

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

1. What's in a Name?

- Embedded throughout Scripture is the notion that the name has power. The power of the Name of Jesus is not just an idea that the Church came up with. It has been rooted in the scriptures from the beginning. God has charged the Name of Jesus with meaning and power. Perhaps this is why, when I was in college I could barely look at this poster of the Names of Jesus without being overcome by the Spirit.
- In the ancient world it was considered a disaster for one's name not to survive through descendents or in one's work (consider the Tower of Babel). Consider the desperation of Abram to have a child.
- As God began to form a people he gave new names to some who were specially chosen such as Abram/Abraham, Sarai/Sarah and Jacob/Israel. Later Simon became Peter and Saul became Paul. A change in personal name indicated a change in the person. **A new life has begun. The person is now a servant of God.** In Is. 62:2 Zion will be given a new name. New names are given at Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage. In Isaiah God says "I have called you by name and you are mine." **God calls each of us by name** therefore every name is sacred (CCC 2158) and to be respected.
- **Nor is the name for this life only.** In the new creation we will be given a new name and the name of the Lamb and the Father's name will be written on our foreheads (Rev. 2:17, 14:1). And Jesus also has a new name in heaven. The Name is Eternal.
- **To know a person's name is to have influence over him.** In NT the demons knew Jesus' name and spoke it out loud in their struggle against him. In Gen 32 29-30, after wrestling all night with God Jacob asks his name. He wants to hold on to him. God does not give it. Moses asks God's name: "I am who I am" is the answer. As if God was saying "I am existence itself, no name can contain me".
- This is impressive and helpful but aloof and impersonal. (Example-I was recently negotiating use of space at the school with the school secretary. In an effort to take the upper hand I asked her name. "Miss Duggan" was her reply. She didn't want me to know her first name, she wanted to keep a distance and keep the transaction formal.)
- But Moses and the Hebrews took what they were given and began to worship "I am" or Yahweh. In Ex 23:20. The work of Yahweh in leading Israel through the desert is attributed to his name. **What is developing is the Name becoming an utterance of power.** David meets Goliath with the name of the Lord. "I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied" (1 Sam 17:45)
- Equating the essence and power of God with his name got more and more powerful after the exile. To call upon his Name is to summon HIM. He is present and active where his name is evoked. Ps 8:1, Ps 103:1. "Our God inhabits the praise of his people."

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

- As we near the time of Christ the elevation of the name only increases. The Name should only be uttered with supreme respect. Soon the name was not uttered at all. Adonai, which means the Lord, is substituted.
2. Annunciation: The envelope please...
- So into this environment where the name is charged with so much meaning, power and presence we read in Matthew and Luke that God finally reveals the only true name of God that we have ever been given. Mt 1:21” **You shall call his name Jesus.**” By God, the Son taking a name he steps out of remoteness and into intimacy with us. The incarnate Son now subjects himself to us (like a faithful friend) in unimaginable ways, when we call upon his name. (when we pray, when the sacraments are administered)
 - “He will save his people from their sins” Mt 1:21. That is the meaning of his name, Jesus. **He saves us from sin.** This is the name our God has given us for himself. The Divine name, until now so sublime that we humans can’t even speak it, yet now through his humanity he hands it over to us (CCC 2666). What a treasure we have.
 - Yet, there is no power in the name of Jesus if it is separated from its meaning, “God Saves”. **And his name only has meaning because of the Incarnation.** God himself has come as a man. He’s not a teacher or a prophet or an example but Savior (from sin).
 - **1 John 4:2-3 “Any spirit that denies that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God,”** because then there is no salvation from sin. But we live in a culture that doubts that sin exists. Is pretty sure God doesn’t exist and knows for certain that if God does exist he is not the Christian God revealed in Jesus Christ. Christianity is old news that has been eclipsed by science. If Jesus did live he was just a rabbi who traveled to the orient (where he got his moral teaching) and then married and moved to France. And to us who call upon his name he says.
 - But we do call upon his name, yet there is one thing more. The root of sin is self-will. “Not everyone who says Lord, Lord will enter the Kingdom of Heavenbut only he who does the will of my Father”. “Mt 7:21-23 The name of Jesus has power for those who do his will. It is not magic, true faith is required, (John 1:12). **Prayer in his name is prayer in accord with all that he is.** It is not enough to just attach his name to our requests we must want his will even if it differs from ours. This can only happen through a prayer life.
 - **“Until now you have not asked for anything in my name” John 16:24 ASK!** This is not a suggestion. He didn’t ascend to the Father so that he could have more free time. This tapping into the Power of Infinity is a main purpose of the Church! “All power is given to me.” Mt 28:18. He chooses to send that power out into the world through us. But we can be like a little old lady with a high powered sports car or SUV. She doesn’t want to drive too fast or get it dirty. John 14:13, John 1:12, Jn 16:24.

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

3. Power in the Name of Jesus

- Christians are defined as those who call on the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. **To be a Christian is to invoke the name of Jesus.** The name has power to protect and power to overcome. We are The Church of Christ. Each of us are baptized into his name and incorporated into the community of which he is head. Impressive!
- Yet Christians today are seen as weak. We see ourselves that way. **Goliath and the Philistines seem to have all the good weapons.** I know I can feel like David's brothers, intimidated by the lies and the taunts and the apparent strength. If we fight the enemy on their terms, we will lose. Do we have all our hopes in the Power of the name as David did
- The Apostles didn't see it themselves as weak nor did their contemporaries. Ac 3:12-19 "In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean, walk." Then Peter pulled him up with force. Acts 3:16 By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. **It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.** Acts 4:4 And many who heard the message believed and the number of men grew to about 5000.
- Acts 4:7 **'By what power or name did you do this?'** Acts 4:18 "They commanded them not to speak at all to anyone in this name." Notice the Sanhedrin didn't tell them to stop preaching forgiveness, mercy, repentance, but to stop the Name. Christianity is all about the person of Jesus Christ (and his relationship to the Father) not just his moral teaching. The world is forever promoting him as a moral teacher. Jesus asks, "Why do you call me good?" "Who do you say that I am?" "Who appointed me judge?" Jesus is the message.
- The second part of this miracle is the Power of the Name of Jesus over his fear, weakness and weak will before the Sanhedrin. Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" **The early Church had power! Almighty and Eternal God in all his infinite power in one name.** The name (like a sacrament) produces what it signifies. John 1:12. The Mediterranean world was converted.
- Acts 5:41 (They rejoiced) that they were counted worthy to suffer for his name. Now they suffered imprisonment, flogging, rebuke. Yet they rejoiced to suffer for the name of Jesus. Do I suffer shame? Am I too proud to invite people to Prayer Meeting. Will I feel uncomfortable and awkward if they say no? (CCC ?) We have a responsibility to proclaim the name.
- What a sweet responsibility! (Phil 2) His is "the name above all names" "Every knee shall bow" No wonder the Apostles were giddy with the privilege of being the ones deemed worthy to proclaim the name. Its not that they wanted suffering its just that they weren't going to let earthly suffering rob them of this honor and supreme joy.
- The one who pronounces the name speaks with the power of the one who sends him. Like a royal emissary. In a sense God has placed himself in our hands. The ball is in our court. Will we give it our all and confront our indifference or not. We need to talk about it as a community.

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

One thing is for sure, there is room for us to become more like the Apostles. Can we commit to praying and speaking in the name of Jesus more? Will we? If so, we just might need to buy more chairs for the Prayer Meeting.

4. Praying the Name of Jesus

- Praying the name of Jesus overcomes sin. “For it is your gracious presence that saves me from sin and sorrow” (Fr. Walter Hilton, 1/3 *Magnificat*). Keeping his name on our lips and in our heart summons him. In his presence the desire for sin flees. The name Jesus contains all; God and Man and the whole economy of Salvation, (CCC 2666). “To say that Holy Name of Jesus in prayer is to call you within ourselves,” (Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus)
- We can only pray to the Father in the Name of Jesus because of his Sacred Humanity, (CCC 2664). Because he has come in the flesh he has opened the way to the Father for us.
- Saint Bernardine of Siena, Saint Alphonsus Liguori and Saint Bernard all had devotions to the Holy Name of Jesus. Brother Lawrence practiced the presence of God, calling on him constantly. Not long ago all Catholics were taught to bow their heads at the mention of the name of Jesus.
- A tradition especially in the Eastern Church has been the Jesus Prayer. ‘Lord Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner’. This prayer completely upholds the meaning of Jesus’ name. Let’s say this prayer together now and in a particular way this coming week.

Isaiah 62:2

² The nations will see your vindication, and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the LORD will bestow.

Genesis 32:29-30

²⁹ Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.” But he replied, “Why do you ask my name?” Then he blessed him there.

³⁰ So Jacob called the place Peniel,^[a] saying, “It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared.”

Exodus 23:20-21

²⁰ “See, I am sending an angel ahead of you to guard you along the way and to bring you to the place I have prepared. ²¹ Pay attention to him and listen to what he says. Do not rebel against him; he will not forgive your rebellion, since my Name is in him.

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

1 Samuel 17:45

⁴⁵ David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

Psalm 8:1

¹ LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory in the heavens.

Psalm 103:1

¹ Praise the LORD, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

Matthew 1:20-22

²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^[a] because he will save his people from their sins."

1 John 4:2-3

² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

John 1:12

¹² Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—

John 16:24

²⁴ Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

John 14:13

¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

Acts 3:16

¹⁶ By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus' name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

Acts 4:4

⁴ But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand.

Acts 4:7

⁷ They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?"

Acts 4:18

¹⁸ Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:12

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

Philippians 2:9-11

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

CCC 2158 God calls each one by name. Everyone's name is sacred. The name is the icon of the person. It demands respect as a sign of the dignity of the one who bears it.

CCC 2159 The name one receives is a name for eternity. In the kingdom, the mysterious and unique character of each person marked with God's name will shine forth in splendor. "To him who conquers . . . I will give a white stone, with a new name written on the stone which no one knows except him who

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

receives it." "Then I looked, and Lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads."

CCC 2664 There is no other way of Christian prayer than Christ. Whether our prayer is communal or personal, vocal or interior, it has access to the Father only if we pray "in the name" of Jesus. The sacred humanity of Jesus is therefore the way by which the Holy Spirit teaches us to pray to God our Father.

CCC 2666 But the one name that contains everything is the one that the Son of God received in his incarnation: JESUS. The divine name may not be spoken by human lips, but by assuming our humanity The Word of God hands it over to us and we can invoke it: "Jesus," "YHWH saves." The name "Jesus" contains all: God and man and the whole economy of creation and salvation. To pray "Jesus" is to invoke him and to call him within us. His name is the only one that contains the presence it signifies. Jesus is the Risen One, and whoever invokes the name of Jesus is welcoming the Son of God who loved him and who gave himself up for him.

Litany of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us. Jesus, hear us. Jesus, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven, *have mercy on us.*
God the Son, redeemer of the world,
God the Holy Ghost,
Holy Trinity, one God,
Jesus, Son of the living God,
Jesus, brightness of eternal light,
Jesus, king of glory,
Jesus, son of justice,
Jesus, Son of the virgin Mary,
Jesus, most amiable,
Jesus, most admirable,
Jesus, the mighty God,
Jesus, father of the world to come,
Jesus, angel of great counsel,
Jesus, most powerful,
Jesus, most patient,
Jesus, most obedient,
Jesus, meek and humble of heart,
Jesus, lover of chastity,
Jesus, lover of us,
Jesus, God of peace,
Jesus, author of life,
Jesus, example of virtues,
Jesus, zealous lover of souls,
Jesus, our God,
Jesus, our refuge,
Jesus, father of the poor,

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

Jesus, treasure of the faithful,
Jesus, good Shepherd,
Jesus, true light,
Jesus, eternal wisdom,
Jesus, infinite goodness,
Jesus, our way and our life,
Jesus, joy of angels,
Jesus, king of Patriarchs,
Jesus, master of the Apostles,
Jesus, teacher of the Evangelists,
Jesus, strength of martyrs,
Jesus, light of Confessors,
Jesus, purity of virgins,
Jesus, crown of all saints, *have mercy on us.*

Be merciful, *spare us, O Jesus.*
Be merciful, *graciously hear us, O Jesus.*
From all evil, *deliver us, O Jesus.*
From all sin,
From Thy wrath,
From the snares of the devil,
From the spirit of fornication,
From everlasting death,
From the neglect of Thine inspirations,
By the mystery of Thy holy Incarnation,
By Thy nativity,
By Thine infancy,
By Thy most divine life,
By Thy labors,
By Thine agony and passion,
By Thy cross and dereliction,
By Thy sufferings,
By Thy death and burial,
By Thy resurrection,
By Thine ascension,
By Thine institution of the most Holy Eucharist,
By Thy joys,
By Thy glory, *deliver us, O Jesus.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *spare us, O Jesus.*
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *hear us, O Jesus.*
Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *have mercy on us, O Jesus.*
Jesus, *hear us.*
Jesus, *graciously hear us.*

Mother of God Community
Sunday Night Prayer Meeting
January 11, 2011
The Power of the Name of Jesus
Lisa Sharafinski

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus Christ, who hast said: ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you; mercifully attend to our supplications, and grant us the gift of Thy divine charity, that we may ever love Thee with our whole heart and with all our words and deeds, and may never cease from praising Thee.

Make us, O Lord, to have a perpetual fear and love of Thy holy name, for Thou never failest to help and govern those whom Thou dost bring up in Thy steadfast fear and love; who livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. Reflect on your names: Baptismal, Confirmation, Mother of God member. These are your names in Christ. What do they mean?
2. Have you ever found yourself saying "Lord, Lord" but not been intent on His will?
3. What ways have you experienced the power of the Name in your life?
4. When confronted with a person's difficult situation do you really believe Jesus is the answer?
5. What ways have you thought of to uphold the name of Christ whenever his name is sullied?
6. Do you ever find saying the name of Jesus in public embarrassing?
7. This week try bowing your head whenever the name of Jesus is spoken and see if it changes your attitude toward The Name.
8. This week keep the Name of Jesus or the Jesus Prayer on your lips (either hourly or at 9:00 a.m., noon, 3p.m., 6 p.m., and 9:00 p.m.) and observe any changes that occur within you. Are you more inclined to Ask in his Name?