



# SIGN OF THE CROSS

# PRILEP



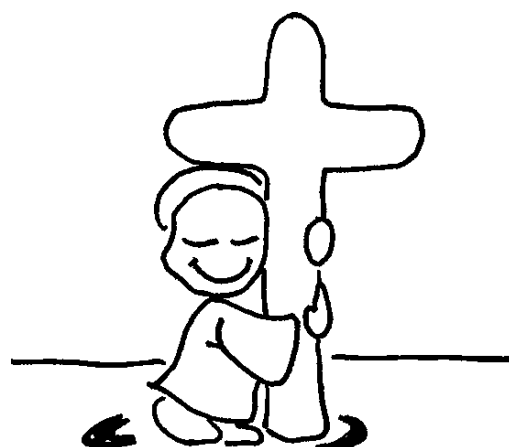
Coming from a country of catholic culture that is Italy, it is the first time for me to live in an orthodox country such as North Macedonia. And I'll tell you now about how a simple act made me wonder about Orthodox Church.

One day, while walking along a road in Prilep - next to a church - I realized how many people stopped in front of it - this was yes impressive but normal... Nevertheless, by observing better, i noticed how the fedels were making the sign of the cross exactly three times and going from the right shoulder to the left one. So I got curious and decided to find out why.

For thousands of years the sign of the cross has been fulfilled by millions and millions of Christian fedels: before praying, at the entrance of the church, for the blessing, for example. However, what does it exactly stand for ?

## ***ORIGIN***

In the christianity this popular gesture is not talked in the Bible ,but in the IV century, St. Basil claims it has origin since Apostles' age and it was executed during the baptism to create a connection between the fedel and God.



# ***SIGNIFICANCE***

The sign of the cross stands for the confession of faith, a renewal of the baptism, a symbol of discipleship, an acceptance of suffering, a defense against the devil, a victory over the self-pity.



Christians, by doing it, mean to blessing themselves in the name of God, Son and Saint Spirit



# Christian Catholic Church

The predominant tradition of the Catholics is to sign themselves from up to down, and from left to right. Commonly the sign of the cross is executed with the right open hand, and the five fingers straight to represent the five plagues of Christ.

This execution is kind of recent compared to the eastern Christian church.

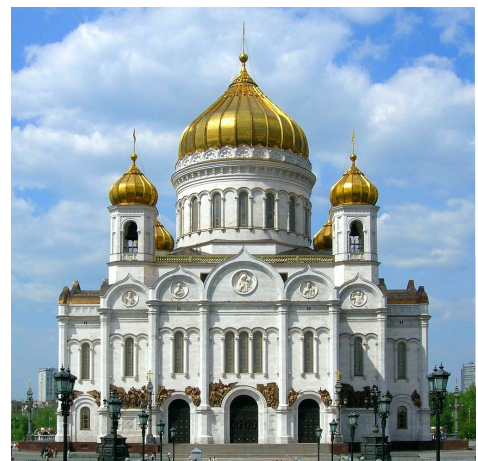


# Christian Orthodox Church

At the origin, the Christians were making the sign from up to down, and then from right to left.

Thumb, Index and middle fingers are united, to evoke the indivisible Trinity; While the ring finger and the pinkie are collected in the palm of the hand, representing the two natures of Christ: the divine nature and the human nature

This primitive tradition reproduces the sign given by the clergy like the image on a mirror.





# Christian Catholic Church

However, it has its meanings.

By tracking the cross on our own body from left to right, we'd go through the passage from darkness to lightness, from misery to glory.

*The difference of marking the cross on the body differs the Orthodox from the Catholic church, and it was an evolution of the schism of the Church, between eastern and western Christian Church*

LEONARDO

# Christian Orthodox Church

The hand, that consecrates, tracks the sign of the cross to the forehead from up to down and from left to right.

In this way the blessing is reproduced by an authority like on a mirror. Therefore, none could really bless him/herself and that, even with no authority, every blessing is received by a bigger potency, God's.

Finally they reproduced it from three times to emphasize the Trinity

MOTTI