The Most Holy Name of Jesus: Name above all names

"It is the divine name that alone brings salvation" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 432).

The month of January is dedicated to the holy name of Jesus. The Church celebrates the feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus on Jan. 3. Take time to celebrate its power and significance with your family, for the name of Jesus is truly the Name above All Names.

Invocation of the Holy Name
Say this prayer many times throughout the day this month:

"Blessed be the most holy name of Jesus without end!"

The Sacred Scriptures and Saints
St. Paul tells us "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth" (Phil 2:10). Mark writes, "In my name … they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover" (Mk 16:17-18). And Jesus himself tells us, "Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you"
(Jn 16:23).

Although the name of Jesus has been respected since the days of the apostles, it has been honored with a special feast day since the end of the 15th century. St. Bernard, St. Bernardine of Siena and St. John Capistrano are among the saints who have had a special devotion to the name of Jesus.

Under His Protection
The monogram used for the Holy Name of Jesus includes the three letters IHS, which come from consonants in the Greek word for Jesus (IHSOUS). Over time, IHS has also become associated with the first letters of the Latin phrase Iesus

Hominum Salvator ("Jesus, Savior of Men"). The letters IHS were often inscribed above doorways in medieval Italy for protection of the inhabitants.

Write the name of Jesus with chalk above your front door.

God Calls Us by Name
In Hebrew the name Jesus means "God saves" and reminds us that God the Father and Jesus are one. Read the account of the naming of Jesus in Matthew 1:21-23.

Discuss the meaning behind your family name and each individual's name. Share stories about how each family member was given their name.

Write the name of Jesus with chalk above your front door.

Why we celebrate
While most of our liturgical celebrations throughout the year focus on biblical events or the lives of the saints, on Jan. 3 is honored the name of Jesus, observed as an optional memorial. Why should we celebrate and honor the name of Jesus with a feast? Find out in this article on our sister site, Simply Catholic.