. And that will be the case with the Jesus Prayer if we say it.

Let me at this moment utter a word of warning: St. James says in his Epistle: “The double minded person is unstable in every way”. We must not be double minded. We mustn’t try to do two things at once, because probably we will end up by doing neither of them very well.

That means don’t attempt to keep reciting the Jesus Prayer in situations which require total concentration. Pray the Jesus Prayer while you’re waiting for someone to arrive, but when they come, listen to them. Listen with your whole self. Perhaps, on some deep level, prayer will be there, but don’t on the conscious level keep trying to say a prayer in that situation. A surgeon may well say the Jesus Prayer before he begins the operation, but as he actually performs the heart transplant, he needs to be totally gathered in what he is doing. So by and large, begin with the Jesus Prayer at moments that are empty, but don’t try to combine it with tasks that require an intense concentration, a gathered attentiveness.

Secondly, there is the structured use of the Jesus Prayer. With that I mean that it is part of our regular prayer time morning and evening. Here we are trying to say the Jesus Prayer and not anything else, in conditions of outward quiet, if possible, with a fully gathered attentiveness. Of course, for most of us the Jesus Prayer will not be the only prayer that we use. It is normally assumed that those who use the Jesus Prayer will also use the normal prayers in the books. They will want to use sometimes the Psalms. They will use the Scripture; reading is as well part of their spare time to intercede for different people by name. The Jesus Prayer can enhance all this, but it doesn’t under normal circumstances replace it. Of course, also it is assumed that those who use the Jesus Prayer are practicing members of the Church, receiving the sacraments, going to Holy Communion.

How would we usually say the Jesus Prayer when saying it in our usual prayer time? We usually say it alone in the Orthodox Tradition, although I mentioned the Monastery where the members say it together. Usually in Orthodox Monasteries you say the Jesus Prayer after “Compline”, the last service in the evening and then after waking up before the first service at night, before the midnight office. It is a prayer that you say normally in your cell.

The Jesus Prayer is usually said, not chanted. And it is not necessarily said with an outward sound, not articulated outwardly with our lips. It may be said inwardly. When it is said inwardly, the words should be distinctly formed within us.

There will be moments when we shall be moved not to continue saying the prayer but rather simply to rest silent, sitting and looking at God. But we have to be careful here. We may think we are offering silent prayer when in fact we are falling into vacancy and dozing off. There is no harm having a nap every now and then. But that is not the same as the Prayer of the Heart.
When we confuse things we are advised in the Orthodox Tradition at the beginning to be quite insistent about saying the prayer. The entry into silence may come later but we should not over hasten it.

Most commonly the Jesus Prayer is said seated. On Mount Athos they use a low stool, about 9 inches high. I recommend, anyway, for people who are beginning to pray, to use an ordinary chair, with a back, but without arms. Don’t cross your legs. Try to be as comfortable and as still as possible. Usually we say the Jesus Prayer with our eyes closed. Aha, you say, if you sit with your eyes closed and repeat the same words over and over again, what will happen? All right! If you are getting sleepy, stand up. Do a few prostrations, right down to the ground, with your forehead on the ground. When you do that about 20 times, it will wake you up. And start again with the prostrations when necessary.

For those beginning with the Jesus Prayer 10 to 20 minutes is quite enough. Don’t overdo it! And I would also add that we can use the Jesus Prayer in a free way at our tasks, without making it part of our structured prayer time. I do not say that the Jesus Prayer is a prayer for everyone without exception. As I stressed there is freedom in prayer. For those who do not find the Jesus Prayer helpful at their prayer time, they can still use it freely.

The aim of the structured use of the Jesus prayer is listening, to stay in stillness, creative silence. And here we may recall the words of a Desert Father, Evagrios of Pontus: “Prayer means the shedding of thoughts”. The Jesus Prayer, that is to say, unlike the Western Rosary, is not a form of discursive meditation, in which we reflect on successive incidents in the life of Christ. It is rather a prayer of total presence. We do not think about particular events, we do not think of specific words of Christ or speculate about various theological truths, nor do we deliberately form pictures. If the images occur, and of course they will, what we do is let them go, shed them.

Saying the Jesus Prayer is to gather ourselves into a simple sense of presence. Our mind wonders away, but each time our mind wonders as we say the Jesus Prayer, we bring it back, gently without impatience, gently but firmly, return to the center. As your mind wonders again, return to the center. That is the great advantage of the Jesus Prayer; we don’t have to keep thinking what I am going to say next. The prayer is there, immediately available. So when you have started to think about lunch, which some of you might be thinking right now, we call it back again to the presence of Jesus, present in my heart, back into this invocation, which grows more and more familiar, more and more part of us, instantly available.

The function of the Jesus Prayer is to still our ever active mind. That is the aim, to move from multiplicity to simplicity, from fragmentation to wholeness. It’s no use my saying to myself “stop thinking”. I might just as well say “stop breathing”. I cannot turn off the inner television set by a simple effort of will. But what I can do is to detach myself from my ever active mind a task that is specific and at the same time simple; the constant invocation of the Holy Name.

In other words I cannot just by an effort of will stop the distractions when I’m praying. But what I can do is to detach myself from them. Say you are sitting in your room and you can hear the sound of the traffic outside. You can, if you choose, concentrate your attention on the noise of the traffic. You can say “isn’t it dreadful, it goes on all the time. I hate it! I cannot think!” If you do that, you are being totally unconstructive. It does not help you at all. But if you wish you can simply let the noise of the traffic go. You can detach yourself from it. You can think of what you are reading or writing. On one
level in your consciousness the noise of the traffic is still going on outside. But you don’t have to listen to it. In fact, if you are having a talk with somebody, it is very interesting; you won’t notice the traffic at all.

We can treat our distractions in prayer in this kind of way. We can let them go. Don’t, by an angry effort of will crush the distractions away – that will only make it worse and destroys inner peace. Let them recede into the distance as you return to the center. Don’t listen to the cars outside, to the inner static crackling inside your brain. Return to the center, Jesus Christ present in my heart.

We have some external helps when we say the Jesus Prayer. First of all in the Orthodox Tradition we are taught that it is highly desirable, if we possibly can, to find a spiritual guide. What in the ancient Celtic Christian Tradition was called “Anam Cara”, a soul friend, a spiritual father or mother, who will act as our companion, one who is familiar with the pathway.

A second aid, on a rather difficult level is the use of a prayer rope; the Orthodox equivalent to the Western Rosary. We don’t use it to say the Hail Mary, but we use it to say the Jesus Prayer. The Orthodox prayer rope is usually not with beads, but made of knotted wool or cord. Silent in use!

It is what the Greeks call “Komboskinion”. Incidentally, we ought to distinguish Komboskinion, the prayer rope, from the komboloi (κομπολόι), worry beads; you often see in Greece men playing with beads in their hands. Probably the worry beads have the same origin, but today they have become a little different. An idealistic friend of mine went to Greece the other day, and when he returned, he said to me: “It is a marvelous country!” Well, so it is! But he continued: “They are all so spiritual. In the cafes, the men are smoking, playing cards, but all the time they are saying the Jesus Prayer.” I’m afraid he confused the prayer rope with worry beads.

The purpose of the prayer rope is primarily not to measure the quantity that we say the Jesus Prayer, for that does not really matter. As St. Isaac the Syrian says: “I do not want to count the milestones, but to enter the marriage chamber”. The purpose of the prayer rope is to assist regular, rhythmical repetition. The Jesus Prayer should be like we are told, like a gently flowing stream. It is a fact of experience that if we give our hands something to do, as we pray, this will help us to be more gathered and less restless, less fidgety.

And now, a third aid in saying the Jesus Prayer. Sometimes in the Orthodox Tradition the Jesus Prayer is linked to breathing. I don’t propose to say very much on that. Because we are told that it is better not to try to control the breathing in prayer. There are various other aspects and other psycho-somatic techniques in saying the Jesus Prayer; it is better not to try these unless you have got a spiritual guide. You need personal direction. In a very simple way, there is no harm in relating the Jesus Prayer to our breathing, say, the first half of the prayer when we breathe in “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God”, and we can say the second half when we breathe out “have Mercy on me, a sinner”. But anything more elaborate requires spiritual guidance. The aim of this breathing technique is to involve the body. “Glorify God with your body”, says St. Paul. But how are we to do that. Well, if we slow down the rhythm of our breathing, if we integrate the prayer with the rhythm of our breathing that may help to integrate our body as well.
Christians all too often distance themselves from their body and don’t really want to use their body in their spiritual life. I remember years ago in the University of London there was a Professor of Philosophy, H. D. Lewis, not to be confused with C. S. Lewis. H. D. Lewis was a rather patronizing man; he was much inclined to stress the difference between soul and body. Students used to say of Professor Lewis that he does not go for a walk; he takes his body for a walk. That is not the true Christian view of the body. It is not something that I have or use; I am my body, and my body is me. So in praying it is good to involve the body. We want to make prayer part of ourselves; it is not just something that I do, but something that I am.

What about the speed of the Jesus Prayer? Find your own rhythm, do not hurry. Do not, on the other hand, brag out the recitation of the words. Do not recite them with excessive emphasis. Do not, as you say the Jesus Prayer, shout inwardly. For violence achieves nothing. We want the fire of the Spirit and not the manmade steam!

One last word: Some people say to me: “Is it not selfish to go alone in our room to shut the door, to close our eyes, and to say “have Mercy on me, have Mercy on me? Is not the Jesus Prayer an anti-social form of world denying?” I would answer with two sayings. The first is from the great 19th century Russian Saint St. Seraphim of Sarow (Icon on the left): “Acquire inner peace and thousands around you will find their salvation”.

And my second saying is from one who was the Secretary General of the United Nations some year ago, who had an extremely active and stressful life, Dag Hammarskjöld: “Understand through the stillness, act out of the stillness, conquer in the stillness”.

The aim of the Jesus Prayer is to acquire inner peace, to make us thereby a woman or man for others. If we really do gain inner peace we shall have a creative effect on others around us, because we have prayed alone in secret with the door shut for perhaps no more than 5 or 10 minutes a day. Then, through all the other hours and minutes of the day, we shall be available to others, open to their concerns loving Christ-like in a way that would be otherwise impossible. Acquire inner peace, and thousand around you will find salvation. Again, let us hear the words of Dag Hammarskjöld “act out of the stillness”. If I have no inner stillness, no depth, if I am not in contact with my heart then my words will be empty noises. I shall be perhaps hyper active but ineffective.

But if by God’s grace I can learn, even to a small degree, to speak and act out of stillness, if my words to others become words out of silence, then it will be a word of fire, a word of healing, and a word of transfiguration.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have Mercy on us...

Thank you for listening!

Bishop Kallistos
Appendix

As far as we know all these prayers follow the singular format, which is:

**English:** Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have Mercy on me, a sinner.

The first group consists of the languages of the Autocephalic Churches:

**Arabic:** أَيَاهَا الْرَّبُّ يَاوُلُّدُ الْمَسِيحِ، إِرْحَمْنِي أَناَّ الْخَاطِئُ (Ayyuha-r-Rabbi Yasū`-al-Masih, Ibmun-l-Lāh, irhamni ana-l-khāti` (ana-l-khāti'a if prayed by a female).

**Armenian:** Տեր Յիսուս Քրիստոս Որդի Աստուծոյ ողորմեո ինձ մեղավորիս (Ter Yesuos Kristos Ordi Astutsowy Oregonme Oynz Megavoris).

**Belarusian:** Госпадзе Ісусе Хрысьце, Сыне Божы, памілуй мяне, грешнага. Hospadzie Isusie Chrysie, Synie Bozy, pamiluj mianie, hrešnaha.

**Bulgarian:** Господи Исусе Христе, Сине Божий, помилвай мен грешника.

**Church Slavonic:** Господи Ісусе Христе Сыне Божїй помил уй мя грѣшнаго. (грѣшнюю иг prayed by a female)

**Czeck:** Pane Ježíši Kriste, Synie Boži, smiluj se nade mnou hříšnym.

**Dutch:** Heer Jezus Christus, Zoon van God, ontferm U over mij, zondaar.

**Finnish:** Herra Jeesus Kristus, Jumalan Poika, armahda minua syntistä.

**Georgian:** უფალო იესუ ქრისტე, ძეო ღმრთისაო შემიწყალე მე ცოდვილი.

**German:** Herr Jesus Christus, Sohn Gottes, erbarme dich meiner, eines Sünders. (einer Sünderin if prayed by a female)

**Greek:** Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, Υἱὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ, ἔλεησόν με τὸν ἁμαρτωλὸν (tēn ἁμαρτωλόν if prayed by a female)

**Latin:** Domine Iesu Christe, Fili Dei, miserere mei, peccatoris. (peccatricis if prayed by a female)

**Lithuanian:** Viešpatie Jėzau Kristau, Dievo Sūnau, pasigailėk manęs nusidėjelio.(nusidėjelės if prayed by a female)

**Maltese:** Mulej Ġesù Kristu, Iben ta’ Alla l-haj, ikollok ħniena minni, midneb.

**Norwegian:** Herre Jesus Kristus, forbarm deg over meg.

**Polish:** Panie Jezu Chryste, Synu Boga, zmiłuj się nade mną, grzesznikiem.

**Romanian:** Doamne Isuse Hristoase, Fiul lui Dumnezeu, miluieste-ma pe mine păcătosul. (păcătoasa if prayed by a female)

**Russian:** Господи Исусе Христе, Сыне Божий, помилуй мя грешнаго.(грешную if prayed by a female)

**Serbian:** Господе Исусе Христе, Сине Божији, помилуј мне грешног. / Gospode Isuse Hriste, Sine Božiji, pomiluj me grešnog.
Slovak: Pane Ježišu Kriste, Synu Boží, zmiluj sa nad mnou hriešnym.

Spanish: Señor Jesucristo, Hijo de Dios, ten piedad de mí, que soy un pecador.

Ukrainian: Господи Ісусе Христе, Сину Божий, помилуй мене грішного. (грішну if prayed by a female)/Господи, помилуй (The shortest form).

Languages of non Autocephalic Orthodox Churches.

(For example: The Hungarian Orthodox Church is subject to the Patriarchate of Moscow)

Chinese: 主耶穌基督，上帝之子，憐憫我罪人。

French: Seigneur, Jésus Christ, Fils de Dieu, aie pitié de moi, pécheur.

Hawaiian: Ė ka Haku 'o Iesu Kristo, Keiki kāne a ke Akua: e aloha mai ia'u, ka mea hewa.

Hungarian: Uram Jézus Krisztus, Isten Fia, könyörülj rajtam, bűnösön!

Italian: Signore Gesù Cristo, Figlio di Dio, abbi misericordia di me peccatore.

Japanese: 主イイスス・ハリストス、神の子よ、我、罪人を憐れみ給え。

Korean: 하느님의 아들 주 예수 그리스도님, 죄 많은 저를 불쌍히 여기소서


Portuguese: Senhor Jesus Cristo, Filho de Deus, tende piedade de mim pecador!

Please see the article on Autocephaly at Wikipedia for explanation:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autocephaly