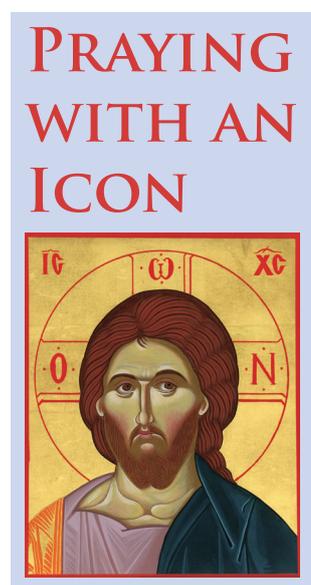


*But when you pray, go to your room, close the door, and pray to your father who is unseen.
And your father who sees what you do in private will reward you.
When you pray do not use a lot of meaningless words, as the pagans do,
who think their gods will hear them because their prayers are long. Do not be like them.
Your father already knows what you need before you ask him.*

MATTHEW 6: 6-7

SETTING UP

Have your Icon somewhere like your bedroom where you can go and pray in private. You will need a comfortable chair and a candle. Put your icon on the wall with the candle below. Have your chair sitting directly facing it. If possible have it set in a way that you can leave it like this permanently so that you do not need to set it up every time you go to pray.



PRAYING

Light the candle and sit down looking at the Icon. Place your feet firmly on the ground, open your hands and face them towards Jesus. Be aware that you are opening yourself to Jesus. Become aware of Jesus, study him, look at the detail of the image. Take a deep breath in & inhale Jesus. Exhale as much as you can, this is all your worries & troubles. Inhale as much as you can, this is Jesus coming into you, there is no room for anything else when you inhale.

Continue to be aware of your breathing & Jesus' Face. Distractions will come to your mind, acknowledge them but return to focusing on Jesus. Start a mantra, a short prayer, whatever comes to mind. *"Jesus guide me, Jesus heal me, Jesus I am yours, Give me faith, Jesus protect me, Jesus I love you, Do with me what you will, Jesus, Jesus I am yours"*. If it's dark, it can create a different awareness if you only have the candle lighting the face of Jesus. Give time to Jesus.

When you start, stay a little longer than you would like to. Create a routine of being in front of the icon. When you are making important decisions, make them in the presence of Jesus. When you are looking at the Face of Jesus in the Icon be aware that Icons are created by artists that are fasting and praying. It is said that an Icon is written not painted. When you feel called to go and be in front of the Icon do it. If you waken during the night and you think about sitting in front of the Icon, then do it.

It's useful to have a bible where you are sitting and perhaps some other books of a spiritual nature. You may feel called to read and reflect when you are in the presence of Jesus. Perhaps you could start reading a little piece of the bible every day. There is a surprise in the bible that you find when you read it in front of an Icon. You should also have a journal that you can write in. I suggest that you put the date and time as your first line. Writing is a form of praying. Write down whatever comes to mind. Write to Jesus, write to yourself, write to others. Write everything that comes to mind. Write two lines and write pages. It can be very surprising where this type of praying and journaling can take you. It is also useful to have this to look back on. Reading these journals in the future can also become part of your praying.

*Mediating on the Face of Jesus will lead you on an incredible Journey.
Pray for everyone who is taking part in this form of prayer.*

"Jesus lead me"