

SESSION 2: HALLOWED BE THY NAME

The following excerpt from the Catechism of the Catholic Church will serve as the session material to be read by participants before the meeting.

I. “HALLOWED BE THY NAME” (2142–2159)

2807 The term “to hallow” is to be understood here not primarily in its causative sense (only God hallows, makes holy), but above all in an evaluative sense: to recognize as holy, to treat in a holy way. And so, in adoration, this invocation is sometimes understood as praise and thanksgiving. But this petition is here taught to us by Jesus as an optative: a petition, a desire, and an expectation in which God and man are involved. Beginning with this first petition to our Father, we are immersed in the innermost mystery of his Godhead and the drama of the salvation of our humanity. Asking the Father that his name be made holy draws us into his plan of loving kindness for the fullness of time, “according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ,” that we might “be holy and blameless before him in love.”⁶⁷ (2097)

2808 In the decisive moments of his economy God reveals his name, but he does so by accomplishing his work. This work, then, is realized for us and in us only if his name is hallowed by us and in us.

2809 The holiness of God is the inaccessible center of his eternal mystery. What is revealed of it in creation and history, Scripture calls “glory,” the radiance of his majesty. In making man in his image and likeness, God “crowned him with glory and honor,” but by sinning, man fell “short of the glory of God.”⁶⁹ From that time on, God was to manifest his holiness by revealing and giving his name, in order to restore man to the image of his Creator. (203, 432; 293; 705)

2810 In the promise to Abraham and the oath that accompanied it, God commits himself but without disclosing his name. He begins to reveal it to Moses and makes it known clearly before the eyes of the whole people when he saves them from the Egyptians: “he has triumphed gloriously.”⁷² From the covenant of Sinai onwards, this people is “his own” and it is to be a “holy (or “consecrated”: the same word is used for both in Hebrew) nation,” because the name of God dwells in it. (63)

2811 In spite of the holy Law that again and again their Holy God gives them—“You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy”—and although the Lord shows patience for the sake of his name, the people turn away from the Holy One of Israel and profane his name among the nations. For this reason the just ones of the old covenant, the poor survivors returned from exile, and the prophets burned with passion for the name. (2143)

2812 Finally, in Jesus the name of the Holy God is revealed and given to us, in the flesh, as Savior, revealed by what he is, by his word, and by his sacrifice. This is the heart of his priestly prayer: “Holy Father ... for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth.”⁷⁶ Because he “sanctifies” his own name, Jesus reveals to us the name of the Father. At the

end of Christ's Passover, the Father gives him the name that is above all names: "Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."⁷⁸ (434)

2813 In the waters of Baptism, we have been "washed ... sanctified ... justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." Our Father calls us to holiness in the whole of our life, and since "he is the source of [our] life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and ... sanctification,"⁸⁰ both his glory and our life depend on the hallowing of his name in us and by us. Such is the urgency of our first petition. (2013)

By whom is God hallowed, since he is the one who hallows? But since he said, "You shall be holy to me; for I the LORD am holy," we seek and ask that we who were sanctified in Baptism may persevere in what we have begun to be. And we ask this daily, for we need sanctification daily, so that we who fail daily may cleanse away our sins by being sanctified continually.... We pray that this sanctification may remain in us.

2814 The sanctification of his name among the nations depends inseparably on our *life* and our *prayer*. (2045)

We ask God to hallow his name, which by its own holiness saves and makes holy all creation.... It is this name that gives salvation to a lost world. But we ask that this name of God should be hallowed in us through our actions. For God's name is blessed when we live well, but is blasphemed when we live wickedly. As the Apostle says: "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you." We ask then that, just as the name of God is holy, so we may obtain his holiness in our souls.

When we say "hallowed be thy name," we ask that it should be hallowed in us, who are in him; but also in others whom God's grace still awaits, that we may obey the precept that obliges us to pray for everyone, even our enemies. That is why we do not say expressly "hallowed be thy name 'in us,' " for we ask that it be so in all men.

2815 This petition embodies all the others. Like the six petitions that follow, it is fulfilled by *the prayer of Christ*. Prayer to our Father is our prayer, if it is prayed *in the name* of Jesus. In his priestly prayer, Jesus asks: "Holy Father, protect in your name those whom you have given me."⁸⁵ (2750)