

# God Calls Us By Name

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*Our names are significant. They either are given with meaning or, as we grow, we give*



*significance to our names. God has known us by name before we were born. We are also baptized into the name of Jesus.*

What is the purpose of life? This question is often found in the hearts of young people, those in mid-life and those in their later years. Why am I here? To know the purpose of our lives is a gift that helps us make decisions that open a path to our future and

which can make significant changes in our community.

In the scriptures, the purpose of a person's life was closely associated with a person's name. God knows us even before we are born: while we are still in our mother's womb. God has a name for us. The name we are given is a name with significance. Names in the bible are not just "labels" to mark differences among people. Rather, a name has a significance and reveals some inner mystery about the person. A name also indicates the purpose and mission of a person's life.

It seems timely to reflect on our names during Holy Week. During these days, we walk with Jesus on the road through death to new life. The name that God has given us can shed light on the mission we have in life. What is the meaning of our name: is it a call to be a peace maker, counselor, guide, listener, healer? Does our name indicate what we need to be and do in order to be happy in life? As scripture says: "The Lord called me from birth, from my mother's womb he gave me my name." Isaiah 49:1-6

In the Gospel Jesus is living out a crucial moment of his life's mission. He prepares for the final journey to Calvary, the seed planting of his Resurrection. We solemnly join ourselves to Jesus in his journey which, in reality, is our journey, too.

Our baptism into Christ united us most powerfully to him through the bond of the Holy Spirit. In baptism, we were given a name, one that identified us through life. This name, more importantly, became our Christian name which identified us with Jesus Christ. We promised to live as he lived, to bear his wounds through the dedication of our lives for the good of God's world. Now, during this Holy Week, we are called again, as we are each year, to walk with Christ to the Cross, to die with him to our self-centered concerns and to rise anew with him in the power of the Spirit.

What's in a name, we may ask? To those of us baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, our name contains a call, a dedication, a divine power to live on earth as other Christs.