



## Fr. Daniel's Corner

Mass Moment: Part 4

IN NOMINE PATRIS: The Sign of the Cross:

Upon arrival at the sanctuary, the priest, the deacon, and the ministers reverence the altar with a profound bow. In addition, the priest and deacon venerate the altar with a kiss and then incense if appropriate. Together with the congregation the priest signs himself with the Sign of the Cross. Did you know that when we make the Sign of the Cross, we enter into a sacred tradition that goes back to the early centuries of Christianity? In making the sign of the cross we invoke God's presence and invite Him to bless us, assist us, and guard us from harm. In Ezekiel 9:3-4, God "called to the man dressed in linen...to pass through the midst of Jerusalem and mark an X (the Hebrew letter tahv) on the foreheads of the faithful," those who grieved and lamented over the abominations practiced within the city.

Each time we trace the Sign of the Cross over our bodies, we express our desire to be set apart from the corrupt ways of the world in our own day, and we ask for protection in our lives from harm and evil. According to St. Cyril of Jerusalem "Let the cross, as our seal, be boldly made with our fingers upon our brow and on all occasions . . .It is a powerful safeguard for it is a grace from God, a badge of the faithful and a terror to the devils."

When we make the Sign of the Cross, we call on God's name. In Scripture, to call on the name of the Lord denotes worship and is associated with prayer and sacrifice. In Scripture, a name is not merely a way of referring to a particular person. A name represents the essence of a person and carries the power of that person. To call upon God's name is to invoke his presence and power. As is written in Psalm 124:8, "Our help is in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth."

As we begin the Mass with the Sign of the Cross, we invite God into our lives in a powerful way, invoking his divine presence and power. This is why we should make every Sign of the Cross carefully and reverently. Do I 'swat flies' when I make the sign of the Cross? Or am I aware that I am invoking divine protection and baptismal identity as a beloved child of God whenever I cross myself? We should avoid signing ourselves in a hurried, sloppy way. In his General Audience on November 8, 2017, Pope Francis asked parents, "Have you seen how your children make the sign of the Cross? Children must be taught how to make the sign of the Cross properly. Watch the children and teach them how to make the sign of the Cross properly."

*And that is your Mass Moment for the week.*

## A Hurricane Prayer

**Our Father in Heaven, through the powerful intercession of Our Lady of Prompt Succor, spare us from all harm during this hurricane season and protect us and our homes from all disasters of nature. Our Lady of Prompt Succor, hasten to help us.**

**Amen**