

Why Do Catholics Make the Sign of the Cross?

Why do Roman Catholics make the Sign of the Cross when they say, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"?

Making the [Sign of the Cross](#) may be the most common of all actions that Catholics do. We make it when we begin and end our prayers; we make it when we enter and leave a church; we start each [Mass](#) with it; we may even make it when we hear the [Holy Name taken in vain](#) and when we pass a church where the [Blessed Sacrament](#) is reserved.

But do you know why we make the Sign of the Cross? The answer is both simple and profound.

In the Sign of the Cross, we profess the deepest mysteries of the Christian Faith: the Trinity--Father, Son, and Holy Spirit--and the saving work of Christ on the Cross. The combination of the words and the action are a [creed](#)--a statement of belief. We mark ourselves as Christians through the Sign of the Cross.

And yet, because we make the Sign of the Cross so often, we may be tempted to rush through it, to say the words without listening to them, to ignore the symbolism of tracing the shape of the Cross on our own bodies. A creed is not simply a statement of belief--it is a vow to defend that belief, even if it means following Our Lord and Savior to our own cross.

Roman Catholics aren't the only Christians to make the Sign of the Cross. All Eastern Catholics and Eastern Orthodox do as well, along with many high-church Anglicans and Lutherans.

“the fifteen most powerful words in the English Language- In the Name of the Father, and of the son and of the Holy Spirit.” St. Francis De Sales