

THE BULLETIN

“So the faith was planted: so it must be restored.”

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“Thou shalt call His name Jesus...”

Adapted from a sermon by The Most Rev. Clarence Kelly
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“What’s in a name?” This is a familiar question. It was Shakespeare who asked it and then answered: “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” In other words, it is not the name that is important but the thing designated. The thing would remain the same regardless of what you called it. Yet, on the other hand, names can have great significance. For example, when God bestows a name on someone, it is always for some important reason. The name of the first man is of great significance, for the word *Adam* is derived from a word which means “man” or “mankind.” It also can mean “earthborn.” (Catholic Biblical Encyclopedia) The name *Eve* means “life.” (ibid.) Eve received her name because she was to be the mother of all the living. In Genesis we read: “And Adam called the name of his wife Eve: because she was the mother of all the living.” (3:20) Other examples of the great significance of names from the Old and New Testaments would be the names *Abraham* and *Peter*. *Abraham* was called by God. *Abraham* means “exalted father.” But God changed *Abraham*'s name to *Abraham*. God said: “Thou shalt be called Abraham; because I have made thee the father of many nations.” (Gen. 17:5) The word *Abraham* means “father of many nations” or “father of a multitude.” The Apostle Peter’s name was *Simon*. Our Lord changed his name to *Peter*. Christ said: “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church.” The word used by Our Lord in Aramaic was the word *Kephas*. (John 1:42) *Kephas* means “rock.” Translated into Greek it is *Petros*. Translated into Latin it is *Petrus*, from whence we get *Peter*.

Names then can be very significant, and while it may not matter what you call a rose, it does matter what you call Adam and Eve, Abraham and Peter. Now if the names used for the first man and woman are significant, if the name used for the father of the Hebrew nation and the first pope are significant, what must be the significance of the names bestowed upon the Son of God made Man? His names are great in meaning and number. In the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus, there are 38 names or titles by which Our Lord is addressed. They are beautiful names and significant titles. Each one is filled with great meaning. Our Lord is called the Splendor of the Father, the King of Glory, the Mighty God, the Father of the World to Come, the Father of the Poor, the True Light, the Joy of Angels, the King of Patriarchs, the Strength of Martyrs. He is named Emmanuel which means “God with us.” He is called Wonderful, Counselor, the Prince of Peace.

But of all the names given to the Son of God made Man, there is no name more beautiful or significant than His own proper name: Jesus. Thus He was called by the Angel Gabriel, who said to Our Lady: “Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.” (Luke 1:31) In the second chapter of Luke we read: “And after eight days were accomplished, that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus, which was called by the angel, before he was conceived in the womb.” (Luke 2:21) The word *Jesus* is actually a combination or a contraction of two words. One of those words means “He saves.” The other word is the