

...and he was called Jesus

Peculiarly, it is observed on 3 January by Roman Catholics following the present Roman Calendar. (Adapted from Wikipedia)

The Jesus Prayer Of The Eastern Churches

The Jesus Prayer is a short, formulaic prayer esteemed and advocated within the Eastern Orthodox church:

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

The prayer has been widely taught and discussed throughout the history of the Eastern Churches. It is often repeated continually as a part of personal ascetic practice. The prayer is particularly esteemed by the spiritual fathers of this tradition as a method of opening up the heart and bringing about *the Prayer of the Heart*.

The Prayer of The Heart is considered to be the Unceasing Prayer that the apostle Paul advocates in the New Testament. St. Theophan the Recluse (1815 - 1894) regarded the Jesus Prayer stronger than all other prayers by virtue of the power of the Holy Name of Jesus.

While its tradition, on historical grounds, also belongs to the Eastern Catholics, and there have been a number of Roman Catholic texts on the Jesus Prayer, its practice has never achieved the same popularity in the Western Church as in the Eastern Orthodox Church, *although it is a feature of the recently developed Anglican Rosary*. Moreover, the Eastern Orthodox theology of the Jesus Prayer enunciated in the fourteenth century by St. Gregory Palamas has never been fully accepted by the Roman Catholic Church. Nonetheless, in the Jesus Prayer there can be seen the Eastern counterpart of the Roman Catholic Rosary, which has developed to hold a similar place in the Christian West. (Adapted from Wikipedia)

Please prepare St. Mark 1:4-11 for next Sunday

The Holy Name of Jesus



The Circumcision of Christ

Albrecht Dürer, 1505

, Woodcut

From *The Life of the Virgin*: 10.

Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna

Today Gospel Saint Luke 2:15-21 [Year A,B,C Holy Name]

✠ WHEN THE ANGELS HAD LEFT THEM AND GONE INTO HEAVEN, THE shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go now to Bethlehem

...and he was called Jesus

and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.' So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. [© NRSV]

**If you think on the name Jesus continually
and hold it stably, it purges your sin and
kindles your heart –**

Richard Rolle, 14th century.
Feast Day: September 28

Brief Commentary on the Gospel

Jewish male children were circumcised and given their names 8 days after birth. The rite was so essential that it was even done on the Sabbath, the day when no one were permitted to work. In the midst of criticism that he had healed on the Sabbath, Jesus reminded his detractors in John 7 that:

23 If a man receives circumcision on the sabbath in order that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because I healed a man's whole body on the sabbath? 24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgement.'

That last line, verse 24, might well be written on the depths of our hearts along with the Golden Rule:

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

The Holy Name of Jesus

This Is A Very Unusual Day!

Time to do your Prayer Book home work

There are only a very few feast days that take precedence over a Sunday Liturgy. Most greater feast days are superseded by the regular Sunday collect and lessons, but there are a very few feasts - just twelve and a *possible* few more - that take precedence over Sundays: they are (obviously) Easter Day, All Saints' Day, Ascension Day, Christmas Day, The Day of Pentecost, The Epiphany, and Trinity Sunday; The Holy Name, The Presentation and The Transfiguration. Now that adds up to ten. Do you know the eleventh and the twelfth and the *possible* few more? You can find them between pages 15 and 16 in the Book of Common Prayer.

Today's Feast (Adapted From Wikipedia)

The Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus is celebrated by a number of Christian denominations, on varying dates. In the Book of Common Prayer of our Anglican Communion the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ has been celebrated on January 1 since 1979, but it is now listed as the "Feast of the Holy Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ". Many Eastern Churches and the Lutheran Church observes the feast on January 1. The celebration has been held in the past on different dates, usually in January, because January first, eight days after Christmas, commemorates the circumcision of the child Jesus; as recounted in the Gospel we read today:

After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Medieval Christians Catholicism celebrated both events as the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ, and did so usually on 1 January. Bernardino of Siena (1380 - 1444) placed great emphasis on the Holy Name, which he associated with the Christogram: IHS (Greek: *IΗΣ*, [Iota, Eta, Sigma] the first letters of Jesus' name) and he may in fact be responsible for the coupling of the two elements, *Name* and *Circumcision*.