

Praying with FILIP

By Shirley Espada-Richey

(Based on a true story)

“Pray always” (Doctrine and Covenants 19:38).

It was Josef’s first time at Filip’s house. They had a great time building a cardboard spaceship. They even colored awesome flames on it. When Filip’s mom called them for dinner, Josef followed Filip into the kitchen.

“I’ll say grace,” said Filip’s dad.

What does that mean? Josef wondered. He watched Filip and his family as they each touched their forehead, then the middle of their chest, then the left side, then the right. Josef had never seen anyone do that before.

Filip held his hand out. Josef looked around and saw that the rest of Filip’s family were holding hands and bowing their heads. *Are they about to pray? Is that what it means to “say grace”?* Josef wondered.

Josef didn’t want to hurt Filip’s feelings, so he took Filip’s hand. Filip’s dad took Josef’s other hand and then started to pray.

“Bless us, O Lord . . .”

Before they sat down, Filip and his family touched their foreheads and chests as they had before.

When Josef got home, Mom asked about his day.

“Did you have a good time?” Mom asked.

“Yes,” Josef said quietly. He *did* have a good time. The spaceship was awesome, and the hamburgers were yummy. But something was bothering him.

Mom looked at him more closely. “You don’t sound OK. Is something wrong?”

“Well . . .”

Josef had so many questions! He kept thinking about that prayer. Why was it different from how he and his family prayed?

“Mom,” he asked, “how did you pray before you joined the Church?” Josef told her about Filip’s family’s prayer.

“It sounds like they’re Catholic, like I used to be,” Mom said. “They were making the sign of the cross with their hands. See how it looks like a cross? It’s a reminder that Jesus died for us.”

Josef smiled. “So Filip believes in Jesus too?”

“That’s right,” Mom said. “Do you remember what Filip’s dad said in the prayer?”

Josef had to think about it. “He thanked God for the gifts He gives us . . . and he talked about Christ!”

“See?” Mom said with a smile. “We’re not so different. I’m glad you could pray with Filip’s family.”

A few days later, Filip came over to play. They were playing outside when Dad called them in for dinner. Josef’s stomach rumbled as they ran to the kitchen.

“I’m starving!” said Josef.

“Me too,” said Filip.

Everyone took their places around the table.

Filip sat next to Josef. Filip made the sign of the cross and reached for Josef’s hand.

“This is how we pray at our house,” said Josef. “We fold our arms, close our eyes, bow our heads, and pray.”

“That’s it?”

“That’s it.”

“Easy,” said Filip.

Josef closed his eyes and smiled. He was glad he could pray with his friend. ●

The author lives in California, USA.

What did it mean to “say grace”?



I have friends at school who are Catholic and Muslim, and we are all best friends because that is how Jesus wants us to treat each other.

Elizabeth A., age 8, West Midlands, England

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