

OUR CATHEDRAL AND A
RENEWED DEVOTION TO THE
HOLY NAME OF JESUS



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Bishop of Raleigh
October 3, 2016

I.
A NEW CATHEDRAL
FOR THE PEOPLE OF EASTERN NORTH CAROLINA.

If we had forgotten the name of our God, stretched out our hands to another god, would not God have discovered this, God who knows the secrets of the heart? –Psalm 44, verses 21-22.

A new day has dawned for the people of eastern North Carolina, for a new cathedral, a new house of God, a new place of Catholic worship, will be dedicated to the glory of God! This brings good news to all people, for this new Cathedral is dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus, in whose name we pray. And just as our Savior Jesus Christ loves all people with his Sacred Heart, so through the many liturgical celebrations at this Cathedral his love for all people will be further known.

The Dedication of the Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus will bring great joy! For there the Gospel will be proclaimed (the very words of the Good News spoken by Jesus) and the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be celebrated (the very act of offering Jesus' body to God the Father). This will bring faith, hope and love to all who come, for through the Sacred Mysteries we come to increasingly understand the unlimited and unconditional love that God has for his people.

We arrive at this Cathedral through the love and sacrifices of the many who came before us. That love is seen in how they lived their Catholic faith and honored the Holy Name of Jesus by their words and actions. Thus the Faith was transmitted to future generations, all the way down to ours. And just as the Lord God guided his people throughout salvation history, so too he led our forebears to a stronger Faith. God constantly calls us into closer relation with him, giving us the grace to grow stronger in our commitment and trust of him. We do this by living up to the great promise that we received in the Sacrament of Baptism: the dignity of being God's chosen sons and daughters. As it was in the past, so it is now, and evermore will be.

In 1868, the Vicariate Apostolic of North Carolina was formed by Blessed Pius IX, the Pope at that time. In that era, few would have imagined the tremendous growth of the number of Catholics in North Carolina, for the state had one of the smallest percentages of Catholics in the United States. Catholics in North Carolina were served by priests who labored as missionaries, traveling from one parish to another, from one mission to another, sometimes celebrating Mass in homes if there was not a Catholic church in the town, celebrating Mass, baptizing, catechizing, hearing confessions, officiating at weddings, anointing the sick, attending to the dying, and burying the dead. The territory was immense and the number of Catholics few. The harvest awaited the laborers.

When the Diocese of Raleigh was established in 1924, there was no cathedral. Therefore, Sacred Heart Parish (in downtown Raleigh) was designated as the Cathedral. It was not built to be a cathedral, as witnessed by its capacity of only 300. This made it the smallest cathedral in the (then) forty-eight states.

Catholics in North Carolina rejoiced at having a Diocese to call their own, but still remained a very small percentage of the population. Bishops and priests depended on the generosity of the faithful in eastern North Carolina, as well as generous benefactors in other states, to build parishes and schools. These schools were staffed by devoted religious sisters.

As the decades passed, the number of Catholics continued to grow. North Carolina developed economically, offering jobs and opportunities to the many who arrived within its borders. There was a need for more parishes and schools to be built. People who arrived from all parts of the USA, and many foreign countries, added to the number of native North Carolinian Catholics. These men and women have joined hearts and hands to be part of the Diocese of Raleigh, which comprises the eastern half of the state of North Carolina. This is their new home. We have diverse origins, but are united in faith. This new Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus is not only a building where people will celebrate Catholic liturgical rites, but also a symbol of the unity that we share. We are all brothers and sisters, the living Body of Christ, and we confidently call upon the Holy Name of Jesus, who reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God in three Persons.

Growth has required the construction of a cathedral, which will be the first church built specifically for that purpose in the Diocese of Raleigh. Therefore, considerable time was spent prayerfully discerning the decision. When the time was right, planning began on the design of the Cathedral. Because of the rapidly expanding Catholic population, it had to be very large, to allow more of God's holy people to celebrate – together – the sacred and saving mysteries that will be offered to the glory of God in this holy place.

Building is always a challenge and a blessing. A challenge requiring sacrifices, but a blessing that endures and strengthens us. We are not just constructing a new cathedral to house the present generation, but also to provide for the future generations of Catholics who will come to worship. Just as Catholics in the past have sacrificed for us, so we sacrifice for future generations. While the planning and construction of the Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus required a great deal of effort, it is, and will continue to be, a great blessing. We have been faithful to our past and have given hope to our future. Not every generation has the opportunity to build such a sacred building. We will look back as this endeavor with great pride, thanking God that we were able to do this to the glory of his Holy Name.

Essential to the entire process was the capital campaign, which witnessed close to 25,000 people offering their support. Truly it was a campaign of good will and holy faith! The new Cathedral is built of bricks and mortar and is a magnificent architectural gem. Yet even more beautiful are the People of God, who are the living stones, "...built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

Sacred Heart Cathedral is venerable to the memory of North Carolina Catholics. Many priests were ordained there. Numerous lay men and women attended Mass there, not to mention being baptized, confirmed, joined in matrimony, and buried from that church. Sacred Heart is important in our history and will remain a visible sign and presence in downtown Raleigh.

Since the Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus will be the seat of the Bishop of Raleigh, as well as the place where the priests and laity will gather for the principle celebrations in the life of the Church, it is a sacred place for all people, Catholics and non-Catholics alike. It is the Mother-Church of the People of God in eastern North Carolina.

We have arrived at this new cathedral from humble origins. Yet even with the splendor of this new edifice, we remain humble in Christ Jesus. For our joy is through him, our hope is to walk humbly with him, and our only boast is in him. To the Holy Name of Jesus be glory, honor and praise, now and forever!

II.

MORE THAN A CENTURY OF DEVOTION TO THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS ON THIS HOLY GROUND.

Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.

—Matthew, chapter 1, verses 20-21.

In the history of salvation, God has chosen certain sites as holy places. We read that when Moses came across the burning bush in the Book of Exodus, God told him, "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground" (Exodus 3:5). Mount Sinai was revered, because Moses received the Ten Commandments on that holy site. Jerusalem was the holy city, for the Temple in Jerusalem housed the Holy of Holies.

In modern times, people still venerate the sacred places of antiquity. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and to this day pilgrims flock to the Church of the Nativity to pay homage to the Lord at this hallowed spot. Indeed, every place where Jesus traveled or performed miracles is considered sacred. Numerous pilgrims, from all over the world, travel long distances to get as close as possible to the sites where Jesus visited, preached and performed signs and wonders.

Catholics look back in fondness to the church where they attended Mass during their formative years, or where they received Holy Communion as a child, or perhaps where they received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation or Matrimony. Holy sites are important to us, as they are a way to connect with our story of Faith, and celebrate that which has molded and formed us into the disciples of Jesus that we are.

The land, upon which the new Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus stands, is holy ground as well. For on this site Father Thomas Frederick Price, the first native North Carolinian to be ordained to the Priesthood, established a Catholic orphanage. At the time it was located outside the city limits of Raleigh. Father Price chose to call the area Nazareth, since it was the name of the town where Jesus spent his childhood. It was an excellent choice for the site, as what better name could there be for a place where children would grow up to learn, love and follow the teachings of the the Lord Jesus? Father Price, whose cause for canonization has been introduced, was a tremendous evangelizer of the Catholic Faith. It is said that the volume of mail that he sent out (among other things, the magazine *Truth*, which promoted the Catholic Faith) and received on a regular basis was such that a post office had to be established at Nazareth! To this day, one of the roads, that serves as a boundary to the property where the Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus stands, is named Nazareth Street.

Father Price established the Catholic orphanage as a way to share the richness of the Catholic Faith to children who were often born in poverty. He, along with the religious sisters who staffed the orphanage, gave a treasure to those who had so little. This orphanage was a holy place, for it gave dignity, joy and belonging to the boys and girls who passed through its halls over the decades.

On the Nazareth site there was a chapel, which was dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus. It was fitting that this name be chosen as the title of that chapel, for children learn the name of Jesus from a very early age, and they are taught about the power and holiness that surround his Sacred Name. The boys and girls at the Catholic orphanage learned about the life of Jesus, how his name was given to St. Joseph, his foster father, by an angel, and how people are saved through his Holy Name. At the chapel dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus, youngsters attended Mass, learning how to worship God in Word and Sacrament; they were taught their prayers, grasping how important it is to trust in God's Providence; and they found their spiritual home in the Catholic Church, which is the Bride of Christ.

Since a chapel dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus once stood on this property and upon proper consultation, it was decided to honor the memory of so many Catholics, who lived,

worked, and ministered on these sacred grounds, by choosing to dedicate the new Cathedral to the Holy Name of Jesus.

Therefore, when we see this beautiful Cathedral, built by the People of God through so many sacrifices, we are reminded that it rests on holy ground. The many holy events which transpired on this property in years past, have paved the way for us to have this new house of God dedicated to the Holy Name of Jesus. So every time Mass is offered, every time the Word of God is proclaimed, every time the Sacraments are celebrated in this Cathedral of the Holy Name of Jesus, we will be joined in our praise of God with all the men and women who have gone before us, marked with the same sign of faith.

III.
THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEVOTION
TO THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS,
AND ITS ARTISTIC REPRESENTATION.

“But,” said Moses to God, “if I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what do I tell them?” God replied to Moses: “I am who I am.” Then he added: “This is what you will tell the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you.” –Exodus 3:13-14.

To know someone’s name, and to call them by it, is fundamental to human interaction. We cannot know someone without knowing their name. Adam and Eve were given their names by God. The Angels and Archangels have names. Parents give much thought to what name they will give to their child, sometimes debating the decision for months.

Our names are more than just what others call us. They represent the hopes and dreams of our parents; they give us a sense of belonging, as we are known by our family name; and they tie us into the traditions and customs of our ancestors. Just recalling the name of a relative at a family gathering can bring a sweetness to us, a sublime joy. To the highest level this is true of the Holy Name of Jesus.

God created the human race in love, a love which endures forever. God desires that we love him in return. It is not that the Almighty needs this love (for God is complete and perfect in and of himself), but rather because loving God is the most authentic and important act that we humans can perform. We were made in love and we are at our best when we return love.

In the course of time, God revealed his name to Moses: “I Am Who I Am.” This divine name signifies pure being and an eternal, abiding presence. God wanted to be known by Moses and his chosen people, the Israelites. He thus chose to reveal his name, so that they would be in

relationship with him. For our God desires to be known by us, for he loves us more than we can imagine.

As time went on, God's chosen people were able to understand more about him. We find in the Psalms, which are hymns that sing the praises of God, our need to recognize God's divine power and might:

Splendor and power go before him; power and grandeur are in his holy place. Give to the LORD, you families of nations, give to the LORD glory and might; give to the LORD the glory due his name!
–Psalm 96:6-8

Isaiah prophesied about his coming with these words: “For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace” (9:5). This prophesy declares how glorious the Savior will be! He will come as a child, with all perfection resting in him.

In the fullness of time, God revealed himself by sending his only begotten Son, Jesus the Christ, to be born of the Virgin Mary through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Archangel Gabriel appeared to Mary and said to her,

Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end. –Luke 1:30-32

Jesus was humble in all things. Although being the Lord of lords and the King of kings, he came to us in poverty, born in a stable. His only possession was his tunic. Yet, while humble, he is the Son of God, *the* revelation of the Father. Jesus reveals the Father to us, for to know the Son is to know the Father. The Father specifically wanted his Son to be called Jesus. It is this Holy Name that Christians revere throughout the world. Saint John tells of the glory and reverence due to his name:

Great and wonderful are your works, Lord God almighty. Just and true are your ways, O king of the nations. Who will not fear you, Lord, or glorify your name? For you alone are holy. All the nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed. –Revelation 15:3-4.

Jesus gave great assurance to his disciples by telling them, “Amen, amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you. Until now you have not asked anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be complete” (John 16:23-24). Our Savior’s words give us the confidence to know that God will always be with us; for when we ask in the Name of Jesus, all good things will be ours. When Jesus tells his disciples to ask in his name, he is showing them that he is the mediator between God and man. Jesus is true God and true man, having been with the Father from all eternity, and in the fullness of time taking on human flesh, becoming one like us in all things but sin. So, through the Holy Name of Jesus, God the Father hears and answers our prayers.

Soon after the Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, we read how the Apostle Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, witnessed to Jesus’ Holy Name. After healing a man who was crippled, he was called in front of the Sanhedrin to explain his actions. He told them,

Then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. –Acts 4:10.

As the centuries passed, Christians continued to glory in the Holy Name of Jesus. They kept the Faith alive by passing on to their children the stories of Jesus’ life, along with the traditions that they had received. And even if a person didn’t know many facts about the life of Jesus, they still knew and celebrated his name.

The great saints Bernard of Clairvaux, Bernadine of Siena and John of Capistrano fervently promoted devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus. They did this by preaching, giving missions, and encouraging the faithful to honor the Holy Name of Jesus in many ways.

Sometimes, they would publicly hold up placards that would display the Holy Name of Jesus in an abbreviated form.

In Greek, the name of Jesus is spelled “ΙΗΣΟΥΣ” (using capital letters). The first three letters – ΙΗΣ – are rendered “IHS” in the Latin alphabet. These three letters served as an abbreviation for the name of Jesus. During medieval times, shortened forms of Jesus’ Holy Name (called “Christograms”) were used. The Christogram IHS was soon appearing on altars, in church buildings, and even in public spaces. People, who may not have been able to read were able to recognize the IHS, and understand that it referred to the Holy Name of Jesus. Inscribing IHS on objects was a way of dedicating them to the Holy Name of Jesus. The people of God could see and recognize, at once, that the object was set aside for sacred use.

The Christogram IHS soon became an artistic representation. Artisans would painstakingly chisel the IHS on the front of stone altars, or laboriously carve the initials on the wood doors of churches. This not only showed reverence to the Holy Name of Jesus, but also beautified sacred spaces. Gradually, these abbreviations for the Holy Name of Jesus became quite ornate. Here are a few samples of IHS Christograms:



Devotion to the Holy Name of Jesus has kept the Christian Faith strong. For when the name of Jesus is kept sacred we are all reminded of what he did for us in his Passion, Death and Resurrection. From one generation to the next, the faithful have transmitted the Faith through the Holy Name of Jesus. We remain devoted to this Holy Name, for through it we have salvation.

IV.
THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS:
A CALL FOR ALL PEOPLE
TO HONOR THE HOLY NAME,
WHICH UNITES US AS CHRISTIANS.

[Jesus] humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. –Philippians, 2:8-11.

There is one name, known throughout the world, that can change the hearts of not only those who utter it, but also those who hear it. It is the Holy Name of Jesus. For that name gives us an immediate intimacy with our blessed Savior. When we utter it, we speak with the conviction and power of knowing that what we ask in Jesus' name will be granted. When we hear it, we are reminded of the tender mercy that the Holy Name of Jesus represents. When conversations turn affectionately to the Holy Name of Jesus, the holiness of our Redeemer transcends the thoughts of those speaking, lifting them to a higher level.

Why is this? It is because when we utter the Holy Name of Jesus we are speaking about the One who loves us, who forgives our sins, who is the Word of God that hones our hearts, and who feeds us with his Body and Blood. In Sacred Scripture we read, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Therefore, mentioning the Name of Jesus takes the speaker and the listener to a place that gives life, for we understand that we need him, just as branches need the vine. We, the branches, will always have life if we cling to the vine, which is Jesus.

Around the world this Holy Name is pronounced and spelled differently. But whether the spelling is Jesus, Ἰησοῦς, Jesús, Iesus, Jésus, Gesù, Giêsu, 예수, Jezus, Иисус, Yesu, Íosa, or Ісус, this Holy Name touches the heart in a similar way. This applies to Christians and non-Christians alike, for the Holy Name lovingly penetrates the hearts of all. We cannot remain unchanged when we encounter the name of Jesus. Some will come closer to him through it; others may choose to reject it; but we are all changed by it.

During Jesus' public ministry, crowds came to hear him teach, heal, or perform wonders. They marveled at his words and their faith was strengthened by his signs and miracles. They were spellbound by his presence. People began to know this teacher by his Holy Name: Jesus. His name spread far and wide as a sacred one, one that performed mighty wonders. So even those who had never seen or heard him came to know of him through the words of others. Thus they came to recognize his power, his majesty, his love and his humility. They understood that it was Jesus who did these great things, and he was the Savior of the nations. They put all their hope in him. They learned to follow his teaching and treat others with gentleness and compassion. They knew that he would be in their midst when two or three gathered together in prayer, invoking his Holy and exalted Name. And they recognized him preeminently in the breaking of the bread, which is forever and always a participation in his Passion, Death and Resurrection.

The Holy Name of Jesus has been transmitted from one generation to the next, even to our own day. And we remain in awe of it for these many centuries. The sanctity of this name endures throughout the millennia.

Christians are united under the Holy Name of Jesus. For while our beliefs may differ theologically, we all love the Son of God, who bears this Holy Name. He redeemed all of us by his suffering and death, and promises us a place with his Father in the Resurrection. No greater love has ever been shown.

There are over two billion Christians on the planet. Believers bear the name of Christ in the title "Christian." Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. The saving waters of the

Sacrament of Baptism envelop us and form the portal of life eternal. In Baptism, we become God's sons and daughters, heirs to the Kingdom of Grace. In the waters of Baptism, Christians die to self and live for Christ Jesus. This unites all followers of Christ.

To grow in the Faith means to love God. Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church are the pillars which help us to appreciate his love, to understand his precepts, and to continue on our pilgrimage of life. Sacred Scripture and the Tradition of the Church bring Christians to a greater love of Jesus and his Holy Name.

We read in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Respect for his name is an expression of the respect owed to the mystery of God himself and to the whole sacred reality it evokes. The *sense of the sacred* is part of the virtue of religion..." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, N° 2144). We celebrate the mystery of God, for God in his greatness has embraced the human race with his love. Therefore, when we show reverence for God's Holy Name, we are lifted up by this mystery and experience an ever fuller participation in God's majestic life here on earth.

Jesus always calls us into fuller communion, leading to complete unity. He calls us to be one, as he and the Father are one. We Christians long for the day that we may together worship our one Lord, be of one Faith, and celebrate one Baptism. He is our Shepherd and we are the sheep of his pasture. In Scripture it is written, "Know that the LORD is God, he made us, we belong to him, we are his people, the flock he shepherds" (Psalm 100, verse 3).

Sadly, the Lord's Holy Name is not always used in prayer or teaching. We have heard the commandment, "You shall not invoke the name of the LORD, your God, in vain" (Exodus 20:7). The Catechism instructs us that this, "The second commandment *forbids the abuse of God's name*, i.e., every improper use of the names of God, Jesus Christ, but also of the Virgin Mary and all the saints" (N° 2146). This means we must avoid using the Lord's Holy Name in any context that shows a lack of respect for it. This would include using it in the context of profanity, or using it as part of phrases, even habitual ones that are frequently used, that are devoid of an intention of prayer, or speaking respectfully of the Lord. The Holy Names of our Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are sacred to us, and must be shown the highest respect.

The name of the Blessed Virgin and all the saints are also holy to us, for they always point us toward God.

This commandment is not simply a rule or a law to be followed. It is a way of living that points us to a greater love of God. For when we hold God's name as holy, we share in the holiness and are enriched by it. We are in relation with God, and we honor his Holy Name to the greatest extent. In Sacred Scripture we read, "You shall love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5). Since we know God by the name he has revealed to us, holding his name as sacred keeps us in right relation with him.

When the Lord's name is taken in vain, it makes the name common for us. When this happens again and again, the sacred nature of this Holy Name is gradually stripped from us. Therefore, the gift that is given to us in the names by which we know God (e.g. God, Jesus, Lord, Christ), loses its meaning for us, and becomes empty. To love someone is to respect him/her, and their name. If we truly love God we will respect the Holy Name that he has revealed to us.

When people use God's Holy Name in vain they lose sight of the loving relationship that God desires with us: he calls us by name, and we know him by name. The intimacy that we desperately need with God is enhanced by respecting the Holy Name of Jesus, and conversely is damaged by its abuse.

We know that misuse of God's name cannot debase God or take away any of his power. God is the Almighty One, and all power and authority come from him. His might is endless. He gave his Son the name of Jesus that we would know him, glorify him, have unity in his name and be saved through it. This is for the glory of God and our good.

When we keep reverence for the Holy Name of our blessed Savior, we not only glorify God but also allow him to lift us to the level of the Spirit. Our prayerful use of God's Holy Name

takes us to the lofty heights of his Kingdom, where we can experience, even now on earth, the peace, joy, and communion of his eternal love.

Therefore, let us be renewed in our commitment never to take the name of the Lord our God in vain. What a powerful witness and example this will be for all those we love and encounter! Such a witness also proclaims the truth, "... that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10-11).

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michael F. Burbidge", written in black ink. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line.

Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge

Bishop of Raleigh

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