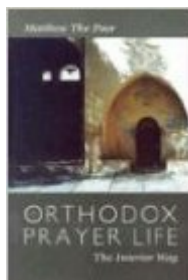


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Orthodox Prayer Life: The Interior Way



Synopsis

Saints who experience the power of prayer say it gives them wings to fly: wings of elation from being in proximity with Jesus Christ and relief from the burden of a sinful conscience. Once engulfed in the grace of the Holy Spirit, the person in prayer experiences death to sin, resurrection in the Spirit, and mystical ascension to the Father. The visible touches the Invisible, and joy wells up in the human heart. This volume evolved experientially: the fruit of fifty-five years of solitude by a contemporary desert monk besieged by prayer. Father Matta's prayer life initially was formed under the direction of the sayings of the Russian Fathers, and later expanded under the direction of other Fathers, both Eastern and Western. He spent whole nights in prayer, reciting one or two passages from these luminaries and begging these saints to enlighten his understanding. Father Matta discloses: Whenever physical hunger turned cruel against me, I found my gratification in prayer. Whenever the biting cold of winter was unkind to me, I found my warmth in prayer. Whenever people were harsh to me (and their harshness was severe indeed) I found my comfort in prayer. In short, prayer became my food and my drink, my outfit and my armor, whether by night or by day.

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Customer Reviews

This book is based upon the notes of a contemporary Egyptian Orthodox Christian monk regarding prayer. It defines the different types of prayer, instruction on how to pray and hindrances we find in our spiritual growth. Matthew the Poor brings his own experiences as well as those from the eastern Orthodox tradition and the west. Each chapter contains instruction from the Desert Fathers. It is practical advice, what I call applied faith. The book is not about discussing 'theology' and which

church is right and which is not. It is about living the Christian faith and how a life of prayer can be achieved in our life. Matthew the Poor provides advice when you God feels distant and for those times and your faith feels weak. I have bought many of the books Matthew the Poor references and, even though I never met him, I consider him to be one of my spiritual fathers. I did try to find his monastery when I visited Egypt a few years ago but the taxi cab driver we heard, who promised us he knew the way, never found it...This is deeply spiritual book and I highly recommend it for those who want to deepen their understanding of prayer. An update. This has become one of my favorite books and I bought a copy for my son who also loves the book and Matthew the Poor.

An excellent book from Matthew the Poor; a hermit who left civilization to dwell in the desert with only a few books in his hands. Whether or not you are from the Orthodox faith, this book will speak to you. If you pray, you will pray with more connection to God...guaranteed; if you don't pray, you may just start. I recommend reading this book slowly, or you will miss revealed depths. Another excellent book from the same author that I highly recommend is "the communion of love".

Contemplative prayer from the Orthodox tradition. A fascinating perspective on the life of prayer that digs much deeper than most modern Coptic Orthodox writing. Fr. Matthew the Poor writes very practically on what a complete prayer life can look like and how to get there. This book was a revelation to me, including many things that I had only heard hints of in my reading of the early Fathers and nothing at all about in modern Coptic preaching. I found it most similar to what some Catholic authors have been writing recently on prayer, but strongly prefer Fr. Matthew the Poor's perspective on contemplative prayer to that other writers (such as Fr. Thomas Keating). This is a book that was very difficult for me to finish, because I didn't want to keep reading until I had really incorporated each step of the prayer life that Fr. Matthew the Poor had discussed into my own life. I highly recommend reading it slowly and incorporating his suggestions as you read, but have more grace on yourself than I did or you might never get through it!

This book is perfect for anyone wishing to better appreciate the dynamics of prayer and its role in developing a relationship with God. While the author draws much from the writings of Eastern Church Fathers, his explanations about prayer will inspire Christians from almost any background to adopt a lifestyle in which prayer becomes for them as nourishing and refreshing as eating or breathing and not simply a discipline or a ritual done at bed time.

It's a shame that the Coptic Church is not visibly in union with Rome. As many reading this will know, they never were guilty of the Nestorian heresy. This "Eastern lung" as Pope John Paul II referred to the Eastern Church, is clearly much less 'smoke-filled' than so much of the 'Western Lung'. The value of the deep spirituality of the Coptic (mystic) Monks is immeasurable and Matta El-Meskeen, who lived the life of the great desert fathers of the past, has so much to teach any Christian willing to take the time and read the 'pearls of wisdom' contained in the pages of this book. It's not a book that can be read from front to back. It requires reading a page at a time and sometime only a paragraph or phrase. One is called to reflect, pray and learn from this master. Anyone who is serious about enhancing their prayer life would do well to acquire this and other writings of Abuna El-Meskeen. Check out his monastery's website ([...]).

I have no more than saying that this is a very high and unique extremely profound style of Christian writing by an author who is commonly described as a Christian school for his many writings and oral teaching on different aspects of Christianity. The writer is a *Coptic monk who spent most of his life in prayers in the deserts of Egypt. You really need to read this book which was his first book three years after he had abandoned the world to dwell the desert for the rest of his life and after he had been a rich pharmacist. This book can be said to be a true masterpiece that I enjoyed reading it several times in Arabic before being translated into English with many other books by the same writer. This is published by (St. Vladimir's Seminary Press". Thanks to for making such treasures available for that reasonable price. Wish you all the best. Adel*the Copts are currently the Christians of Egypt (mostly Orthodox) and they are the descendants of the Ancient Egyptians - Different from the Arab of Egypt. the words Copt and Egypt are mainly derived from the Greek word 'Aiguptos' different from the current Arabic name of Egypt 'Misr' which means 'country' in Arabic

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