

Concerning the Circumcision of our Lord Jesus - How to Give Names to Infants



On the eighth day after His Nativity, our Lord Jesus Christ was circumcised, in accordance with Old Testament Law. All male infants underwent circumcision as a sign of God's Covenant with the holy Forefather Abraham and his descendants.

The Fathers of the Church explain that the Lord, the Creator of the Law, underwent circumcision in order to give people an example of how faithfully the divine ordinances ought to be fulfilled. The Lord was circumcised so that thereafter no one would doubt that He had truly assumed human flesh, and that His Incarnation was not merely an illusion.

From then on, in the New Testament, the ritual of circumcision gave way to the Mystery of Baptism, which it prefigured.

The Divine Infant was given the name Jesus, as the Archangel Gabriel declared on the day of the Annunciation to the Most Holy Mother of God. Christ received the name Jesus (Savior) as an indication of His service, the work of the salvation of the world.

We must understand that the names people are given are very important and have a great positive (or negative) influence upon their life. This is why we should take care what name we give an infant. Here are some basic rules:

- Don't give two (or more) names because the infant doesn't have two (or more) souls.
- Give just one name, with a strong preference for the name of a saint—especially saints who have shown that they're ready to help the child and its family. Later on, educate the child to have a strong relationship with the saint for whom it was named and use this relationship to help it grow spiritually.
- Avoid names which can produce a negative reaction from the society in which the child will grow up. You don't want your child to suffer just because you wanted to give it an outlandish name.
- It's very good to give a rather common name, in order to gain all the advantages of humility and avoid the damage caused by the pseudo-celebrity of a rare name.

Be firm but polite as regards the name of an infant, because it's an important spiritual matter. Ignore any pressure you might encounter from the family and social trends.

Based on Genesis 17:10-14, Leviticus 12:3, Luke 1:31-33, 2:21, Colossians 2:11-12, Matthew 1:21; Mark 9:38-39, 16:17; Luke 10:17; Acts 3:6, 16; Philippians 2:9-10

— Source: asceticexperience.com