

intelligent, prudent, priestly priest who has had adequate professional training, and a staff of assistants sufficient to the needs of the seminary. It will be only librarians of this calibre who can begin to carry out a program effectively aimed at training the capable priests desired by our Holy Father in his encyclical *Menti nostrae*.

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FIFTY YEARS AGO

The leading article in *The American Ecclesiastical Review* for November, 1903, contributed by Fr. W. R. Carson, of Shefford, England, is entitled "The Twofold Aspect of Purgatory." The author explains that purgatory can be viewed either as a state of expiatory punishment or as a state of purificatory cleansing. In whichever light it is considered, the reasonableness of the Church's teaching will be apparent. Fr. Carson himself regards purgatory primarily as a state of punishment. . . . The series entitled "In Father Martin's Library," by Fr. A. Waldron, continues, with a discussion on the use of snuff and tobacco by the clergy. . . . Fr. R. Schwickerath, S.J., in a lengthy article entitled "Modern Scientists and Religion," complains that many scientists are too prone to encroach on the field of religion. He also enumerates some luminaries of the scientific world who have been deeply religious. . . . The editor, Fr. Heuser, writing on "Slav Catholics in the United States," suggests some practical measures for providing adequate religious care for the many immigrants of Slavic nationality constantly entering our country. . . . An anonymous writer, signing himself "C. M.," under the heading "Blessed are the Dead," explains the ways in which Catholics should manifest respect and reverence toward the bodies of the deceased. . . . In the *Analecta* appears the Latin text of *E supremi apostolatus cathedra*, the inaugural encyclical letter of Pope Pius X, in which the newly elected Sovereign Pontiff announces as the keynote of his pontificate the inspiring phrase "Instaurare omnia in Christo." A correspondent pleads for a band of priests who will preach total abstinence.

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THE INVOCATION OF THE HOLY NAME AND THE BASIC CONCEPT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The names employed in the New Testament to designate the true Church of Jesus Christ and its members bring out very clearly a great part of the divinely revealed teaching about the nature and the characteristics of that society. The great encyclical letter *Mystici Corporis*, issued by the Holy Father ten years ago last June, shows the immeasurably rich doctrinal content of one of these titles, that of "Body of Christ," which was used by St. Paul in the course of his epistles. Other names, such as "ecclesia" itself, and titles like "the Kingdom of God," the "City of God," and the "Household of the faith," are likewise tremendously rich in meaning.

The ninth chapter of the *Acts of the Apostles* contains six of these designations, all of them magnificently indicative of the nature and properties of the Church. This chapter, the first part of which tells of Saul's journey to Damascus and of the miracle of grace by which this bitter persecutor was converted to the very Church against which he was raging, speaks of the members of the Catholic Church as "the men and women of this way,"¹ as "those that called upon this name,"² as "the saints,"³ as "the disciples,"⁴ as "the brethren,"⁵ and as those "who were converted to the Lord."⁶ In this brief paper we shall consider only the second of these titles, that according to which the members of the Catholic Church are indicated as the people who call upon or invoke the name of the Lord.

The disciple Ananias, the Christian leader in the Church at Damascus, used this designation of the members of the Church when he tried to urge objections against God's command to go and receive Saul, the future Apostle of the Gentiles, into the Church.

¹ *Acts* 9:2.

² *Ibid.*, vv. 14, 21.

³ *Ibid.*, vv. 13, 32.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vv. 1, 10, 19, 25, 26, 36, 38.

⁵ *Ibid.*, v. 30.

⁶ *Ibid.*, v. 35.

But Ananias answered: Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints in Jerusalem.

And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that invoke thy name (πάντας τοὺς ἐπικαλούμενους τὸ ὄνομά σου).⁷

The text of the *Acts* likewise shows that this title for the members of the Church was used, not only within the Church itself, but also by those outside its ranks. It appears in this way as part of the comment on the astonishing change in Saul's attitude made by those citizens of Damascus who were aware of his former attitudes.

And all that heard him were astonished and said: Is not this he who persecuted in Jerusalem those that called upon this name and came hither for that intent, that he might carry them bound to the chief priests?⁸

St. Paul himself applied this term to the membership of the universal Church, in contradistinction to the membership of the local Church in the city of Corinth.

Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Sosthenes a brother,

To the church of God that is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place of theirs and ours.⁹

The *Acts of the Apostles* gives two valuable indications about the meaning of this expression. In the first place, St. Paul himself, in describing his conversion to the hostile Jewish mob in Jerusalem, connects the invocation of the Holy Name in some way with the process of baptism itself.

But he [Ananias] said: The God of our fathers hath preordained thee that thou shouldst know his will and see the Just One and shouldst hear the voice from his mouth.

For thou shalt be his witness to all men of those things which thou hast seen and heard.

And now why tarriest thou? Rise up and be baptized and wash away thy sins, invoking his name (ἐπικαλεσάμενος τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ).¹⁰

⁷ *Ibid.*, vv. 13, 14.

⁸ *Ibid.*, v. 21.

⁹ *I Cor.* 1:1-2.

¹⁰ *Acts* 22:14-16.

The term is used again with reference to the proto-martyr, St. Stephen.

And casting him [St. Stephen] forth without the city, they stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man, whose name was Saul.

And they stoned Stephen, invoking (ἐπικαλούμενον) and saying: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.¹¹

Invoking the Holy Name, then, meant nothing more or less than praying to Our Lord as God. It is interesting to note that Pliny's report to Trajan the Roman emperor contains an interesting statement to the effect that the proscribed Christians were people who "had been accustomed to meet before daybreak, and to recite a hymn together (*carmen . . . dicere secum invicem*) to Christ as to God."¹² This was the first characteristic of the Catholic people noted by Pliny. To him, the members of the Church were primarily the people who performed the corporate social work of worship of Our Lord, publicly and openly acknowledging His divinity.

One portion of the *Shepherd of Hermas* is of great value in bringing out what the teachers themselves understood as the function of the Holy Name in the true Church of Jesus Christ. The Shepherd or the Angel of Repentance is represented as explaining to Hermas that "No man shall enter into the kingdom of God except he take His holy Name."¹³ and that, specifically, "a man cannot otherwise enter into the kingdom of God except through the Name of His Son, who was beloved by Him."¹⁴ The Shepherd is depicted as teaching that

The Name of the Son of God is great and incomprehensible, and supports the whole world. If then the whole creation is supported by the Son of God, what do you think of those who are called by Him, and bear the Name of the Son of God, and walk in His commandments? Do you see them whom He supports? Those who bear His Name with their whole heart. He then was their foundation and He

¹¹ *Acts* 7:57-58.

¹² Pliny, *Ep.* X (ad Traianum), xcvi.

¹³ *Shepherd, Simil.* IX, xii. 4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 5.

supports them joyfully, because they are not ashamed to bear His Name.¹⁵

It is evident from these passages and from the context in which they are placed in the *Shepherd* that, for Hermas, and for the men of his circle, the members of the true Church were primarily the people of the Holy Name, the people who recognized the fact that Our Lord is actually the Son of God, and who expressed that recognition or acknowledgment in their prayers to Him or their invocation of His holy Name. They are the people who have been joined together, united among themselves and with God, in the power of the Name of their divine Redeemer. Their corporate life of prayer centers around a statement of the fact that He is truly the Incarnate Word of God.

From this point of view, the expression "those who call upon the name of the Lord" is identical, objectively speaking, with the old scholastic definition of the Church as the "congregatio fidelium." The *fidelis* is not merely one who has the theological virtue of faith. He is rather one who, by the force of the baptismal character within him, is empowered and commissioned to profess and manifest that belief in the course of his daily activities. The *fidelis*, in other words, is thus designated by reason of the baptismal profession or outward expression of faith, which he has never publicly revoked or rejected, and by reason of the association into which he has been incorporated by virtue of his baptismal character, an association which he has not abandoned, and which has not expelled him from its membership.

The member of the group of those who invoke the name of the Lord has obviously the same set of characteristics. He is one who not only realizes that Our Lord is the Incarnate Word of God, but one who gives open and public expression to that recognition. Moreover, this outward expression or profession of the faith is something which is done rightly only in the society which God has instituted as His Kingdom of the New Testament here on earth. The corporate expression of the faith, the corporate invocation of the Holy Name, these are tasks which belong essentially to the true Church of God. A man is designated as one who in-

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, xiv, 5 f.

vokes the name of the Lord primarily by reason of his membership in this community.

There is, however, a special and highly important implication contained in the designation of the Church as the group of people who call upon the name of the Lord. That implication is in the line of eternal salvation. Indeed, the Holy Name itself, the Name which the Church, as a social unit, is commissioned by God to invoke, is explained in divine revelation in terms of eternal salvation. The first chapter in the *Gospel according to St. Matthew* tells us that the Angel, speaking to St. Joseph, commanded him to impose the name of Jesus upon Mary's Son precisely because He was to be the Author of salvation. "And she shall bring forth a son: and thou shalt call his name Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins."¹⁶ Thus, from the outset the Holy Name itself was explained as something indicative and effective of eternal salvation.

The famous tenth chapter of St. Paul's *Epistle to the Romans* brings out this implication with great clarity. It is in the light of this teaching that the full meaning and richness of the designation of the *fidelis* as one who calls upon the name of the Lord is to be sought and found.

But what saith the scripture? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart. This is the word of faith, which we preach.

For if thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For, with the heart, we believe unto justice: but, with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.

For the scripture saith: Whosoever believeth in him shall not be confounded.

For there is no distinction of the Jew and the Greek: for the same is Lord over all, rich unto all that call upon him.

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

¹⁶ *Matt.* 1: 21.

And how shall they preach unless they be sent, as it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things?¹⁷

According to God's own teaching, set down in this letter of St. Paul, salvation will come to those who call upon the name of the Lord. This is merely another and a very strong way of bringing out the doctrine of the infallible efficacy of prayer, a teaching which Our Lord Himself repeated and insisted upon many times during the course of His instructions to the disciples. And, in order that prayer may be infallibly efficacious, it must be endowed with those qualities which make it a true and reverent *petitio decentium a Deo*.¹⁸

Obviously not every instance of the use of the Holy Name could qualify as the type of invocation which leads to eternal salvation. St. Paul himself, in the course of his *Second Epistle to Timothy*, issues the command: "let every one depart from iniquity who nameth the name of the Lord."¹⁹ The very obvious implication is that it is quite possible for a man to act as part of the community which calls upon the Lord's name, and which prays to Him as God, and, at the same time, by the force of his own conduct, to make his own petitions to Our Lord manifestly insincere and valueless. What St. Paul wants the members of the Church to do, so as to guarantee the sincerity of their invocation of Christ, is to manifest the kind of charity about which he wrote in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, wherein he speaks to his "dearly beloved" and reminds them that "God is not unjust, that he should forget your work and the love which you have shewn in his name, you who have ministered and do minister to the saints."²⁰

In the last analysis, we must remember that the designation of the faithful as the people who call upon or invoke the Lord's name is to be understood in terms of St. Peter's pronouncement that "there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby

¹⁷ Rom. 10: 8-15.

¹⁸ Prayer is infallibly efficacious when it is offered for oneself, when it is made for salvation itself, or for something actually necessary for the attainment of salvation, when it is offered piously, and when it is persevering. Cf. Fenton, *The Theology of Prayer* (Milwaukee: Bruce, 1939), pp. 210-215.

¹⁹ II Tim. 2: 19.

²⁰ Heb. 6: 10.

we must be saved."²¹ The members of the one true Church of Jesus Christ on earth were and are the men and women who have been called by God, and endowed with the light of divine faith. Through the power of that faith they are privileged to know Our Lord, to know Him as their Brother, to know Him so as to be able to call upon Him, and, through this invocation, to procure for themselves the salvific fruit of His sacrificial death.

The most serious intellectual temptation of our time is that of minimizing the revealed truth about the Catholic Church by refusing, in some measure at least, to admit that these glorious New Testament titles of the people of God actually designate the visible Catholic Church of our day. The Holy Father, through his encyclical *Mystici Corporis*, and more recently through the *Humani generis*, has put a stop, once and for all, to the once all-too-prevalent tendency to identify the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, the social entity which St. Paul called "the body of Christ," as something other than the visible Catholic Church. It is to be hoped that this tendency never reappears.

The other New Testament designations of the people of God are just as proper to the Catholic Church as is the expression "body of Christ." The visible Catholic Church, with its bad members mingled with the good, is likewise truly and exclusively God's kingdom in this world. It is the City of God, and the true household of the faith. It is also, by the ineffable supernatural gifts God has bestowed upon it, the one society of those who truly call upon the name of Our Lord, and through Him gain eternal salvation. It is the one society which God Himself has described as truly necessary for the attainment of eternal salvation.

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²¹ Acts 4: 11.