

Spirituality through the Liturgical Seasons (6) **—Invocation of Christ's Holy Name**

The Working Group for Discipleship Training
The Steering Committee of the HKSKH Church Policy Paper

January 1st is the eighth day after Christmas Day. According to Luke 2:21, 'After eight days had passed, it was time to circumcise the child; and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.' Therefore, the Church celebrates the Feast of the Holy Name and the Feast of the Circumcision of Christ on January 1st. For Jews, a baby's circumcision and naming symbolizes being accepted as a descendant of Abraham, a member of God's chosen people. Thus, God the Son amazingly became one of them and a family member of the people He was sent to save.

Jesus and Abraham, tied by blood, have reminded us that Jesus did not come to replace or refute the Israelites' hope upon the coming of Messiah. Christ's Holy Name 'Jesus' means 'God Saves' in Hebrew. It expresses His identity and His mission that He was sent by God the Father to become flesh and He is whom has been waiting for by generations of Israelites. The prophet Isaiah had foretold that a child has been born for us and a son given to us. He is named 'Wonderful Counsellor', 'Mighty God', 'Everlasting Father' and 'Prince of Peace'. (Isaiah 9:6)

Jesus has even more names. Have we thought deeply on meanings of these names on how they help us get closer to the Lord and know Him better? We invoke His name, neither because of His miracle power nor His teaching in praying. We do so because at the name of Jesus every knee should bow to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10-11). We learn to be humble, be grateful and are reminded to live with Christ be our centre.

Let us begin the New Year with praising Jesus Christ by upholding His Holy Name towards the spiritual journey centered at the Lord

Meditation:

1. In invoking Jesus' names, may you write down His different names you know. How do these names help you know more about Jesus ?
2. Write down one of the names attributed to Jesus. Remove the familiar meaning that it comes to you. Mediate on it, re-feel and concentrate on writing any meanings and reminders of the name comes to you.
3. The Orthodox Church has a tradition to use 'The Jesus Prayer' in praying. Through repeatedly reciting it, we learn to be humble and to invite the Lord Jesus live in us and help us live in Him. Do to start your spiritual journey with the Prayer, 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner'.