

Let's all say this prayer together. "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; amen.

This is a little prayer that we say all the time, usually without thinking about what we are doing. Just something we say before we get around to the real prayer, or is it something more?

In the invocation of the Trinity, we bless ourselves with the same words that are used to Baptize, to make a person a member of the Church, the Body of Christ. We recall our own Baptism and in the process drive away the minions of Satan who are there to tempt us into sin.

Our gesture, making the Sign of the Cross, reminds us of Our Lord's Passion and death on the Cross. The agony he suffered for our sins.

When we use Holy Water to bless ourselves, we draw deeper into the mystery as we remind ourselves of our Baptismal promises, to reject Satan and all his works and all his empty promises.

The combination of gesture and words affirms our Catholic faith. With this prayer we dedicate our thoughts, words and actions to God. Then we affirm, and declare that we hold this to be true when we say 'amen'.

This little one line prayer that we say a dozen times a day, more out of habit than thought, is probably one of the most powerful prayers we can say because we invoke the One Father, from whom all things are, the One Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom all things are and the One Holy Spirit, in whom all things are. One God, 3 persons, co-equal, consubstantial, unique, yet the same God, totally incomprehensible to us as human beings.

Yet we try to comprehend, we try to explain because we are all drawn to be one with God. It is in our nature, it is how he made us. Saint Patrick used a shamrock to describe the Trinity to the pagans in Ireland. A couple of weeks ago Pope Francis used a fidget spinner with 3 arms to put a modern twist on the same concept. Simple analogies to try to explain the unexplainable, a mystery that can only be appreciated through faith.

There was a time when Catholics would make the Sign of the Cross whenever a fire engine, police car or ambulance would cross our path with its emergency lights on as a prayer for the victims and responders.

And I'm sure there was more than one time it was also in thanks that those blue lights in the rearview mirror didn't mean that the driver making the Sign of the Cross was going to get a ticket.

I wonder why we have fallen away from this simple affirmation of faith in God, hope that the responders can get there in time and charity in praying for the victims? Is this just another demonstration of our faith where we have allowed society to intimidate us into inaction, or have we simply become inattentive, callous or lazy?

It has been a quite a few years since I was on an Airborne Operation, but I can still remember how many Paratroopers, and not just Catholics that would make the Sign of the Cross when the doors were opened. If we can invoke the Trinity to protect ourselves when we are in danger, we can invoke the Trinity to protect others in the same situation.

I was in Christ Life class this past week watching the speaker on a DVD, and the speaker said something I thought was profound. He said that we all have a God sized hole in us and trying to fill that hole with the things of the world was like trying to fill the Grand Canyon by flipping marbles into it.

When we ring the bell about 5 minutes before mass it is a signal for 2 things to happen. The first is for everyone to settle in, remain silent and prepare mentally and spiritually for the Mass. The second action is for all of the people who are participating in a ministry during the Mass to join together for prayer in the gathering area.

Part of our prayer in the gathering area before each Mass is that we take the graces God gives us and the things that we learn during the Mass out into the world that needs it so much.

There are thousands of people here in our community who want to have what we have. They want to know what we know. They want to fill that God sized hole in their souls and they just don't know how.

We need to bold! We need to be willing to demonstrate our faith by making the Sign of the Cross in public. Yes, some may mock us, most will ignore us, but someone who needs us will be able to identify us and in that simple action we generate the opportunity for us to lead them to Christ.

In the name of the Father, and the of Son and the of Holy Sprit, amen.