

PRAYER EXERCISE

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

*Taken from the book "You Can Pray" of P. Ribes, s.j.
published by the Gujarat Sahitya Prakas.*

Note:

- ✓ *This prayer exercise aims at making the words and the gestures of the sign the cross meaningful.*
- ✓ *From time to time, go through this prayer exercise It will strengthen your faith and give you courage*

Procedure:

1st Step:

- Quite down. Remain silent for a while.
- Think of what you are about to do, namely, to reflect and pray on **The Sign of**
- **The Cross**, the most commonly used Christian prayer and unfortunately, the one said with least attention.
- Invoke the Holy Spirit for inspiration in your mind and warmth for your heart.
- Slowly, attentively and devoutly, sign yourself three times with The Sign of the Cross stopping for a few seconds after each invocation and say:

In the name of:

The Father

The Son, and

The Holy Spirit.

2nd Step: Pay attention to the fact that the sign of the cross accompanies you from birth to eternal life! Be aware of its relevance!

- The first thing your Parents did to you after you were born was to sign you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*
- At Baptism you were marked out and consecrated to God with the sign of the Cross *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*
- With the sign of the Cross you were confirmed and consecrated afresh to God as a grown up member of God's family *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*
- Time and again, with the sign of Cross, at the Sacrament of Reconciliation, you have been forgiven your sins *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*
- With the sign of the Cross you were given the body of Christ at your first communion and every time you received the Body of Christ. *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*
- With the sign of the Cross you have been blessed countless times and occasions throughout your life *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*
- With the Sign of the Cross you will receive the last sacraments and depart from this world *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*
- With the sign of the Cross you will be consigned to the grave and enter eternal life. *(Pause for reflection and prayer)*

- Again, slowly, attentively and devoutly sign yourself three times with sign of the Cross stopping for a few seconds after each invocation and say:

In the name of:
The Father
The Son, and
The Holy Spirit.

3rd Step. Pay attention to The Words you say while signing yourself.

Everything you do, every prayer you say, every pain you endured, every new venture you enter upon should be undertaken in **The name of the Father. The Son and The Holy Spirit. Yes,**

- In the name of **The Father, Your Creator** from whom you came into being and to whom finally you shall return. (*Pray to the Farther*)
- In the name of **The Son, Your Saviour and Redemer** who was born for you, lived for you and died for you. (*Pray to the Son*)
- In the name of **The Holy Spirit, The Sanctifier** who gives you Divine Life and makes you a child of God. He gives you courage and strength to be like Jesus. (*Pray to the Holy Spirit*)
- Again, slowly, attentively and devoutly sign yourself three times with sign of the Cross stopping for a few seconds after each invocation and say:

In the name of:
The Father
The Son, and
The Holy Spirit.

4th Step: Pay attention to The Sign you make on yourself. A Cross upon the upper part of your body –Head and Chest- namely, over your Mind and over your Heart! (Reflect and pray on the following points)

- The cross is the instrument of your salvation.
- There is power in the cross of Jesus to draw away from you all evil, to turn pain into joy and loss into gain.
- Trust in the power of the cross of Jesus will make you like Jesus, a victor, a conqueror, immortal.
- The Lord said: **“Do not be afraid; in life, you will face troubles and persecutions. But remember: I have conquered the world”**
- The sign of the cross upon your head will **illumine your mind**, and upon your chest will **warm your heart and strengthen your will.**
- Again, slowly, attentively and devoutly sign yourself three times with sign of the Cross stopping for a few seconds after each invocation and say:

In the name of:
The Father
The Son, and
The Holy Spirit.