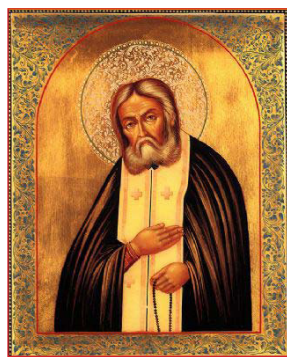




■ On the Occasion of the Commemoration of St. Seraphim of Sarov (19 July)

## The Jesus Prayer\*

A handwritten letter of St. Seraphim  
to Archimandrite Anthony,  
Rector of the  
Holy Trinity-St. Sergej Lavra



*In 2006, a photographic copy of a manuscript was published containing spiritual counsels written by the hand of St. Seraphim of Sarov († 1833) to the then young Hieromonk Anthony (1792–1877), who regularly visited and sought advice from the Saint. In 1831, St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, chose Father Anthony as his spiritual Father and appointed him Rector of the Holy Trinity Lavra near Moscow (the Metropolitan was then Abbot of the Monastery). Father Anthony, as Archimandrite, worthily served the renowned Lavra, and Russian monasticism more generally, for more than forty years, until his saintly repose.*



*It seems that the original text was found among the personal archives of Father Anthony at the Lavra. We do not have further information regarding either the original or the photographic copy; nevertheless, the Grace-filled spiritual admonitions of the text are wholly consistent with the well-known "Brief Teachings" of St. Seraphim.*

*A copy of the original handwritten letter and an English translation of the text follow.*

*Father Seraphim: words written by his own hand.*

о оной. Серафима слово и творило  
 1. Ксенофонт. А. К. Ар. Антоний?  
 у еси утмой молитвы Герафаном, какъ узати св.  
 тучи въ Авротамбѣм. Небо Иисуса молитва есть свѣ-  
 тнаѣннѣе стезѣмъ нашимъ и путеводная звѣзда хвнѣ  
 2. Иисус творитъ молитву чрезъ нозарное дыханіе  
 съ сокнутыми устнами, это искусство есть бжѣ  
 притиву плоти и глѣдскіхъ подоутиій.  
 3. Къ оббкнѣенной Иисуски молитвѣ Грѣбавѣ  
Богородицѣ молитвѣ м. А.  
 у оная молитва внѣшная недостаточна Богъ  
внѣмлетъ уму, а питутъ монахи, кои не  
соединяютъ внѣшную молитву совнѣренную  
не монахи. 2. ЗЕРНЫЕ ПОЛОВЕШКИ  
Сбойѣ какъ редилкаго огнѣ Глѣокъ намазан-  
ныхъ (женщина) и бо онѣ застѣ изъ воинво  
карѣкнѣ дѣлаютъ рабѣ сатаны.  
 1. Эт шомнѣ, это истинная мантія монаше  
каѣ, естѣ радушное перенесеніе КЛЕВЕТЫ  
на правны: нѣтъ скрѣбѣ нѣтъ класеніѣ.  
 2. Всѣ Атлѣ ЛѢТНИХОНѢ КУ ПѢЛЕНСКО КУ И НЕ  
ВАРУ АВРО ДѢ ПѢЛ НЕ ГЛУ И ВА РУ НЕ ЦѢ Л Н У.

R[ector of the] L[avra] Ar[chimandrite] Anthony\*\*

1. Learn noetic prayer of the heart as the Holy Fathers teach it in the *Philokalia*; for the *Jesus Prayer* is a light on our path and a star leading us to Heaven.

2. Learn to practice the *Jesus Prayer* while breathing in through your nose, with your lips shut; this technique is a scourge against the flesh and carnal desires.

3. Add “through the *Theotokos* have mercy on me” to the usual *Jesus Prayer*.

4. Outer prayer alone does not suffice, for God is attentive to the mind. Thus, monks who do not unite outer prayer with inner prayer are not monks, but little black heads.

5. Fear like the fire of Gehenna those painted ravens [women]; for they often transform soldiers of the King into servants of Satan.

6. Keep in mind that the true *mandyas* of a monk is patient endurance of slander and disparagement with joy; where there are no sorrows, neither is there salvation.

7. Do everything gradually, calmly, and not at once. Virtue is not a pear; it is not devoured in one bite.



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\* From the Russian book by Princess Natalia Vladimirovna Urusova, *Materinskii Platch Svyatoi Rusi* [*Maternal Lamentation for Holy Russia*] (Moscow: Izdanie "Russkii Palomnik," 2006), pp. 80-81.

\*\* This title was probably written by Father Anthony.