



Let us Pray to the Lord

We know as Orthodox Christians that prayer plays a key role in our relationship with God. It is the way that we communicate with Him and grow personally closer to Him. It is extremely important then, that we have an understanding of what prayer really is so that we can move forward on our journey toward our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

St. John Chrysostom writes that, "Nothing-NOTHING is more powerful than prayer when fervent and genuine." With these words he is telling us that when our prayers to God truly come from our hearts, they have great influence and they assist us in our journey toward Him and His eternal Kingdom.

There are two kinds of prayer that we must practice. The first type is *corporate prayer*. Corporate prayer is found when we come together as the Body of Christ in the services of the Church. Christ tells us in the book of Matthew, "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (18:20). By gathering for this type of prayer as brothers and sisters in Christ we show Christian love and fellowship as we lift our voices together up to God.

The second type of prayer is *private prayer*. Christ Himself serves as an example for us when we see Him pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. He took time to be alone in order to speak with His Father. Through the private prayers that we do alone, we communicate with God on a very personal level. We can do this by reciting written prayers that are found in books, and we can also create our own prayers.

Often times when we take time to pray, we start out by asking God for things that we feel we need. While it is important that we ask God to be active in our daily lives, we must also remember that praying is not just asking for things. When we pray we should praise God and glorify Him as our King. We must also thank God for the many wonderful gifts which He has given us.

Whether we are praying corporately as a group, or alone privately, our prayers allow us to communicate with God. Through praising Him, thanking Him, and asking Him to act in our lives, our prayers are pleasing to God and they help us in our journey to grow closer to Him.