

A Holy Week Prayer The Sign of the Cross

Holy Week is the story of the journey of Jesus to his cross. A very good way to start each day this week is to take a few minutes to pray a slow and meaningful “Sign of the Cross.” We may not think of the Sign of the Cross as a prayer, but it is the prayer that begins every prayer we say. The cross is the sign of our Christian faith. It is the sign that the world has been saved. It is the heart of our Holy Week.

So let us pray it together. Perhaps someone in your family could read the instructions as you pray it. And as we start, please feel the love of God who is always with us.

- 1) Please raise your right hand and place it **on your forehead** and hold it there a moment – as we pray in the name of our Father – this is the God who created us. The God who, like a father, cares and protects each of us. The God who, like a mother, watches over and loves each one of us. This is the God who called us each by name before we were born. It is in the name of the Father that we pray today.
- 2) Take your hand now and move it down into **the center of your chest – over you heart** - and hold it there - as we pray in the name of the Son – Jesus. Jesus came down from heaven to live with us and be with us. As you hold your hand over your own heart, remember that Jesus’ Sacred Heart still burns with love for us today. Jesus gave up his own life that we might live forever. It is in the name of the Son that we pray today.
- 3) Now take your hand and raise it to **your left shoulder** and hold it there - as we pray in the name of the Holy. God is holy and all of life and creation is holy. It is in a holy and sacred place in our hearts that we find God. It is in the name of the Holy that we pray today.
- 4) And now take you hand and place it **on your right shoulder** and hold it there - as we pray in the name of the Spirit. Holding our hand in this way is not the most comfortable gesture. But it is the Spirit that stirs the world often in a most uncomfortable way – asking us to move and to act with kindness toward others, even when it isn’t comfortable. God’s Spirit burns in each of us a fire of love so powerful - that we can use it to renew the face of the earth. It is in the name of the Spirit that we pray today.

And now bring your hands together and fold them in front of you. Let us pray.

Dear God - your Son Jesus showed just how much He loved us by making the long, slow journey to his death. Help us on this holy day to follow in His footsteps of love. Help us to know that we can turn to you in both good times and in troubled times. In doing this - may we learn to follow Jesus’ way of love in all that we do. We make our prayer through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

