

Holy Name of Jesus, 2009

*“Know ye that the Lord he is God: he made us, and not we ourselves.
(Ps. 99:3)*

Thinking on those words, I am sure that each one of us realises the important message they convey; at the same time we must ask ourselves, how much thought we give to knowing that the Lord is God — what actual impact does that fact have upon our souls? It becomes more interesting when we read in Psalm 143: “My soul is as earth without water unto thee.”



Before the days – in our own times – of the attack on the Catholic Church and her well ordered spiritual life, it was so easy because of the reminders; I recall how proudly we boasted of the Holy Name Society which was popular in the USA. The Feast of the Holy Name, every year, would see more than a thousand New York Police in procession to St Patrick's Cathedral for Pontifical High Mass. The new ideas, somehow, wiped out that glorious Confraternity, almost overnight. A similar fate befell all the Confraternities and Societies throughout the Western World, bringing a total collapse of the power of prayer and disaster to family life. Will it ever be restored? From my earliest days I can remember being taught reverence for the Holy Name of Jesus; we were taught to bow our heads at every mention of it. Here in Ireland whenever the Holy Name occurred in the reading of the Gospel, the men, especially of the West, would bend the knee — a practice they carried with them when they emigrated. What a different picture there is today!

The Church today reveals to us the wonders of the Incarnate Word, by singing the glories of His Name. In the second chapter of the Epistle to the Phillipians, we are given the reason why we should hold this name in honour.

“Christ humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross; for which cause God also hath exalted Him, and hath given Him a Name which is above all names: That in the Name of Jesus every knee should bow of those that are in heaven, on earth and under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father.”

And another scripture proclaims: “There is no other Name under heaven by which we can be saved.” St Bernard writes:

“The name of Jesus is not only Light, it is food; are you not strengthened whenever you meditate upon it? What is its equal to enriching the mind that thinks about it? What else can so renew your fatigued spiritual powers, bolster virtue, make good and upright habits grow, foster pure affections? ... Jesus is honey to the mouth, sweet song to the ear, Joyful delight to the heart. But it is also a medicine. Is someone sad among us? Let Jesus come into his heart and from there leap to his lips. And behold as the Light of His name arises, all clouds pass and cheerfulness returns. Especially in times of temptation we should, invoke the Name of Life, and be at once revitalised.”

With what loving devotion Mary His Mother must have uttered that name given by the Angel sent by God! From His very incarnation her soul was one with those in heaven singing praises to the Name above all names. Take time to ponder upon what little I have been able to give to you, looking into your own heart — what has His Name meant to you throughout the years? Our heavenly Mother will lead you along the way and help you especially to ponder in loving adoration for the future: the Holy Name.

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