

- 1 In 1997 a TV programme interviewed Jason Robinson, a member of the Wigan Warriors Rugby League team. He mentioned that being a Christian touched every part of his life, and he was convinced that he should use his talents well.
- 2 As he gets changed to play a match, he applies bandages to his legs to help give strength and protection where there is weakness. With his thumb he then makes the sign of the cross on those bandages, as a sign that he is committed to Christ in all that he does, as well as praying for Christ's strength through his weaknesses.
- 3 *Let us pray:*

Lord Jesus,

**by loving to the extent
that you were wounded,** *Is 53*
we are healed. *1 Pet 2²⁴*

**By loving to the point of death
and by rising from the dead
you have set us free.**

You remind us

that it is when we are weak *1 Cor 1²⁷*
that we can be strong *2 Cor 12¹⁰*
**because of your love
and the power of your Spirit.**

Enable us

to take up our cross each day, *Lk 9²³*
**share the burdens of others,
and follow you faithfully.**

Amen.



 *The early Christian theologian, Tertullian (c.160 - c.220 A.D.), mentions the practice of tracing a cross on objects and on the forehead of people: "At every step and movement, when we go in or out, when we dress or put on our shoes, at the bath, at the table, when lights are brought, when we go to bed, when we sit down - whatever it is which occupies us, we mark the forehead with the sign of the cross."*

 *A prayer of commitment for personal use:*

Lord Jesus,

**I sign my *heart* with the sign of the cross,
reminding myself
of your love for each person.**

**I ask that I may grow in faithfulness
as your friend.**

**I sign my *lips* with the sign of the cross,
that I may speak as you would speak.**

**I sign my *hands* with the sign of the cross
asking that you enable me
to do your work,
and be your hands
in our world which you love so much.**

**I sign my *eyes* with the sign of your cross
that I may really see, Lord,
and be aware
of all that is around me.**

**I sign my *ears* with the sign of your cross
that I may listen and really hear
the communication that comes to me
in different ways
- from you
and from the people
you place into my life.**

**I sign my *shoulders*, Lord, with your cross,
knowing that you call me
to carry my own cross each day
and support others
in the burdens and difficulties
that they have.**

**All that I do today
I set out to do
in the name of the Father (+)
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.**

 *The practice of making the 'Sign of the Cross' - touching one's forehead, chest and shoulders - certainly took place as early as the 5th Century. In the 13th Century, Pope Innocent III (1198-1216) decreed that the Sign was to be made with three fingers from forehead to chest and then from the right to the left shoulders (sic). It was later that the whole hand was used for the Sign, and the direction changed from left to right, as is the present practice except in the Eastern Churches.*

 *Today is the Feast of 'The Triumph of the Cross': It was formerly called 'The Exaltation of the Cross', recalling the miraculous appearance of a cross in the year 312 to the Emperor Constantine, who was told: "In this sign, conquer." We read that 14 years later his mother, St Helen, recovered the cross on which Jesus had been crucified.*

 *Mk 8³⁴; 1 Cor 1¹⁸; Gal 2^{19-37,13-14},6¹⁴; Phil 2⁸; 1 Pet 2²⁴*

 Abide with me ("hold thou thy cross");
All that I am; Come, come, follow me;
Follow me ("take my cross"); I give my
hands; Lay your hands; Take my hands

This is an excerpt from the page of this date in
'Praying Each Day of the Year',
a 3-volume book
by Nicholas Hutchinson, FSC.

For details:

<http://www.matthew-james.co.uk/>

Could make use of a search engine
to research this topic further.

This material is part of
the prayer and education website
of the De La Salle Brothers
in Great Britain:

www.prayingeachday.org