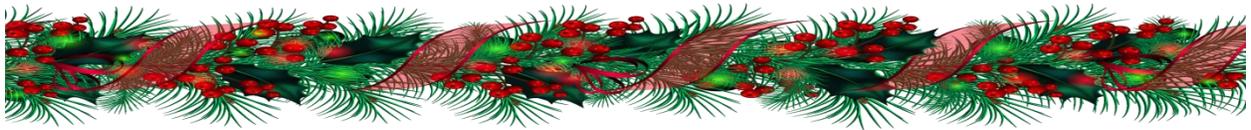


The Meditation

Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus

Commemorating The Second Sunday After Christmas A.D. 2016



The Holy Name of Jesus

By Juan de las Roelas (1570 - 1625)

Flemish-Spanish Baroque artist

Collect for the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus

O God, who didst ordain that thine only-begotten Son should be the Saviour of the world, and didst command that His Name should be called Jesus: mercifully grant, that we who worship his holy Name on earth, may at length behold him face to face in heaven. Where he liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end. Amen.

HE SHALL BE CALLED JESUS

The name Jesus means *Saviour*: saviour from sin and to pronounce it is to confess Jesus' personal love for us and our salvation through Him. Jesus didn't become man only to restore his Father's glory, but also out of love for each of us individually. From that time, His love has been our life.

When the Angel announced to Mary that she should bear a son, "*a holy offspring who would be known as the Son of God*," he added, "*Thou shalt call him Jesus*." Joseph learned the meaning of that name from the angel who visited him in a dream: "*Mary, thy wife . . . and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call him JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins*." (*Matt. Ch.1 Vss 20 & 21*). The whole plan of mankind's salvation lies in that word, the holy Name of Jesus. He will, for the love of mankind, take away the burden that oppresses us. He will whisper to every soul that He, the Eternal God, has become man for us, and He will shed the last drop of His Blood to propitiate (satisfy) for our sins.

The person who pronounces the Name of Jesus confesses with Isaiah: "*Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed*." (*Isaiah; Ch. 53, Vss. 4 & 5*). The Saviour satisfied God's justice giving proof of his love for his Father, and at the same time of his love for us.

No words of reproach or condemnation for the sinners who were causing his Passion ever left his lips. His breaking heart sought them as it sought the Father. That's why God "*hath given him a name which is above every name*." (*Phil: Ch. II, Vs 9*).

The faithful, in the Eastern Church, have but one prayer: "*Jesus, have mercy upon me!*" His Name echoes all day long in their hearts, filling them with a sense of His Presence, so fervent and peaceful. Apostles and saints worked their miracles in that name; it calmed the storm and brought lost sheep back to the fold.

St. Bernard of Clariveaux, the great Cistercian, says that the Name of Jesus is just like an oil that is poured out. Oil produces light and food, and healing. The Lord Jesus is our light. He is the light that drives all darkness from our hearts. Light drives out the cold; the flame of Christ's love melts the ice that comprises our self-love and selfishness, changing it into the burning heart of love of God and of our brothers and sisters for His sake.

Oil is food. The Name of Jesus satisfies our hungry hearts. We are no longer lonely or fearful, for we know, if not by feeling, at least by faith, that Christ is with us. He becomes true Food of souls in the Blessed Eucharist; a treasure that surpasses all earthly riches.

Oil is a healing remedy. The Name of Jesus is a balm for every wound that life, and even more...sin, can inflict upon us. It is a balm that closes the wound and softens the pain.

3.

No bitterness can remain where that oil flows; for where it is placed, a path is made that our Lord would have us walk on and becomes clear.

The Name of Jesus is food, food that strengthens us so we may follow Him courageously through our lives. It is like the sweetest fruit...the fullness of Almighty God the Father, and also the spotless virginity of Blessed Mary. It is as a fruit that has been ripened in fire and under the shadow of that Holy Cross on Calvary.

Let us adore and praise the Name of our Lord, **Jesus**; to Whom everything in heaven and earth must bend the knee. Let us invoke it as a blessing upon ourselves and those we love - throughout all the ages, world without end. *Amen.*

A Postscript

*“God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name ; that at the name of **Jesus** every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in the earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.” (Philippians: Ch. II, Vss. 9- 11.)*

“And God spake all these words saying ... Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.” (Exodus: Ch. 20, Vs. 7.)

How often have we carelessly taken the Lord’s Name in vain? Let’s be honest with ourselves in answering this question. Cursing and using the Name of our Blessed Lord is more commonplace nowadays than ever before. If you don’t think so, just listen the next time you are in a restaurant, or shopping center, or watching the T.V. The two quotes from Holy Scripture should give us all something to seriously ponder. There is, in St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians, a majestic declaration of the Holy Name. However, in Exodus, there is a dire condemnation to those who use the Lord’s Name profanely. Every Christian certainly recognizes it as one of the Ten Commandments.

One of our dearly departed Bishops, who could be as tough as St. Peter, and yet so holy and humble when celebrating the Mass, would become quickly incensed whenever he heard our Lord’s Name taken in vain...which hopefully was not often. His reply was; “they know not what they do” ...and that was said either before or after his reprimand, which, though filled with the natural charity this man possessed, was always honestly to the point! The world has too few of these kind of good men today.

Cursing and carrying on in such ways, is an acquired thing that somehow due to human nature easily becomes a habit that once entrenched, is very difficult to root out. We should always be aware as Christians, of how this type of language reflects on our professed beliefs in Jesus Christ as our Lord, Saviour, and Master. Non-Christians are only too ready to point this out as hypocrisy, and sadly, they are right.

What can we do to change this? A lot! First, we must *acknowledge* this behavior. We must look inside and think carefully what may motivate us to do this. Acknowledgement will bring awareness, and that’s the first thing we can do in our desire to correct our words and actions.

4.

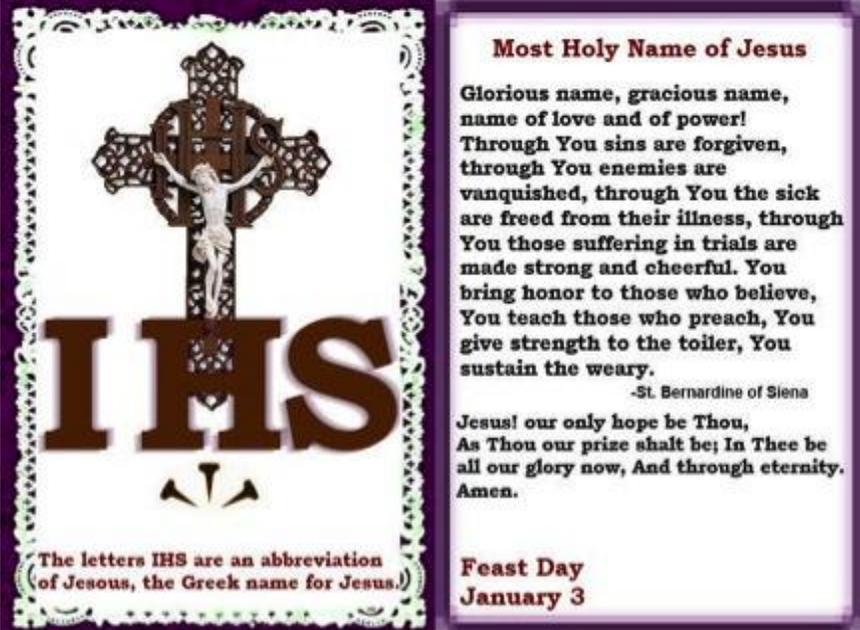
Next, we must develop a discipline of this awareness, and when the provocation or temptation arrives, through awareness, we can parry the action of the voice away, and replace it with something else. That's where our prayer lives really come into practical play. One that has an active, developed prayer life, can truthfully say that throughout the day they are in some sort of frame of prayer; whether verbal or mental, it makes no difference. We can replace temptation with a short prayer when we are tried and tempted by the world, the flesh, and the devil to "*let one fly*" that is, curse. Even if we should lose control, we are not lost, for we can offer a prayer asking forgiveness for what we have just said. The *Act of Contrition* is the perfect prayer at that time...or any time we are tempted. Even just a simple "*I'm sorry, Lord*" is better than nothing at all, *provided that it comes from the heart*. This takes discipline and perseverance, but it can be done, and is within the reach of all sincere Christians.

The "*Jesus Prayer*" a prayer that is said constantly by the Orthodox and contemplative religious, would be an excellent discipline to develop. This prayer, when recited continuously, becomes ingrained in one's soul, and becomes automatic. Much evil is thwarted when developing this as part of one's prayer life, not least the act of taking the Lord's Name in vain. Instead of profaning, we are sanctifying that portion of our day and our actions.

That may be the first and perhaps best resolution that we can make for the coming new year; Honoring and giving praise to the name of Jesus, rather than profane it.

The Jesus Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Have mercy upon me, a miserable Sinner.



Most Holy Name of Jesus

Glorious name, gracious name,
name of love and of power!
Through You sins are forgiven,
through You enemies are
vanquished, through You the sick
are freed from their illness, through
You those suffering in trials are
made strong and cheerful. You
bring honor to those who believe,
You teach those who preach, You
give strength to the toiler, You
sustain the weary.

-St. Bernardine of Siena

Jesus! our only hope be Thou,
As Thou our prize shalt be; In Thee be
all our glory now, And through eternity.
Amen.

Feast Day
January 3

The letters IHS are an abbreviation
(of Jesus, the Greek name for Jesus.)

6.



Collect for the Second Sunday After Christmas

Almighty God, who hast poured upon us the new light of thine incarnate Word ; grant that the same light enkindles in our hearts may shine forth in our lives ; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



Animal News from the Priory



Bless us O Lord, in these thy gifts.

2015 has been an interesting year. We took in some wonderful animals that touched our hearts. We have witnessed each of them change from a creature filled with mistrust and physical, emotional and mental wounds and scars into loving, happy and well fed individuals, still with issues but able to cope in these accommodations. We found homes for some who completely healed and were ready for their forever home and helped many people over the internet to make thoughtful decisions regarding their animals considering the situation that they presently found themselves in.

We also saw some peacefully go home to God.

We find that there are always more waiting in the shadows for a space to open up here for them and some we take, space or not to save their lives. None of this would be possible without the kindness of people like you. Many of our animals will live here 30 or 40 years and many of those are large animals who eat a lot.....

We are grateful, as are the animals for the kind, generosity that you have shown in 2015. We all send our best wishes and blessings to you all for a happy, healthy, and peace filled 2016.

