

A Sermon on the Glorious Name of Jesus Christ

by

Saint Bernadine of Siena

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Translator's Introduction

Anyone familiar with the Scriptures, and especially with the Psalms, cannot fail to be impressed with the number of references to the Name of God. It has been incorporated into the liturgical formulae and prayers of the Church since the time of St. Paul. It is recommended to us in both the Pater Noster and the Magnificat and has been joined to the prayer of the publican—"Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner"—since the time of the Apostles. We have previously published, under the title of "The Incarnation in Contemporary Prayer" a commentary on its use in the western church that firmly demonstrates its place in Tradition. We have also published a translation of a sermon by St. Thomas of Villanova on this topic. The present sermon of St. Bernadine of Siena, often referred to as the "Apostle of the Name", is probably the most complete discussion on the subject by any single author in the Roman Church.

St. Bernadine was born at Massa, near Siena (Italy) on September 8th, (the birthday of the Blessed Virgin) in 1380. Both his parents died before he reached the age of eight and he was brought up by a devout aunt named Dianna. Encouraged by her, he grew in grace and virtue, and from childhood demonstrated a tremendous love of the poor. He interrupted his studies as a young man in order to care for the victims of the plague which struck Siena, and actually became the director of the La Scala Hospital which still stands and functions today across the street from the cathedral of this city. At the age of 22 he entered the Franciscan order and during the course of his life is said to have preached in almost every city of Italy. He was pressed to accept three different Bishoprics but managed to evade them. In 1438 he was made Vicar-general of the Franciscan order and worked to re-establish the rule of strict observance. At the time of his taking this position, there were only 20 houses and 200 religious under this rule. When he died, there were over 300 houses and at least 5000 religious. He died in 1444 during the singing of vespers. As he breathed his last, the monks were chanting the antiphon: "*My Father, I have made Thy Name known to the people that Thou hast given me...*". He was 64 years old.

St. Bernadine is of course most famous for his love of the Name of Jesus. While the Chrismon (the letters used to symbolize the Name of Christ) can be traced back as far as the Epistle of Barnabas, the particular form of this emblem that Saint Bernadine preached is said to

have appeared miraculously at his finger tips during a sermon on the subject. This symbol was adopted for his order by St. Ignatius Loyola, was carried on the standard of St. Joan of Arc, and variants to this day can be seen to adorn both Catholic altars and Protestant “tables”. The Feast of the Holy Name was promoted by St. Bernadine and was appropriately established to coincide with that of the Marriage at Cana, for it is, as Gueranger says, “on the wedding day that the Bridegroom gives His Name to the bride”.¹ This symbol, is appropriately painted in gold on a blue background, blue being the color of faith, hope and charity. It can be seen to this day placed over the entrances of many homes and churches in Tuscany, and is also placed over the entrance to the hermitage of St. Francis of Assisi, a place hallowed in memory to St. Bernadine as well as to the founder of his order.

Though St. Bernadine must have given many sermons on the Holy Name of Jesus, and is said to have ended all his sermons with an exhortation to this devotion, it is of interest that in his *Opera Omnia*, only one is listed that is exclusively devoted to this subject. A second one more recently discovered, has been published in a Sieneese historical journal. However, if we have only one or two, the length and completeness more than compensate for the paucity.

Lest anyone should feel that St. Bernadine’s teaching is exaggerated, or not truly Catholic, they should know that in his lifetime he was accused of heresy for these very teachings and silenced. He was however ably defended by St. John of Capistrano (who wrote his life), and a thorough Papal investigation followed. Pope Martin V declared Bernadine’s conduct, doctrine, and teaching on the Holy Name as orthodox and offered him the Bishopric of Siena. This confirmation was again made by Pope Eugene IV. In the centuries since his death, innumerable saints have spoken in praise of it.

The sermon itself, after an introductory discussion, is divided into three sections. Each section in turn is divided into four chapters. Each chapter discusses the meaning of one of the twelve rays that surround the emblem of the Name. This translation is offered, not as an exercise in scholarship, but rather as a work of devotion. Biblical passages in the sermon often depart slightly from the vulgate, as is understandable when one realizes that they were quoted from memory. Whenever possible, the translations are taken from the Douay-Rheims version. They are italicized as in the original. To my knowledge, no previous complete translation in English exists. Any errors are of course my own.

JESUS MARIA

¹ Due to liturgical reasons, the feast is often celebrated on January 1st, the Feast of the Circumcision.

Saint Bernadine of Siena

PALM SUNDAY

“At the Name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth and under the earth”—taken from the second chapter of Paul’s letter to the Philippians and read in the lesson for today.

When the human mind makes bold to speak of the Name of Jesus, and of its praise, it finds itself deficient; the tongue cleaves to the palate of the mouth and all speech dries up. Indeed, this Name is so great, so much more profound than the very oceans, that no human intellect is fully capable of expounding it; this is why Saint Isidore says “the spoken Name is like a well of wisdom that makes things known to us”. Now it is the nature of names to specify that which is named, and the Name of Jesus instructs us in an incomprehensible manner. Who is able to explain the incomprehensible? Is it possible to reveal the infinite? And what man can possibly express in mere words the meaning of the Incarnation—God-man? This is what David the prophet expresses when he says to the Lord in Psalm 48: “according to Thy Name O Lord, so also is Thy praise”, which is to say that the very Name itself is Thou, a giving praise O Lord. But who is able to explain this—The Name—which thing in and of itself gives praise to God? Who can be found so full of grace and virtue as to proclaim this praise in an appropriate manner? Absolutely no one, unless his lips be “circumcised”. Thus it was that when Isaiah (6) was raised up in the contemplation of the vision of the King of Glory, before speaking of Jesus whom he referred to as Emmanuel, and before speaking of the Virginal Conception, acknowledged his speech to be unworthy. It was only after he experienced the mystery of the Seraphim, after he felt the burning coal upon his lips and was purged and spiritually circumcised, that he announced the Virginal Conception and the Name of the Son, disclosing to us in these things, a most sacred mystery. Come, therefore, O Jesus Christ, minister of our spiritual circumcision, touch my lips, take away my iniquity, purge my affections, illuminate my mind, eliminate my imperfections, move my tongue and make my speech and action such that, for the glory of Thy Name, it may burst forth with the burning heat of Thy charity, mixed with the flame of Thy piety. Grant that I might taste the great sweetness of Thy Name not merely on my lips, but even more that I might find refreshment and delight from it in my interior soul. For just as water gushing forth from a fountain forms at first a gentle and narrow stream that murmurs softly and sweetly, but later grows into a broad and deep river, so also the Name of Jesus seems at first to be a small sound, a phrase easily spoken, but is at the same time pregnant with meaning and overflows with a superabundance of ineffable grace. All that God has ordained for the salvation of mankind is encompassed and comprehended in the Name of Jesus. The Name is variously

translated by Saint Jerome as “Savior”, “Deliverer”, “Benefactor”, “Salvation” and “He who saves us from sin, delivers us from evil and confers on us both grace and an abundance of glory”. He is proclaimed “Savior” first of all because it is He who saves us from sin: as the angel declared unto Joseph (Matt. 2): “*and His Name shall be called Jesus, and He shall save His people from their sins*”. Second, He is so proclaimed because He frees us from our enemies to whom we are subject; as Zaccharias (Luke 1) says: “*He saves us from our enemies and from the hand of those who hate us*”. Third, He is called the “fullness of salvation” because He confers on us grace. Thus it is that David, who had lost that salvation by sinning, says in Psalm 51: “*give us the joy of Thy salvation*”. Fourth, He is called “Salvator” because of the abundance of His glory, and hence Jacob says in Genesis (49): “*I await thy salvation O Lord*”, which is to say, the glory already promised. All this and much more that is lofty and stupendous is encompassed mysteriously in the blessed Name of Jesus.

Because of its great excellence, this Name was first revealed by the Father; Second, it was prefigured many times in the Old Testament; Third, it was spoken forth by the prophets; Fourth, it was announced by the Angel Gabriel; Fifth, it was revealed to the Virgin; Sixth, it was proclaimed by the Apostles, and seventh, it is venerated and adored by all creation.

Truly this Name was first given forth by the Father, for the entire Trinity was written in the book of life in the beginning and for all eternity. And indeed, who else would dare to impose a Name on the Eternal Word unless it were God the Father Himself? Certainly He who settled the Name of Jesus on the Eternal Word acknowledges this when He says in Isaiah 45: “*I the Lord who calls forth thy Name*”, and again in the same place: “*I have called forth thy Name*”. Also in Isaiah 62 God says: “*and thou shalt be called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord shall name*”. Indeed, this Name was given Him from the beginning of time, when as the Apostle says in Romans 2: “*the Son of God was predestined in excellence*”. In the same vein Isaiah says in Chapter 63: “*O Lord, everlasting is Thy Name*”, and again elsewhere: “*may Thy Name be blessed forever, which Name was from eternity, before the sun shone forth*”. Even more is written about this Name in the book of life, concerning which book Moses said in Exodus 32: “*either deliver the people from this evil, or if Thou canst not, strike me out of the book of life that Thou hast written*”. Now the Lord said to the Apostle in Luke 10: “*rejoice, because thy name is written in heaven*”; and Daniel (12) saw that in this book of life are written all the names of the elect that are to be revealed on the Day of Judgment. And on the top of this book, as well as on the foreheads of all the saved, is placed this Name of Jesus, for the Lord said, speaking through the prophet: “*on top of the book it is written of me*”.

Second, the Name of Jesus is prefigured many times in the Old Testament. Indeed there were many Jesuses in Judea, who as Saint Bernard said, anteceded the real Jesus. But these prefigured names were empty of glory, for they did not shine forth; they did not nourish, nor did they heal. The Synagogue was at that time laboring in darkness, hungry, unable to be healed, unable to be satiated, until she knew Jesus to rule over Jacob and over all the world. Indeed, we

read of three Jesuses that came to Israel. First of all there was Jesus, son of Nun, or Josue, and he is called “Savior” because he led the Jews out of their exile in the desert and apportioned up to them the promised land. Second, there was Jesus, son of Josedech, and he is called “Savior” because he was a most holy priest and he rebuilt the temple where he officiated. Zacharias (3) spoke of this saying “*the Lord shewed me Jesus the high priest*”. Third, there was Jesus, the son of Syrach; he was a prophet, priest and most wise teacher, whence it is said of him in Ecclesiasticus (5) that “*he renewed Wisdom from his heart*”. But how very great is the difference between these prefigured Jesuses, and the real Jesus! The first Jesus, that is Joshua, having broken and dispersed the seven kings of Canaan, led the children of Israel into the Promised Land; but our Jesus, having broken the powers of hell led all the saints into eternal glory. Second: Jesus, son of Joshua, rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem even more gloriously than the initial one built by Solomon, as it says in Haggai 2, and which temple is also a prefiguring of Christ, but our sweet Jesus rebuilt the temple in grace and in truth—verily rebuilding a nature which was inclined to ruin, one which in fact was (by original sin) brought to ruin, and in this rebuilding he made a most complete holocaust of his body and of his heart. The third Jesus was a prophet, a priest renewing Wisdom from his heart rather than from his own strength. Over and above this he taught in many obscure words, symbols and figures of the Old Testament. But our loving Jesus was a prophet great in works and in speech, explaining the symbols and figures, clarifying what is obscure, and also renewing Wisdom in the New Testament. Moreover he teaches the doctrines of the Father and the Holy Spirit as one having power, and not like the Scribes and Pharisees. Indeed, He was the priest of priests, as the prophet says: “*Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek*”. From all this you can clearly see that these Jesuses were not the true Jesus. Nor do we preach about their name when we announce and extol the Name of Jesus, for we preach Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who is the true Savior of the world. Just as the day-star goes before the sun, as darkness goes before light, as heralds go before a king, so do these figures go before the mystical Truth. These aforesaid Jesuses were sent forth like the staff of Hilesius (the servant of Elijah), going before the prophet to bring the dead to life (Kings). Nor were these Jesuses able to give meaning to their own names, for their names were empty of true salvation. And just as the staff of Hilesius, when it was laid upon the dead person, failed to resuscitate him until the man who sent the staff came down himself, so also it was not until the true Jesus who had sent these other Jesuses before Him, assumed our nature and proving Himself to be the real Jesus by saving His people from their sins that there was life—not as before which is only an image empty of salvation.

But listen to what He did. Whence came our voice and feeling and return of life back to us as Saint Bernard asks. The prophet Jesus, powerful in action and in speech, descending from the mountain on high somewhat like Elijah from Mount Carmel, deigned to visit the dead human race, which was dust and ashes; deigned to abase Himself, and to lie over mankind as Elijah lay over the dead body; to place Himself on the same footing as the least; to impart the light of His eyes to the blind; to loosen the mouth of the dead with the kiss of his His own mouth; to

strengthen human weakness with the strength of His hands; to replenish with His breath the spirit of man which was dead. O what a delight it is to think on these things! How wonderfully my very bowels are replenished! How satiated is my heart with spiritual sweetness! My very bones burst forth in praise.

Now the boy that Elijah lay on “gasped” seven times, which “gasping” is recapitulated in the Church which seven times each day (in the Divine Office) gives praise to the Savior. And you, O sinner will also gasp seven times if you conform and return your five exterior senses and two interior senses to the inspiration of the prophesy of Jesus—rejoicing and singing “*my heart and my flesh exult in the living God*”.

The coming of Jesus was foretold on three occasions in the past. Thus in Habakkuk (3) it says “*I will rejoice in the Lord: and I will joy in God my Jesus*”. Also in Esdras (4), admittedly non-canonical, God says “*and it shall come to pass after many years that My Son Jesus shall be killed and the world shall be converted*”. Lastly the Sybil Erithrea pronounced the Name of Jesus in a wondrous manner as Saint Augustine tells us in *De Civitate Dei* (lib.18, c.23) where he speaks of the Sybillian verses concerning the last end of the world, which verses had been translated from Greek into Latin. Now the translation, because of the rhythm of the verses, was not able to conform in all things to the original—and this was especially true of the first letters of the lines. If however we take the first letters of all the lines in the original Greek, they spell out “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior”.

Fourth, this Name of Jesus was announced by the angel—we read in Luke 1 that the Angel Gabriel said to Mary “*do not be afraid, Mary, thou hast found grace with God*”, that is to say, that very thing which Eve had lost; “*behold thou wilt conceive in the womb*”, which is to say, you will receive Him completely in yourself; “*and thou shalt bring forth a son and thou shalt call His Name Jesus*”, from which it is clear that Jesus is his personal Name and Christ is a title or surname. It is as if the angel said “*thou art that soul, so full of grace, on which account it was conceded to thee by God that thou shouldst give to the world the Savior, and that thou shouldst announce to the whole world, before all men and all women, the saving and glorious Name of Jesus. Hence it is that in the second chapter of Luke it says: “and His Name was called Jesus, which (He) was called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb*”—and hence it is that this Word is the appropriate theme for the Feast Day of the Circumcision.

Fifth, the Name was revealed to the world by the Virgin, and over and above this, by her holy husband Joseph—for only these two were given this duty by God through an angel, the duty of naming Christ Jesus the Son of God. Concerning the Virgin, Scriptural authority has already been given above. Concerning Joseph, we read in Matthew 2 that the angel said to him: “*do not fear to accept Mary for thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus*”. These two, Joseph and Mary, first revealed to us on the day of His Circumcision, that He who had been born was Jesus, that is, the Savior of the world; and concerning the manner in which this Name was, imposed Isaiah (55)

“and the Lord shall be named for an everlasting sign that shall not be taken away”—that is to say, from those that believe in Him.

Sixth, this Name was taught by the Apostles to the entire world, starting first in Judea as is written in Acts 5: *“and every day they ceased not in the temple, and from house to house, to teach and preach Christ Jesus”*. See then, how sweet the Gospel of Christ is—from whence it comes about that Jesus is the Savior.

He takes away all sin, He who mixes together what is useful with what is sweet.

And from Judea the Apostles went to Greece, and from there finally to Italy, and in this we see mystically fulfilled all that Pilate wrote in the triumphal title placed on the cross: *“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews”* which title was written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin. In this way the Apostles taught the glory of the Name of Jesus in all languages, fulfilling the words of the prophet Isaiah (18): *“the sound of them shall go out into all the lands”*. And what else can this be than the preaching of this *Name which is above all names*, as that vessel of election Saint Paul teaches. For Paul is like the holy candelabrum of the Apocalypse over which this Name shines like a bright star, its brilliance illuminating the entire world—as God says in Acts 9: *“for this man is to Me a vessel of election to carry My Name before the gentiles, and before the kings and the children of Israel”*. Indeed, how greatly did Paul show his own glory when he said *“for I judged not myself to know anything among you but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”*.

Seventh, truly this Name is venerated and adored by all creation. Indeed, does not every knee bend before this Name, and do not people even today perform miracles through this same Name? This is why Origen says: *“the Name of Jesus is a glorious Name and worthy of all worship”*. It seems reasonable then, and certainly it is not improper to say and to believe with a pious devotion, that when St. Paul was caught up into paradise—as he himself testifies in 2 Cor. 12, and *“heard secret words which it is not granted to man to utter”*, that he then learnt perfectly in just what manner the Name of Jesus is adored by all—for in the state of rapture the meaning of *“to hear”* is the same as *“to see”* or *“to learn”*.

Now we can find evidence for the above statement on three planes, for the knowledge of God is threefold. First, by nature; second by grace; and third through glory. The first is by nature, for the human intellect is able to know God by nature as the philosophers do—for according to Boethius, the knowledge of God is by nature inborn in all men. Second, we can know God by grace—that is by the living faith after the fashion of the faithful who know Him in this life. Third, we may know Him by glory, which is to see God in His Essence as the blessed see Him in heaven. It is of course impossible for us to achieve this state during our pilgrimage in this world unless divine and supernatural power operates miraculously to elevate us to it, as it did with the Blessed Paul—for this is the third heaven into which Paul was raised up in so far as he saw the Divine Essence. Saint Augustine (*De Videndo Deum*) says that Paul heard hidden words because he was enlightened and instructed in such high mysteries that it was not permitted that

he should speak of them to men—for the human tongue was not fit to explain, nor the human nature able to comprehend those things which pertain to the Spirit of God. Now in the vision discussed above, we can piously meditate that Paul saw the most great glory of God which is contained in the glory of God the father. *“In the highest heavens, above all principalities and powers and virtues and dominions, and above every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world which is to come. And all things He made subject under His feet”* as written in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians 1.

Now when Paul saw God in such sublime glory, being spiritually inflamed and bursting with love, he gave forth with a loud cry saying “Jesus my love!”. On hearing this Name cried out, all the saints in heaven bowed down and adored Jesus in His Name. Paul understood that the bowing down was before the Name of Jesus because before this Name all the spirits in hell bend their knee, and we, as wayfarers in this world have a similar obligation. Returning to our subject however, and recalling what we have said above, Paul, instructed with the Spirit of God, writes universally concerning the Name in his letter to the Philippians 2 saying: *“at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, on earth and under the earth”*. On heaven through glory, on earth through grace and in hell through eternal justice. For the Name of Jesus is poured forth like oil, not only perfuming heaven, but also flooding the earth and even seeping down into hell. Herein it is that the Church wishes all to be satiated, stating in *De Immunitate Ecclesia* (in the sixth chapter entitled “holiness is appropriate to the house of the Lord”) that:

1. This Name is above all names and no other Name is given to man in which he should place his trust for salvation—the Name being referred to is clearly that of Jesus Christ who saves His people from their sins.
2. It is appropriate for the members of the Church, on hearing this Name, to publicly demonstrate some sign of spiritual reverence. If one does not genuflect, it is because the command is generally fulfilled in an inward manner (especially when one partakes of the sacred mystery of the Mass), that is to say that as often as this glorious Name is mentioned, the head is bowed—which is as it were, a bending of the knee in one’s heart. And it is most useful that this devotion be observed with fervor, and that we increase this fervor, because the Name of Jesus should always be contemplated in a most loving manner. Just as the sun with its power and splendor and warmth stimulates growth and gives life to material things, and thus serves all of creation, so also does the Name of Jesus initiate and sustain the life of grace in those wandering through the pilgrimage of this world. This is why Zaccharias (6) says: *“the rising sun (Oriens) is His name”*—that is to say, like the sun rising in the east. And again, this is why Psalm 18 says: *“He has set His tabernacle in the sun”*—that is in the mystical sun which is radiating faithfully the tabernacle of His Name. We distinguish therefore the flames of this burning Name in twelve different rays, so that we can discuss the subject under twelve chapter headings—like the twelve Apostles. We hope to expound the fullness of the meaning of these rays of the Name of Jesus to the faithful so that—as it says in Ecclesiasticus 42: *“the light of the sun is seen by all”*.

SECTION I

THE FOUR PRINCIPAL RAYS: THE “POWERS” OF THE NAME OF GOD, OUR JESUS CHRIST, THAT REACH OUT TO THOSE IN NEED

The Name of Jesus has four principal rays that represent its four powers, like beams of strength, for the Name by its very nature is opposed to four evils. First it is opposed to sin; second, to strife; third, to concupiscence; and fourth to affliction. The Name of Jesus is opposed to these four evils because first of all, it is the refuge of sinners; second, it is a standard (flag) in battle; third, it is a remedy for those who are spiritually or physically sick; and fourth, it is a solace to sufferers.

Chapter 1

*Concerning the First Ray of the Name of Jesus in which is clearly demonstrated
how great is the mercy of this Name extended towards sinners.*

First of all, this Name is a refuge of sinners, that is to say, against the evil of sin—for who is the sinner that does not fear this powerful Name? Who is it that does not quake before the Name of divine anger, and who is not terrified before the Name of the furious God, and who is it that does not tremble when he hears the Name of the God of vengeance? Yet, behold how the Name of Jesus is a sweet refuge into which is poured forth the power and the majesty of God, for it is sweet with piety and shows forth the great mercy of God. Formerly, in the Old Testament, in the law of fear, it was a terrible Name, whence Isaiah says (30): “*behold, the Name of God cometh from afar, His wrath burneth and is heavy to bear*”. See how terrible was the Name of God in those times, giving forth fire and wrath and heavy burdens that scourged and scalded and overburdened us; but now it has been tempered in the fountain of mercy and piety, that is to say, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, through our most loving Jesus Christ. Now this fire is changed and cooled; the wrath is sweetened and the burden lightened. Just as the word *filius* can be said to be derived from *philos*—which means love—so also is the immense love of God made clearly manifest to us in the New Testament. Thus it is that the Angel said to Mary in Luke 1: “*the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee, and therefore also the Holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God*”. O most loving and most gracious Name! O Holy Name! O Pious Name, full of sweetness, so greatly desired by the ancient fathers, so anxiously awaited and with such prolonged weariness, called on with so much yearning and with so many tears of desire! But at last the time of grace has mercifully arrived—that time which the prophet desired when he said: “*say to my soul: I am thy salvation*”. It is almost as if the prophet said: O Lord thou hast said enough, ‘*for thus spoke the*

Lord, God of hosts, the God of vengeance, our just God". It is as if he said: I beseech Thee O Lord, hide Thy Name of power from us; let us not hear Thy Name of vengeance; may Thy Name of justice not be spoken;—rather give us Thy Name of mercy. And now "*the Name of Jesus rings in my ears, because now Thy voice is sweet, and truly Thy face is beautiful*". Behold, what a sweet solace is the Name of Jesus! Without this Name both the ancient fathers' and even the men of the New Testament hoped in vain to find salvation. It is because of this that in Matthew 2 "*the angel said to Joseph, thou shalt call His Name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins*". And again, Peter says in Acts 10: "*to Him all the prophets give testimony, that by His Name all receive remission of sins, who believe in Him*", that is to say, believe with faith operating through love. And again, in 1 John 2 it says: "*I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His Name's sake*", and in Acts 4 Peter says: "*there is no other Name under heaven given to men, whereby we might be saved*".

Now this Name of Jesus is prefigured in Exodus 28 by the Tetragrammaton. Nicholas of Lyra in his gloss on this passage says that the sixth ornament of the high priest was a plate of purest gold hanging over his forehead and tied with a violet string, and on this plate was written the Name of God—Tetragrammaton. This ornament was somewhat like a crown, but an imperfect crown, for according to Josephus and Rabbi Solomonem, it passed from ear to ear over the forehead forming a semicircle; however, if one ignored the back part of the head it appeared to be made like a perfect crown. Now God instructed Moses that, across this ornament "*thou shalt grave with engraver's work HOLY TO THE LORD*", which is according to Nicholas of Lyra, the Name of God—Tetragrammaton. Also, the same author in his *Contra Judaeos* makes the following comment on these words of Jeremiah (23): "*you have perverted the words of the living God, the Lord of hosts*": he says, wherein do we have God? In Hebrew it is expressed by the Tetragrammaton, the Name of God, which signifies the Divine Nature in its intrinsic essence, and without respect to anything external. And if indeed this Name was written on the golden plaque that was placed on the forehead of the high priest when he entered into the Holy of Holies, it was because this signified that no soul could enter into the temple of the kingdom of heaven to make a sacrifice of praise unless he carried the Name of Jesus written on his forehead.

Now this Name is written on the forehead of the soul at the time of Baptism. Though it can be washed away by mortal sin, it is again written on the forehead through the power of absolution in confession. Thus it is that it says in Apocalypse 3: "*and I shall write on him the Name of my God*", for indeed, that Name is only given to one whose nature the Name expresses. This is shown from Genesis 2 where Adam named all things because he knew the nature of all things. The Name therefore is only written on the forehead of sinners when by true contrition they merit it, in order that by means of this Name they might be raised to the true knowledge of Christ. And this is what the Apostle implies when he says in 2 Cor. 3: "*Ye are our letter*", that is, the Epistle of Jesus Christ "*written on the fleshy tables of the heart*". From all this we can understand that a person who has profaned himself with the guilt of sin, has in the last analysis, no power to help himself, and no way to be forgiven, except by means of a contrite heart. If

however he invokes this Name of Jesus in his heart, and murmurs this Name in his mouth, it follows that the remission of all his sins occurs, for as the prophet Joel (II) testifies: *“whoever invokes the Name of God shall be saved”*. However, he must invoke it with a pure heart that is full of devotion, and not just with polluted lips, for such a real invocation includes in it true contrition. Now if true contrition is necessary for salvation, and if invoking the Name of God reflects this contrition, then the words of the prophet Joel are indeed most important. Certainly invoking the Name in the heart and with the lips and in the proper frame of mind greatly increases the guarantee of salvation. However, it is possible for a person to fall into sin unexpectedly, or to be exposed to the danger of sin. Hence it is necessary to invoke the Name of Jesus frequently as a protection, and then, no matter what ill fortune the heart falls prey to, the Name of Jesus which is the Name of Salvation comes to its help. This is why the Apostle says in his letter to the Colossians 3: *“all whatsoever you do, in word or in work, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ”*. Moreover, experience clearly teaches us that just as one who frequently invokes the devil from out of an evil heart, when something unexpected happens to him, calls upon the devil with his lips—so also it happens that a person who is in the habit of invoking the Name of Jesus, when he stumbles, will also quickly pronounce with his mouth this sacred Name. God is our witness to this, for he says in Matthew 12: *“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of a good treasure bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of an evil treasure bringeth forth evil things”*. In all of the sacred Scriptures, and throughout the entire Gospels, no one who invoked the Name of Jesus was ever cast down. And now we pass on to the second ray.

Chapter 2

*Concerning the second Ray of the Name of Jesus: that in no matter what battle
a devout man undertakes for himself the Name of Jesus triumphs.*

The Name of Jesus is a standard in battle, that is to say, in the fight against evil. For even though the contempt of Pharaoh and his like should rise to the point of being scandalous, even then, if we but recollect the Name of Jesus, it is to fight with confidence—for this Name subjects all the fury of our enemies to us. Truly we have three adversaries in this life; the devil, the flesh and the world. First of all the devil is our adversary because when anyone seeks and tries to abandon a life of depravity, and to change himself into a new man, the devil opposes him with all his strength and cunning. Hence it says in Ecclesiastes 2: *“son, when thou comest to the service of God, stand in justice and in fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation”*. Elsewhere St. Gregory says that to draw near to the Savior is to draw near to temptation, for the light of righteousness follows upon the shadow of temptation. In the same manner, should the devil rise up against you, do not be afraid, but raise up against him the banner of salvation which is Jesus, and invoke His Name. Listen and have faith in what God says in the Gospel of St. Matthew: *“In my Name devils are cast out”*; and this power He gave to his disciples saying in Matthew 10: *“cast out devils”*.

Now the disciples found this to be true, for it says in Luke 10: “*and the seventy-two returned with joy saying: Lord, the devils also are subject to us in Thy Name*”. And note well Christ’s response: “*I saw Satan falling from heaven like lightning*”—which is as if He said: do not be surprised if the devils are afraid of My name, and are cast down through the power of My Name, for after all, Satan and all his angels were ejected from heaven by the strength of this Name and fell like lightning. Hence, we read in Apocalypse 12 that after the battle in heaven between Saint Michael and the dragon, and after the dragon had been defeated and sent into eternal punishment, all the saints and angels in heaven rejoiced and cried out saying “*now is come salvation and strength*”, that is, the power of salvation through the Name of Jesus, “*and the power of His Christ*”, which is amply discussed in the book *De Circumcisione Domini*. Nor should we be surprised if by this Name demons are cast out, for truly, they cannot stand its power and its terror, for as Jeremiah (10) says: “*Thou art great*” (that is to say, Lord Jesus), “*and great is Thy Name in might*”. And again, the prophet says in Psalm 110: “*holy and terrible is Thy Name*”, holy that is, to the good angels and to just men, but terrible to demons and to impious souls. And this can be demonstrated from an example.

When Saint Bernard Papius of Modiolone was visiting in this area, a certain person whose wife was under the influence of an evil spirit brought her to the saint and the devil began to speak to him from out of her mouth saying: “do not drive me out from this little old lady”. To this the servant of God replied: “not I Bernard, but our Lord Jesus Christ will drive you out!” after which he began to pour forth in prayer. Then the evil spirit said: “no matter how willing I am to leave this woman”, for he was greatly vexed with her, “it is not possible, for the great God does not wish it”. The saint said to him: “and who is the great God?”, to which he answered “Jesus of Nazareth”. To this the man of God asked: “Have you ever seen Him?” and the evil one answered: “even so”. So he asked him where and he answered: “in glory”. The Saint asked: “were you then in glory?” to which the devil answered: “certainly”. The saint then asked “In what manner did you forsake this glory?” and the evil one answered: “with Lucifer many of us fell”. Now all this was spoken from out of the mouth of the little old lady with a sorrowful voice, but loud enough for all to hear. The saint then asked: “can you ever gain back that glory?” to which the evil one answered laughing in a strange way: “it is too late for that”. There followed an argument between the saint and the evil spirit, after which the devil departed from her. But as soon as Saint Bernard had left and gone a short distance, the evil one returned into the old woman and her husband ran after the saint and informed him what had happened. The saint then gave him a talisman, a folded piece of paper on which was written “In the Name of God, Jesus Christ, I admonish you, O devil, never to presume to disturb this woman again” and this she hung around her neck. And when this had been done, the devil made no further attempt to bother her.

Our second adversary is the flesh, for it is full of filth and evil, whence Saint Bernard says in his fifteenth sermon on the Song of Songs: “Does one of us feel sad? Let the Name of Jesus come into his heart, from there let it spring to his mouth, so that shining like the dawn it may

dispel all darkness and make a cloudless sky. Does someone fall into sin? Does his despair even urge him to suicide? Let him but invoke this life-giving Name and his will to live will be at once renewed. The hardness of heart that is our common experience, the apathy bred of indolence, bitterness of mind, repugnance for the things of the spirit—have they ever failed to yield in presence of that Saving Name? The tears dammed up by the barrier of our pride—how have they not burst forth again with sweeter abundance at the thought of Jesus' Name? And where is the man, who, terrified and trembling before impending peril, has not been suddenly filled with courage and rid of fear by calling on the strength of that Name? Where is the man who, tossed on the rolling seas of doubt, did not quickly find certitude by recourse to the clarity of Jesus' Name? Was ever a man so discouraged, so beaten down by afflictions, to whom the sound of this Name did not bring new resolve? In short, for all the ills and disorders to which flesh is heir, this Name is medicine. For proof we have no less than His own promise: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me". Nothing so curbs the onset of anger, so allays the upsurge of pride. It cures the wound of envy, controls unbridled extravagance and quenches the flame of lust; it cools the thirst of covetousness and banishes the itch of unclean desire. For when I name Jesus, I set before me a man who is meek and humble of heart, kind, prudent, chaste, merciful, flawlessly upright and holy in the eyes of all; and this same man is the all-powerful God whose way of life heals me, whose support is my strength. All these re-echo for me at the hearing of Jesus' Name. Because He is man I strive to imitate Him; because of His divine power, I lean upon Him. The examples of His human life I gather like medicinal herbs; with the aid of His power I blend them, and the result is a compound like no pharmacist can produce. Hidden as in a vase is this Name of Jesus. You, my soul, possess a salutary remedy against which no spiritual illness can hold out".

Third, the world is an adversary. When you are, by the judgment of God, allowed to be shipwrecked on the seas, or to fall into similar dangers, and the buffs of your enemies rush against you like threatening waves; when you are a victim of treachery, or to the terrors of thunder and lightning; when calamities strike, such as earthquake, or the destruction of one's home as by an unexpected conflagration, or if anything of a similar nature occurs, invoke the Name of Salvation. Quickly call upon the Name of Jesus with your lips and in your heart. Have hope in the assistance of the Almighty, for He says in Psalm 90: "*he shall cry to me and I will hear him. I am with him in tribulation; I will deliver him and I will glorify him*". And again, our Lord tells us through His prophet: "*I will protect him because he knows My Name*". Finally, it says in Proverbs 18: "*the Name of the Lord is a strong tower, the just runneth to it and shall be exalted*", which is to say that one who invokes the Name will never be harmed by the evils and calamities discussed above.

Chapter 3

Concerning the third ray of the Name of Jesus: when burdened with the problems of illness, devotion to the Name of Jesus is productive of health.

Third, the Name of Jesus is a remedy against our infirmities, that is to say, against the evils of concupiscence. For in man, condemned to death by sin, and saved at such great cost, concupiscence persists as a morbid and sickly tendency. Therefore let us turn to the Name of Jesus, of which Peter Ravennas says: this is the Name that gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, the ability to walk and even to run to those who are lame, speech to the mute, life to the dead, and even allows us to fly from and escape from the power that the devil has over the prison of the body. Hence, should you have any illness, or should any disease threaten your health, do not despair, but recall to mind the invocation of the Name of Jesus. This is true even though it often happens that one cannot apply a natural remedy for a given illness, either because we lack it, or because we are ignorant of the nature of the disease, or because there is no natural way to cure the illness in question. We are assured of this by God himself in the last chapter of the Gospel of Saint Mark where He says: “and this sign shall follow them that believe: *In My Name they shall cast out devils: they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay their hands upon the sick and they shall recover*”.

Do not confuse the invocation of the Name with those inane and insane and entirely erroneous incantations used by some who claim to be invoking the Name of God but who are in fact invoking the devil and using his incantations. In such formulas are interpolated unknown words and in them are always to be found mendacious things. Even though the Pater Noster or Ave Maria is added to disguise them, and even though by similar means they may appear as something noble, nevertheless—it is permitted by the justice of God—you must remember that the devil can with his craftiness, make a man or a child sick, and then through erroneous and impious incantations make him well in body. The devil however, in doing this, fastens onto the soul and heart of such a person the mortal sin of blasphemy and heresy. Such a situation is clearly demonstrated to us in the legend of B. Bartholomeus. Also David told us of this possibility in Psalm 39 saying: “*blessed is the man whose trust is in the Name of the Lord: and who has not had regard to vanities and lying follies*”. How very often I have heard from trustworthy sources, that even in our own times, when the Word of God is mentioned with the imposition of hands upon the sick, they are cured when the Holy Name of Jesus Christ is invoked. Hence it is that the prophet says in Psalm 105: “*He saved them because of His Name, that His power might be known*”, and what is even more remarkable, even sinners and pagans, when they invoke this Name, are able to perform miracles and are manifestly able to bring about the healing of the sick. Blessed Dionysius the Aeropagite gives us an example of this. It is narrated that when he was travelling with Saint Paul, they came across a certain blind man, and that Dionysius said to the Apostle, “if you say to this blind man, ‘in the Name of God you are

cured’, and he sees, then I shall believe at once. But you must not use magic words, for I shall prescribe the form of the prayer that you shall use—namely ‘In the Name of Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin, crucified and died, who was resurrected and ascended into heaven, receive your sight’”. In order that he might remove all mistrust on Dionysius’ part, Paul answered him saying that he wished for Dionysius to say the words. So Dionysius spoke these words to the blind man that he might see, and at once his eyes were opened. Immediately Dionysius confessed his belief in Our Lord, Jesus Christ. Thus we see that even when this man was a sinner and an unbeliever, he was able to cure the blind man. Both then, and in our own times many have experienced similar things, for it is allowed to sinners to verify personally what is written in Psalm 102: “*He shall save thee because of His Name, that His power might be manifest*”.

It is however to be noted that four things are required if a person is to obtain what he requests through the power of the Holy Name. First that he ask for himself; second, that whatever he asks be necessary for salvation; third, that he ask in a pious manner; and fourth, that he ask with perseverance—and all these things concurrently. If he asks in this manner, he will always be granted his request.

First, and I repeat it, a person must ask for himself, for only then is he assured of being heard. No one is able to merit eternal life through the worthiness of another, for it follows reason that things pertaining to the eternal life cannot be merited through the efforts of others. Hence, when a man asks for someone else, he is not always heard. As Saint Jerome says in his commentary of Jeremiah: in vain does a person ask for someone else what that other person should ask for himself. Saint Augustine also tells us in his commentary on John that all the faithful are heard when they ask for themselves, but not when they ask for all their friends and their enemies. When God says in John 16: “*if you ask the father in My Name, He will give it*”, He does not say give it to anyone, but He says “*dabit vobis*”, which is to say, “*he will give it to you*”; and even further, with regard to this, God says in Jeremiah 7: “*do not thou pray for this people, nor take to thee praise and supplication for them, and do not oppose me, for I will not hear thee*”. A gloss on this passage explains that those who prayed were not heard by God for two reasons: first, their absolute and persistent heresy, and second, their complete impenitence of heart.

Second, when God says, as quoted above, “*that which you ask the Father in My Name, He will give it to you*”, it is implied that that which is asked should be necessary for salvation. Thus Rabanus in his commentary on Matthew says: no matter how often you ask the Father, He will not hear you if what you ask for is something that hinders your salvation. Or again, He may not seem to hear you because the answer to your petition is delayed to some future time, either so that you might develop greater yearning, or so that the joy which he withholds might be the more completely apprehended.

Third, it is necessary to ask with piety. This phrase implies all the attitudes which are necessary on the part of one that prays—in so far as he prays at all. Namely, he should pray with

faith, with humility, and with fervor. First, he must pray with faith and confidence, for as B. Jacobus says: ask with faith and without hesitation. Second, he must pray with humility, for it says in Psalm 101: *“he has regard to the prayer of the humble and he has not despised their petitions”*. Third, he should pray fervently, for as Saint Augustine says: greater worth follows prayer when it is preceded with a fervent disposition.

As we said four paragraphs above, four things were required if a person is to obtain what he requests through the power of the Holy Name. The last and fourth is that he should pray with perseverance. This is taught us by God in the parable in Luke 11, for He says: *“which of you shall have a friend and shall go to him in the middle of the night and say to him: ‘friend, lend me three loaves, for a friend of mine has just come to me from a journey and I have nothing to set before him’. And he from within should answer and say, ‘do not disturb me; the door is now shut, and my children and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give to thee’. I say to you, although he will not get up and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will get up and give him all he needs. And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you, for everyone who asks receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened”*.

Chapter 4

Concerning the fourth Ray of the Name of Jesus: how he who with devotion applies himself to the repetition of this Name is filled with a wonderful joy and Happiness.

Fourth, the Name of Jesus is truly a consolation to the afflicted and a protection against the evils of suffering and concupiscence. No matter what, God will not allow his servants to succumb to temptation, for in no way will He allow them to be conquered by their afflictions. There is no despair or forgetfulness in the sweet Name of Jesus if only we call upon it with the greatest possible intensity. This is why God says in Matthew V as a consolation to the patient: *“blessed are you when men reproach you and persecute you, and, speaking falsely, say all manner of evil against you for my sake. Rejoice and exult, for your reward is great in heaven”*.

Yes indeed, for those souls inflamed with love, the Name of Jesus is a happiness beyond measure, for the Name of Jesus alone can reveal the intoxicating nature of His love and express the passionate longing of His heart. One should seek no other reward. Is not a man often happy to expose himself to danger for a friend, even though he knows him to be subject to the impermanence of his mortal nature? How much more so should we do this for God, our Jesus, who is immortal and who, as everyone knows, was so glad to suffer for us. It was because of this fact that Paul said in Acts XXI: *“I am ready, not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the Name of Christ Jesus”*, and it was because of this that the Apostles in Acts V *“went rejoicing before the council because they were worthy of being persecuted for the Name of Jesus”*. Saint Augustine says that the Name of God, when it is written in the hearts of the just,

bestows on them such great courage that they endure patiently and avoid with great prudence, all the attacks of the evil one. When the Blessed Agatha Judici was threatened with sharp torments, her soul being unconquered, she said: if you do to me the things that you threaten, only let the Name of Jesus be heard, and the tortures will be mild; and if you attack me with fire, the angels will administer to me with the saving dew of heaven. Because of the power of this Name, the holy martyrs triumphed over all their torments, whence the prophet says in Psalm XLIII: *“through Thy Name we will despise them that rise up against us”*, and again in Psalm CXXIII: *“our help is in the Name of God who made heaven and earth”*, which is to say that this Name is so powerful that in our torments it consoles and assists us. Nor is it to be wondered at that the martyrs sustained so much suffering with so much joy when it was this Name that supported them. Thus it is that the Apostle says in his letter to the Philippians II: *“it is God who of His good pleasure works in you both the will and the performance”*, and that God Himself tells the patient soul in Apocalypse II: *“thou hast patience and hast endured for My Name, and hast not grown weary”*.

Yes, he who sings out loudly and with passion the Name of Jesus perseveres on account of this Name. He can patiently sustain all persecution because of this holy tradition of our most excellent Christian religion, for as I Peter IV says: *“let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief or slanderer, or as in coveting what belongs to others, but, if he suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God under this Name”*. And lest he not merit the advantage of the virtue of patience, or even not be able to speak of it unless he perseveres to the very end, John adds: *“do not grow weary”*. Let no one become discouraged, either on account of the difficulty of the effort, or because of some hidden passion of the soul, or because he is persecuted on account of his love of justice by the enemy. Let him return again to his initial undertaking, for it says in Leviticus III that an animal with a tail should be grasped and offered up, in which statement it is mystically implied that a work is not able to be pleasing to God unless it is carried through to the very end.

SECTION II

THE NEXT FOUR RAYS: HOW THE NAME OF JESUS IS OF GREAT ASSISTANCE TO THOSE WHO WOULD BE HOLY

In this second section we shall show how the Name of Jesus is of great assistance to those who would sanctify their lives, for if it is as valuable in fighting evil as has been shown above, it must be equally powerful in producing good. Indeed, it should produce this effect in four principal ways. First, in the heart; second, in the mouth; third in actions; and fourth in all other things

combined. And this is so because the Name of Jesus is the highest distinction of the believer; second, it is the most splendid of all things praised; third, it is the reward of our labors; and fourth, it is the help of those in need.

Chapter 1

The Fifth Ray: concerning the wonderful glory and honor that follows all true believers in His Name—that is The Name of Jesus.

First, with respect to the heart, the Name of Jesus is the highest honor of the believer, for through their most loving faith in the Son of God, the Name of Jesus is planted in the hearts of believers. And John testifies to this when he says: *“He gave them the power to be the sons of God—to those that believe in His Name”*. Great indeed is the honor of being a son of God, for as Paul says in Romans 8: *“if we are sons, we are heirs also: heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ”*. A very great foundation then, is the Name of Jesus, making us the sons of God, for it is on this very basis that the entire building (of the Church) is upheld, and the pillars, having been erected, mount up to heaven lasting till the end of time; for the members of the mystical body of Christ are the foundations on which this building is erected. Hence it is that Paul says in 1 Cor. 3: *“for other foundation no one can lay but that which has been laid, which is Jesus Christ”*. For the faith of the Catholic religion consists in the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and in His light, which is the light of the soul, for He is the door of life and the foundation of eternal salvation. If a person does not have this faith, or should he forsake it, he is like one going through the darkness of night without a light, like a blind and lame person walking precipitously along a dangerous path. No matter how eminent a person’s intellectual achievements, he should avoid following a blind leader, a leader whose intellect, cut off from heaven, follows its own path. Such a person is like a man who builds a beautiful and resplendent house, but who ignores the foundation; he is like one who, bypassing the door, enters a house by the roof. The foundation, that is Jesus, who is also the light and the door. It is He who is a guide to those who are lost, and He who demonstrates the light of the faith to all men. This is why men who seek the unknown God come to believe in Him and believe in His coming. The Church is indeed built on the Name of Jesus which is its very foundation, and hence it is the greatest honor to cleave through faith to the Name of Jesus and to become a son of God.

The angel that John speaks of in Apocalypse 9 understood this in refusing to let himself be worshipped, for as John says: *“I threw myself before the feet of the angel to worship him, and he said to me, thou must not do that. I am a fellow servant of thine and of thy brethren who give the testimony of Jesus. Worship God”*. John says: *“I fell down before his feet to worship him”*, not in as much as he was a creature, but rather as an eager servant, with humble submission, honors God his creator. As we know, the angels in the Old Testament allowed man to worship them in a manner now forbidden—for it is clear that he forbade this when he says *“thou must not do that”*.

He goes on further to explain: “*I am a fellow servant*”, that is, with you and like you I am a servant of the same God, Our Lord Jesus Christ. Do not think that the angel says this only with regard to Saint John because of John’s singular holiness and excellence, or even on account of his great eminence. He says this for all men who are servants of Christ, and therefore he adds: “*and of thy bretheren who give testimony of Jesus*”—that is to say, those who with a pure heart confess and testify that Jesus is God and Lord of all the universes and the Redeemer and Savior of man.

Now there are three reasons why the angel forbade John to worship him. First, on account of his worthiness; second, on account of the truth; and third, because of humility. First, I say on account of his worthiness, for the angel knew how John received Christ in joy and exultation, and wished to show this to all mankind. It is as if the angel said that he could see above Him, in the seat of divine majesty, and if it can be said openly, I also see and adore the man-Christ—and hence the angel could not permit a man who believed in Christ to worship him. Second, it is so stated on account of truth: that is to say that when the angels in the Old Testament permitted man to worship them, they were not permitting that which is called worship (*latría*), for this was only capable of being given to God, but rather veneration. And lest the devils should desire to be worshipped,—and indeed they greatly desire this—the angel adds “*adore God*”. The third reason is because of humility with which the angels are thoroughly imbued. This is an attitude that those in the Church who have the highest dignity should adopt, for those that one can say serve with the greatest honor should nevertheless not ascribe to themselves that which belongs to God, or if they do, only to that degree that allows them to better serve and minister to their flocks. Hence it is that Saint Luke says in chapter 23: “*the kings of the gentiles lord it over them, and they who exercise authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. On the contrary, let him who is greatest among you become as the youngest, and him who is chief as the servant. For which is the greater, he who reclines at table, or he who serves? It is not he who reclines? But I am in your midst as he who serves*”. And this is why Peter, the prince of the Apostles and the head of the Church, does not permit Cornelius in Acts X to fall on his knees and to honor him as a servant, but rather says to Cornelius: “*get up, I am myself also a man*”, and he said this that we might know that such humility is to be shown.

Chapter 2

Concerning the sixth Ray of the Name of Jesus: that those who extol and proclaim the singular Name of Jesus who is the Savior, come to fruition in the Word of God.

Second, the repetition of the Name of Jesus is the most wonderful thing that can be advocated, because, by this, as Saint Bernard says, His Word is heard and proclaimed in all its luminous splendor. In what other way can you find the light of God so greatly, so unexpectedly, and so fervently manifested, unless it be in the repetition of the Name of Jesus. With all the brilliance

and sweetness of this Name, God has called us to enter into His wonderful glory—that we might be illuminated and in this light be able to apprehend His glory. As the Apostle says in his letter to the Ephesians 5: “*for you were once in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk then as children of light*”. So also, in like manner, this Name should be extolled and proclaimed, that it might shine forth. It should not be hidden, nor exposed in speech that reflects an evil heart or a polluted tongue, but rather brought forth from a person who is like a vessel of election. Hence God says in Acts 9: “*this man is a chosen vessel to me to carry My Name among the nations and kings and children of Israel*”. “*A chosen vessel*” He says—and is this not a container where the sweetest liquor is kept, a liquor that can be poured forth and imbibed while at the same time it continues to shimmer and glow in the vessel? “*To carry,*” He says, “*My Name*”—this is like the fire lit in the autumn to burn the dry and useless stubble left after harvesting; it is like the risen sun dispelling the darkness of night that covers the acts of thieves that wander about and rifle houses. Thus it was that Paul spoke to the people, like thunder pealing forth; like an overpowering fire; like the burning sun—consuming all perfidy, dispersing error and clarifying the truth, much as a strong fire burns up wax. Truly, the Name of Jesus was spread abroad by voice, by letter, by miracles and by examples, for Paul praised this Name of Jesus continuously. He extolled it in all things, and above all, he extolled it before Kings, before the nations, and to the sons of Israel. The Apostle carried this Name as if it were a torch with which he illuminated his fatherland. He proclaimed it, saying in Romans 13: “*the night is far advanced, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore put aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk becomingly as in the day*”. He showed to all this shining lamp, like the light over the candelabrum—announcing in every place Jesus and His crucifixion. And how greatly did that light shine forth in Paul, blinding the eyes of those who listened as if with wonder and astonishment. Peter describes this in Acts 3: “*like lightning flashing, curing and making strong the crippled limbs of their bodies and illuminating the spiritual blindness of many*”. Did he not dispense fire when he said: “*In the Name of Jesus Christ arise and walk*”? Saint Bernard tells us, both in the source quoted above, and also in his treatise on the Apostle Mark, that “the perfect have extolled it always”—that is to say, the Name of Jesus, “and, God cooperating, the Word having been as it were confirmed, signs follow”,—which signs were truly shown in the Name of Jesus. And how are these signs shown? They are shown by miracles, by the persecution that tyrants imposed upon the faithful, and by those shining lights, who by explaining the scriptures have destroyed the false teachings of heretics—and what is more, it is daily demonstrated in our own sweet meditations and in the frequent illuminations of the elect. Thus it is that the Church, the Bride of Christ, in support of this testimony, rejoices in singing from Psalm 95: “*Lord Thou hast taught me from my youth, and even now I shall pronounce Thy miraculous Name*”—that is to say, invoking it continuously. And the prophet further exhorts us to this, saying: “*sing to the Lord and bless His Name: announce His Salvation from day to day*”—which is to say, constantly invoke the Name of Jesus, our Savior.

Chapter 3

The Seventh Ray of the Name of Jesus: how by the power of this Name, merit is gained in good works.

Third, with respect to our actions, the Name of Jesus is a labor of merit, for by the virtue of this Name, grace and merit are accumulated as is testified to by the Apostle in his first letter to the Corinthians XII: “no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except in the Holy Spirit”. Now, Alex of Ales understands in this passage a triple definition: namely, no one can say Jesus is God in his heart, with his mouth or in his actions unless he does it through the strength of the Holy Spirit. He says “no one” because if anyone is able to bear this most Holy Name worthily, it will inevitably be efficacious in producing in him a worthy life and eternal glory. This is so because all acts that are elicited of the Holy Spirit are worthy of eternal glory. Great indeed then is the richness and treasure with which this most Holy Name of Jesus overflows. Indeed, when the Name of Jesus is continuously praised and glorified, with humble devotion and with sweetness, this hidden treasure is shared and spread abroad in the manner that is recommended in Ecclesiastes 51: “I will praise Thy Name continuously and will extol it in all things”. Saint Chrysostom in commenting on this passage says that it refers to a person who deeply loves and invokes the Name of God repeatedly, and who is, by this invoking, exulted in the most high Lord—that is to say, by the accumulation of merit and the acquisition of graces.

Chapter 4

The eighth Ray of the Name of Jesus: how the lukewarm and spiritually weak through the Name of Jesus are brought back again to fervid charity.

Fourth, to continue our discussion regarding the Name of Jesus, know that it is the help of the infirm, whence Saint Bernard, as quoted above, says: “are not all consoled as often as they recollect the Name of Jesus, which Name impinges upon the mind, and when repeatedly invoked, heals the wounded senses, strengthens the virtues, stirs up good and honest manners, and keeps the affections pure. If you are afflicted with a sluggish mind or an indolent faith, Jesus heals you by exciting fervor, and the Name of Jesus will be always in your heart, and always on your finger tips, because all your emotions and all your actions will be directed towards Jesus. And Jesus Himself invites us to this, saying in the Song of Songs 8: “put me as a seal upon thy heart and as a seal upon thy arm”, for through this Name your tepid heart will be mended and you will have an arm that is both strong and dexterous. I assure you that through the invocation of the Name of Jesus, your actions, should they be depraved will be corrected, and if they are less than perfect, they will be improved; also your senses, which should be your servants, are not only protected from damage and destruction, but should they be injured (by sin) are repaired and healed. Rightly then, my brothers, as Saint Bernard says, is this Name to be invoked by us,

because it is a quick protection against lassitude and against the languor that follows grief; it removes aridity, the fear of isolation, disgust with spiritual reading, agitation of the soul or feelings of tepidity or scrupulosity in our affections. No matter how prolonged the prayers seem; no matter how deep the lassitude of soul, what sweetness this Name brings! When neither the desire for the kingdom of heaven, nor the fear of eternal damnation can free us from or disperse our apathy of soul, if we but retire to a quiet place and invoke the Name of Jesus with love in the depths of our heart, we will quickly be suffused with joy, and an eagerness so great will return, that tongue cannot express it, nor words in sermons portray it, for it transcends the acuteness of human understanding and the ability of all the senses taken together. The mind is, as it were, flooded with a certain kind of radiating light. One becomes inebriated with that special liquor of which we have previously spoken. So full of joy is the mind—as if in a split second—if it is still in time at all—that it can prefer nothing else. It fills the soul with such sweetness, with so many benefits, and with such a heavenly flavor, that no one can describe it. Now I hold that this is because Jesus, when one invokes His Name with a deep and humble love, recalling it secretly and silently (in one's heart), causes the apathy and sadness to disappear and to be replaced with joy. This is illustrated by the story of Lazarus. When Jesus did not come at his death, the house was filled with sadness—but behold, when Jesus arrived, the sisters were consoled by his presence—and shortly afterwards Lazarus was resuscitated.

Mary—in the time of Christ's Passion, after suffering many painful and bitter things, went to the sepulcher and asked "*where was*" as Matthew 6 says, "*Jesus of Nazareth, Crucified*". Now Jesus means Savior. Nazareth is interpreted as flower and the word Crucified is added. It is as if you had in sequence, Savior, Flower and Crucifixion, and in all three of them you have consolation. Jesus gives one the promise of salvation; the flower gives joy in one's affections; and the cross reconciles in action. This is why the sign of the cross is made with a perpendicular motion followed by two horizontal motions. The flower, delighting the eye, makes us hope in the coming of the fruit. Jesus is Himself the blessing (of the cross) and the most blessed fruit of the virgin's womb—the fruit, I say, the most blessed and beautiful fruit that can be imagined—most, pleasant to smell and most pleasant to taste. It is also the most precious fruit to possess for which reason the bride describes her joy in the Song of Songs saying: "*His throat is most sweet and He all lovely*". Understand in this statement that Jesus is the fullness of beauty and completely satisfies all the desires of the soul. And what is even more wonderful, and more to be wished for, just as the deeper and more firmly the root of a tree is fixed in the ground, so much the more abundantly it produces fruit; so also with the Name of Jesus—if it is fixed deep in the heart and solidly rooted, it will produce the most luxuriant crop of fruit—a crop of most sweet smelling and pleasant graces.

SECTION III

THE LAST FOUR RAYS: HOW THE POWER OF THE NAME OF JESUS RELATES TO THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Under the heading of this third Section, we delineate the characteristics of the last four rays. We do this, first, that we might complete the picture, and second, because these characteristics blend together in the contemplative and perfect soul. We discuss this first with regard to meditation which has its seat in the memory; second, with regard to the use of the Name in prayer; third with regard to its tasting and experiencing, and fourth, the Name as our reward when we are to be transplanted out of this life. And all this is true because the Name of Jesus is the initial inspiration of meditation; second, it is the support of prayer; third, it is the savoring of contemplation, and fourth, it is the glory of the triumphant finish.

Chapter 1

*The Ninth Ray of the Name of Jesus—of that great sweetness that fills
one when he devoutly meditates upon the Name of Jesus.*

The Name of Jesus is, as it were, the very essence of meditation and recollection. Hence it says in the Song of Songs: “*Thy Name is as oil poured forth, therefore young maidens have loved thee*”. Origen explains this saying: “it is well known that when oil is poured out (as in food), it nourishes the recipient. Now in what way is the oil of His Name poured forth? Surely it is poured into the heart of the person who frequently and with devotion invokes the Name of Jesus. And what is meant by the young maidens? Surely they are the fresh souls, laboring in asceticism, who with great zeal and joy follow after that delight of love that He inspires—that is, rejoice in its great sweetness”. As Saint Bernard says in recalling the sweetness of Jesus: “He is to be preferred with a joyful heart above all sweetness and honey. Nothing sings more sweetly, sounds more joyful, nor is more delightful than to meditate on the Name of Jesus, the Son of God”. Hence it is that Isaiah says in Chapter 25: “*O Lord, Thy Name and remembrance is the desire of my soul*”. Hence it is that Bernard says in his commentary on the Song of Songs that the Name of Jesus is not so much a light as it is a nourishment or food, and is not the person who constantly invokes this Name completely filled? The Name of Jesus is an oil: and all that nourishes the soul is dry unless flavored with this oil. Oh how much sweetness is seen to be drawn forth from the lips of innocent children when they learn the Pater Noster and Ave Maria from their devoted mothers, and while still unable to repeat the entire prayer, they nevertheless repeat with reverence the Name of Jesus! The Name of Jesus is honey to the mouth and sweet music to the ear.

It says in Apocalypse 2 that: “*to him who overcomes I will give the hidden manna, and I will give him a white pebble (or light) and upon the pebble a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it*”. The hidden manna indicates the taste of divine wisdom, hidden from the unworthy, for just as the manna came from above, having in it all the delicacy of taste, so also, the knowledge of the mysteries of Jesus Christ fills all minds with sweetness. This is why John adds: “*I will give him a white pebble*”, or light. This light is the burning coal, literally a light bearing stone, or a burning pebble—that all might perceive in some mystical way the greatness of the humanity of Christ—for the humanity of Christ is manifested under the sign of a stone. For the manna signifies truth, the pebble sweetness and mercy, and the burning whiteness, justice—which particular qualities are those of the Christ-man. Hence it says in Psalm 44: “*on account of mercy and justice*”. And because the humanity of Christ is joined to it, and since we obtain an awareness of this essential wisdom through the Name of Jesus Christ, he adds, “*and upon the pebble a new name is written*”.

Now truly, the new name written is the one taken by the God-Man who alone is able to save. He it is, who with His well known excess of love, abundantly renews with sweetness and transforms with stupendous grace, all those who through the truth of the Name of Jesus Christ, come to Him. And who is able to measure the brilliance of this light? Who is able to describe the taste of this goodness? Surely only the person who himself experiences it. This is why it says: “*which no one knows except he who receives it*” from Christ. This is because the sweet knowledge of God must be received, and because it is communicated by the mind of Christ through grace to the one who is to receive and experience this sweetness. Christ, then, is the dispenser of this treasure and is shown in Isaiah 45 where God the Father says to the prophet: “*I will give the hidden treasure and the concealed riches*”, which is to say that you O Lord dispense all good things to the members of your body, and to your elect. And in what manner do you give O Lord? The prophet tells us in Psalm 132: “*like the precious ointment*” which is to say, so plentifully that “*it runs down upon the beard*”, which beard signifies the perfect and manly soul. And because this is something clearly experienced, the psalmist adds: “*the beard of Aaron*”, for Aaron means a strong mountain. The beard of Aaron then signifies those great and manly souls such as the Apostles, the prophets, and the leaders of God’s elect in whom the graces and gifts of God are most abundantly diffused. But almost immediately the psalmist adds: “*running down to the skirt of his garment*”, which is to say that almost immediately the lesser saints and the least of God’s elect were included in the diffusion of these gifts and graces. Now this pouring forth of spiritual oil is of such tremendous value to the soul and to the body, and in this both the soul and body so delight, that “*dew*” is added as an analogy—“*as the dew of Hermon which descendeth upon Mount Zion*”. Now Hermon means condemned by the walls, and signifies the body contaminated by original sin. Zion originally meant a watch-tower, and signifies the soul which is the image of the Holy Trinity. And the analogy is most apt, for the soul is washed clean of original sin and bedewed with an excess of grace.

Chapter 2

The Tenth Ray of the Name of Jesus—that whatsoever is asked in the Name of Jesus, observing the necessary circumstances, is invariably obtained.

Second, the glorious Name of Jesus is the support of prayer and all entreaty. What greater force is to be heard in prayer than this Name. Listen to what our Lord says in John 16: “*if you ask the Father for anything in My Name, I will give it to you*”. Now indeed, He does say “*anything*” because that which is evil is not just anything. Remember, He says “*in My Name*”, which is Jesus and which means Salvation. Therefore it follows that you must ask for that which pertains to salvation and then “*it will be given to you*”. Hence Saint Augustine says in his commentary on this passage: “we ask in the Name of the Savior when we ask for the sake of salvation”. Now the power of the Name in which we seek salvation is never denied, and so Augustine, in the same commentary adds: “we are unable, in the Name of the Savior, to ask for that which is against the needs of salvation”. This is why Holy Mother Church, who always desires that which is necessary for salvation, is in the habit of placing at the end of her petitions—prayers always heard with favor such as the Divine Office—the phrase “*through Jesus Christ our Lord*”. Saint Ambrose says in his commentary on this passage (Art. 1, Chap. 3) that no one can call himself poor in or with God, if he prays to the Father in the Name of the Son and receives God’s gifts. Rather, such a person, who extols with devotion the glorious Name, is truly rich in God, for whatever such a person needs of what he asks, is given to him in the most appropriate way possible. For if there are many needy who only place their trust in temporal goods, there are also, in contrast, the just, who place their trust in the invocation of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Thus it is that the prophet says in Psalm 19: “*some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the Name of the Lord, our God*”. Now the psalmist does not use the word “*some*” as a demonstrative, but rather as a partitive, much as Matthew (25) does when, speaking the mind of God. He says: “*and some will go into everlasting punishment, but the just into everlasting life*”. Those that trust in “*chariots*” are those that place their confidence in the perpetual revolutions and changeability of time, those that trust in themselves, which is pride. Those placing their confidence in horses represent those that put their faith in status or position or in worldly power. Such, clearly have confidence in what is worthless. We however who meditate upon these words, “*we will call upon the Name of the Lord*”, asking the Father, in the Name of his Son, for all that we have need of.

Chapter 3

The eleventh Ray of the Name of Jesus—of the immense sweetness with which those who contemplate with delight the Name of Jesus are inebriated.

Third, the Name of Jesus is the most sweet tasting nourishment of contemplation, for it feeds and revives those souls that are famished and spiritually hungry. The world that we live in is a poor and famine-ridden land. Therefore with, we hope, a patient disposition—“*we await the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ who will remake our miserable bodies in the form of His shining image*”. And during our sojourning with hope of being saved, rending as it were, our garments interiorly, we have the foretaste of the tenuous fruits of paradise, which during this earthly pilgrimage are ripened and fed upon in contemplation. For verily, this is that most delicious manna that satiated every soul descending from heaven and nourishing Israel in the desert. And this most edible fruit is the Name of Jesus which contains every flavor and all possible sweetness. This is the fruit whose foretaste we hope to grasp and relish during our wayfaring in this world, in contemplation. But whenever hope seems to be in vain, let us grasp and take pleasure in this most perfect thing, the Name. According to the prophet, when our heart rejoices totally in Jesus, because we hope in His Holy Name, then we can say in accordance with Psalm 32: “*let Thy mercy be on us, O Lord, because we have placed our hope in Thee*”. For the sweet taste of the Name of Jesus instructs us, just as much as it did David—so that with him we say: “*we have trust in Thy Name because it is good*”. Saint Augustine comments on this passage, saying that the Name of God is good because it is good for us if we delight in it, place all our love in it, and praise that which gives us so much joy. And again, Saint Bernard says that through the Name of Jesus Christ we come to the thing named and arrive at the delight and fruition of His Name. Most meritoriously then, does Proverbs 18 state with that lofty wisdom: “*the Name of God is a strong fortress; the just runneth to it and shall be exalted*”. Saint Jerome expounds on this passage saying: not without cause is the Name of Jesus likened unto a strong fortress, for it is the most powerful weapon, not only in attacking the enemy and protecting of oneself against the vicissitudes of life, but also in the elevated contemplation of the multitude of eternal joys. This is why Saint Chrysostom says that he who profoundly loves the Name of God and calls upon it frequently, will be exalted in the high God. The Blessed Giles, the companion of Saint Francis, also knew this from his personal experience, for, ever since our Lord Jesus appeared to him near his hermitage on Mount Ceton, tarrying with him for long periods of time every day from the Feast of the Nativity to that of Epiphany, ever since that time he was so full of sweetness that whenever he heard the Name of Jesus pronounced, he at once was overwhelmed with joy and fell into ecstasy, and was often even raised up above the ground. The Holy Father, wishing to see this for himself, had Brother Giles brought quietly to his privy chambers, and when he casually mentioned the Name of Jesus in his conversation, Brother Giles was elevated above the ground in ecstasy immediately. Oh, if only I might participate in such a superabundant grace! Oh, that I might be transported in such lofty contemplation! Oh, that I might share in this exquisite glory of paradisiacal delight—that I might be given a spark—that a single drop might descend upon my arid soul so that I might know, taste and love Jesus with my whole heart. You are inaccessible, O Lord, to us standing as it were, outside, and wrapped up with bodily things. To many of us living in the world, the sweet graces which you have reserved for your beloved children, are like an oasis in the desert, encouraging us to run after the odor of your scent. And over and above this

most sweet delight, it is because of your odor, O Lord, that the desire seems eternal. This is why the prophet says in Psalm 35: *“In the light of Thy countenance we shall see the light”*. And again, Isaiah 60: *“the people shall walk in Thy light and they shall praise Thy Name the whole day long”*. And finally, I would be numbered among those saying with Habakkuk (3): *“I rejoice in the Lord and exult in my God, Jesus”*.

Chapter 4

The Twelfth Ray of the Name of Jesus: how the saints in heaven eternally glory in the Name of Jesus.

Fourth, the Name of Jesus is the glory of the triumphant saints, for it is in their perfected images that the Name finds its consummation. For where the blessed are living eternally, there is no darkness; no error creeps in to spoil the enjoyment of truth; no impulse of greed to corrupt divine charity—in heaven, the Name of Jesus will be most clearly seen in all its most super-splendorous truth by the intellect of the saints through the merit of faith. It will be kept in the memory, in all its stupendous majesty, as a permanent possession, through the merit of hope. It will be held in the will, like the sweet fruit of goodness, through the merit of loving. As the prophet says in Psalm 5: *“all they that love Thy Name, shall glory in Thee”*. And, if on account of the Name of Jesus every soul lives, is enriched and will come to beatitude, being formed after the Triune God in unity, enlightenment and sobriety, it is because the perfect live eternally in all good things gathered together. Thus it is that the prophet says in Psalm 142 to God: *“Thy good spirit shall lead me into the right land for Thy Name’s sake”*. Concerning this most happy statement, God says further in John 16: *“Hitherto, you have not asked anything in My Name”*, which is to say, because the power of My Name was unknown to you. But now that its power is known, *“ask and you shall receive that your joy may be complete”*. *“Ask”*, He says, *“and receive”*—that is, through the power of My Name. As Saint Chrysostom says, in order that the power of this Name might be demonstrated, this Name, not visualized, not appended to a request—just the Name alone, worked miracles with the fathers. And He adds: *“that your joy might be complete”*, which is to say, it will be complete in eternal glory.

Now eternal glory is called a joy for three reasons. First, every desire of the soul is filled to excess, for as the psalmist says (15): *“Thou shalt fill me with the joy of Thy countenance”*, which passage has been adequately discussed in a preceding chapter. Second, it consists in the vision, fruition and possession, in its entirety, of the consummation of goodness, which is the Triune God, as is taught, and concerning which God Himself says in Exodus 33: *“I will show thee all good”*. Third, this joy is so great, and of such a nature, that it cannot be lost, whence John (16) says to his disciples: *“and no one will take away your joy from you”*.

In these ways, therefore, the Name will be the glory of the saints, whence John says in Apocalypse XI V: *“and I saw, and behold the Lamb was standing upon Mount Sion and with*

Him one hundred and forty-four thousand having His Name and the Name of His Father written on their foreheads". Now Mount Sion indicates the highest power in heaven, of which Sion is an image. And on this mountain stands the Lamb, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is above all, resplendent in the vision of His glory, and in which glory all the saints share. Hence it follows: "*and with Him, one hundred and forty-four thousand*"—that is to say, lambs, with the Name written over them, and they are subject to the principal Lamb. Now the number given, as explained elsewhere, represents all those in glory. By four we understand virtue; by forty, the exercise of virtue; by one hundred, those who delight in virtue and by practicing it, acquire virtue, and, by a thousand, wisdom, for wisdom is the perfection of virtue, for through wisdom God gives eternal glory. And it is added, "*having His Name*" that through this Name they might be well known and recognized, because, in God's eyes they cannot be known, unless it is through love—such is it to be in such a state of holiness. Putting this another way, the Name of Jesus is itself God through which God the Father and the Holy Spirit communicate in the Divine Unity (*Seu aliter dici potest quod Nomen Jesu, id est, res Nominis Jesu est ipse Deus, in qua communicat Deo Patri, & Spiritui Sancto in divinitatis unitate*), a statement to which John testifies in the first chapter of his Gospel, saying: "*and God was the Word*" which Word is indeed distinct from the Father but to which God imparted one nature with the Father. Accordingly, while distinct in person, they deserve to be subjoined together in the unity of the Godhead. "*And the Name of His Father written on their foreheads*"—now the Father undoubtedly gives to all those in glory, the knowledge of the Son whose Father He is. Therefore, if they have the Name of the Father written on their foreheads, that is, if they have it in their mind, then they are not able to be ignorant of the Name of the Son. For the Son says in Luke 19: "*He who receives me*", that is to say, in grace and in glory, "*receives the One that sent me*". Moreover, Scripture tells us that the Name of the Father and the Son, written on the foreheads and minds of the saints, is written there by the finger of the Living God, which, as explained in Exodus 32, is the Holy Spirit. Thus, through the testimony of these first two, we come, in glory, to one Name in three persons, which constitutes the glory of the saints. It follows then, as Saint Bernard says in his eighth sermon on the Song of Songs: those who follow the Lamb are said to have His Name and the Name of His Father written on their foreheads, which is to be glorified by this twofold knowledge.

O glorious Name! O Name so full of grace! O most powerful and loving Name! By you sin is forgiven, enemies are vanquished and the sick healed. Through you the patient are given strength and the afflicted consoled. You are the pride of the believer, a teaching theologian, the strength of the laborer, the sustainer of the weak, the fire of fervor and the heat of ardent love. You are the desire of those that pray, the inebriating liquor of the contemplative soul, and the glory of those who are triumphant in heaven, with whom, O sweet Jesus, allow us also to co-reign through Your most Holy Name, that with the Father and the Holy Spirit, together with all the Holy Saints in glory, we might glory and triumph and reign forever and ever, Amen.