

HOLY NAME  
SOCIETY MANUAL

IHS

Laudetur Jesus Christus

Society of Saint Pius X  
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Holy Name  
Society Manual

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*for the*

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**In Nomine Jesu omne genu flectatur  
caelestium, terrestrium, et infernorum: et  
omnis lingua confiteatur, quia Dominus  
Jesus Christus in gloria est Dei Patris.  
Phil 2, 10-11**

## ORIGIN OF THE HOLY NAME SOCIETY

Sad indeed was the condition of the Church in France and Spain at the dawn of the thirteenth century. The ravages of heresy had well nigh taken from her all traces of strength and beauty. In the evening of unbelief the corner stone had been attacked and the edifice seemed to stagger. The divinity of Christ was denied; His supernatural character ridiculed. So prevalent was this heresy, and so complete its work, that if men did not actually deny in formal words that Christ is God, they did it just as effectively by speaking His Name thoughtlessly and irreverently; by using it as an epithet with which to express every feeling, whether of sinful passion, undue excitement, or unholy anger. Truly might it be said that Christ was not known among them.

Times such as these are sure to come in the history of the Church, for it is human. But it is guided by God and, as an evidence of its divine guidance, wherever such a crisis appears, God raises up some man, especially fitted for the time, who by reason of his own ability, aided by heavenly strength, recalls the sinner from his errors to the way of justice and truth. The man chosen by God at this crisis was the saintly Dominic; his weapon, the preaching of Christ, and of Him crucified.

He taught men to think: he placed before their minds the mysteries of the Incarnation, the Redemption and the Resurrection, in so clear and unmistakable a manner that ignorance of religion, on which heresy is built, was soon destroyed. Man grew to know Jesus Christ, and knowledge begot love. But the habits of years are not suddenly overcome, and though the heresy was destroyed, the effects, the blasphemies, the cursing, the swearing, the irreverent and unholy use of the Name of God, lived after.

Dominic attacked and conquered the greater evil; his sons were to combat the lesser. The Second Council of Lyons, knowing the universal lessening of love and respect for the Name of Jesus caused by the Albigensian heresy, deemed it necessary to urge special devotion and zeal toward the Holy Name. The voice of this Council is expressed in a subsequent letter (1274 AD) of Gregory X, who presided over its deliberations. The following is the letter:

*“Gregory, Bishop, Servant of the Servants of God, to our very dear son, the Master General of the Order of Preachers, salutation and apostolic benediction. Recently, during the Council held at Lyons, we deemed it a useful commendation to exhort the faithful to enter the house of God with humility and devotion, and to conduct themselves while there in a becoming*

*manner, so as to merit the divine favor and at the same time to give edification. We have also judged it proper to persuade the faithful to demonstrate more reverence for that Name above all names; the only name in which we claim salvation—the Name of Jesus Christ, who has redeemed us from the bondage of sin. Consequently, in view of obeying the apostolic precept: “in the Name of Jesus let every knee be bent”, we wish that at the pronouncing of that name, chiefly at the Holy Sacrifice, every one would bow his head in token that interiorly he bends the knee of his heart.*

*Wherefore, very dear son, we, by our apostolic authority, exhort, and enjoin upon you and the brothers of your Order, to use solid reason in preaching to the people, that they may be led to comply with our desires. Thus you will win the crown of justice in the day of recompense.*

*Given at Lyons, 1274 in the third year of our Pontificate.”*

The Dominican General, Blessed John of Vercelli, immediately issued instructions to the whole Order, urging its members, and principally the preachers, to carry out the will of the Holy Father with scrupulous diligence, and untiring zeal. The devotion spread rapidly within and without the Order of Saint Dominic. There is a tradition that the holy Patriarch added the Name of Jesus to the Hail Mary. Blessed Henry Suso cut into his flesh the letters of the name “*Jesus.*” Saint Vincent Ferrer lost no opportunity of preaching on the strength and beauty of the Holy Name. Saint Catherine of Siena began all her letters “*In the Name of Jesus crucified.*” Altars in honor of the Holy Name were erected in all Dominican Churches.

In the year 1432 a plague was laying waste all Lisbon. Bishop Diaz, a saintly Dominican prelate who had resigned his see and was living with his brethren at Lisbon, urged the people to put their trust in the power of the Name of the Savior and to enroll themselves in a society which should labor to make the Name of Jesus loved and honored by all. He blessed water in the honor of the Sacred Name, and its distribution among the people was followed by miraculous effects.

In a remarkably short time the city was freed from the scourge. On January 1st, the new Society of the Holy Name assembled to give thanks to God for their deliverance. Statutes were drawn up. The Feast of the Circumcision was made the principal feast of the Society, for this was the day on which Jesus received his Name. The second Sunday of every month was made the Sunday of the Society. The Infant Jesus was to be the Patron of the Society.

A century later another Dominican, Father Diego, founded the Society of the Name of God and of Oaths, which Pope Pius IV, on April 5th, 1564, affiliated to Bishop Diaz' Confraternity of the Name of Jesus. The Pontiff blessed the now united Societies with many privileges and indulgences. Pope Pius IV, in his bull of confirmation, urges all patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, and ordinaries of places, to do all in their power to promote the Society of the Name of Jesus.

In the 15th century, Saint Bernard of Siena established the practice of representing the Holy Name of Jesus surrounded with rays, and formed into a monogram of its three first letters, IHS. (The ancient spelling often was "Ihesus") The custom spread rapidly through Italy, and was zealously propagated by the great Saint John of Capistrano of the Order of Friars Minor. The Holy See gave formal approbation to this manner of honouring the Name of Our Savior, and in the early part of the 16th century, Pope Clement VI granted to the whole Franciscan Order the privilege of keeping a special Feast in honour of the Most Holy Name of Jesus. Rome extended the same favor to various churches, and at length, it was inserted in the universal Calendar. It was in the year 1721, at the request of Charles VI, Emperor of Germany, that Pope Innocent XII decreed that this Feast should be kept throughout the whole Church.

Such in brief is the origin of the Holy Name Society, which has since encircled the globe, developing a sturdy religious spirit, a deep love of God, and an abiding reverence of the Name of Jesus.

Nowhere has the Society made more rapid growth than here in our own country. The good it has done can be only faintly estimated, but it is certain that the Society is checking the foul habit of profane and indecent language, that it is teaching men to mention with reverence the Name of Jesus, that it is bringing to Mass on Sundays and to the Sacraments at regular intervals, thousands of men who would probably be negligent Catholics were it not for the Society. In the providence of God, it is furthermore a most potent factor in maintaining belief in the divinity of Christ among the men of America.



## PRESENT AIM OF THE HOLY NAME SOCIETY

That there is need of a Holy Name Society in our day none can deny. There is indeed an abuse of the name "*Jesus*," there is a tendency to speak lightly of God and His saints, a growing custom of laughing and ridiculing whatever approaches the supernatural. And it was to fight these evils that the Holy Name Society was organized.

More serious is the attack made upon the divine character of Christ by those who wear the guise of friendship, who pretend to see in Jesus the perfection of manhood, the embodiment of all that is good in our nature, yet doubt, if they do not deny, His divine origin, His equality with the Father and the Holy Ghost. To maintain and to increase man's faith in the divinity of the Savior is the chief object of the Society; to promote respect and honor for His Name, the means. An organized body of men striving heart and soul to make Jesus the Man-God better known and better loved: This is the Holy Name Society and its aim.

The Society further wishes to promote respect for authority both civil and religious. The rejection or the minimizing of authority is one of the great evils of our day.

The better to attain this it was thought advisable to have a set rule, which Pius IV has approved and recommended. In substance, the object and rule of the Society, as approved by Pius IV, are as follows:

### OBLIGATIONS

Holy Name men promise:

1. To labor individually for the glory of God's Name, and to make it known to those who are ignorant of it.
2. Never to pronounce disrespectfully the Name of Jesus.
3. To avoid blasphemy, perjury, profane and indecent language.
4. To induce their neighbors to refrain from all insults against God and His saints and from profane and unbecoming language.
5. To remonstrate with those who blaspheme or use profane language in their presence. This must be governed by zeal, prudence and common sense.
6. Never to work or carry on business unnecessarily on Sunday.
7. To do all they can to induce their dependents to sanctify the Sunday.
8. To attend regularly the meetings and devotional exercises of the Society.
9. To communicate in a body on the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus and on the regular Communion Sundays (2nd of the month) of the Society.
10. To have a Requiem Mass said each year some time after the Feast of the Holy Name for all the deceased members. All who can attend the Anniversary Mass should do so.
11. To assemble at an hour convenient to the Society every second Sunday of the month for devotional exercises and for the transaction of business.

*NOTE:* These duties do not oblige under the pain of sin, but all members of the Holy Name Society should make an earnest effort as a matter of honor to be faithful in the discharge of these obligations.

## SACRED TIMES IN THE HOLY NAME SOCIETY

*JANUARY:* Month of the Holy Name.

*JANUARY 1:* Feast of the Circumcision (Octave of the Nativity of Our Lord) and the Feast of the Holy Name of Jesus which falls within the first week of January, are the patronal feasts of the Society.

*2<sup>ND</sup> SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH:* Day for the procession, Mass, and Communion of the Society.

### DETAILS CONCERNING THE RECEPTION CEREMONY

The reception ceremony is usually conducted once a year. It is recommended that the reception ceremony be also conducted at the conclusion of special membership campaigns so that the men, who have signified their intention of joining the Confraternity, can be admitted immediately.

Men who wish to join the Confraternity at a time when the Reception Ceremony is not held may be received into the Society at the next ceremony.

The members may gain a plenary indulgence, under the usual conditions, on the day of their enrollment. The recitation of the Rosary and a sermon on the Holy Name Society usually precede the actual reception ceremony. The officers may occupy a place in the sanctuary during the ceremony. The Director is vested in surplice and white stole.



**Thou shalt not take the name  
of the Lord Thy God in vain**