

ent catacombs under the Eternal city we see it represented in a thousand different ways. It is found over the altars, on the walls, and in the various inscriptions over the sepulchres of the Christian martyrs. The most ancient form of the Cross in the symbolism of the Church is that known as the "Crux Decussata" or St. Andrew's Cross. It consists of an X joined to the monogram of Christ with the word "salus" underneath, to show that salvation has come to us from the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross.

Another very ancient form of the Cross was the "Crux Commissa" or Tau, or Egyptian Cross. It was in the shape of a T, and was very frequently used in the inscriptions on the tombs of the martyrs, and more especially in those of the catacomb of St. Callixt. Didron holds that the Tau Cross is the anticipatory Cross of the Old Testament. However this may be it is certain that it was always connected in the minds of the early Christians with the wood borne by Isaac, and with the cross on which the brazen serpent was suspended. Tertullian refers this form of the cross to the celebrated passage in Ezechiel, where God commanded the angel to sign Tau on the foreheads of the righteous. "Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem and mark Tau upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and mourn for all the abominations that are committed in the midst thereof." "Ipsa enim litera Græcorum Tau, nostra autem T species crucis."—Tertullian.

As a religious practice the custom of making the sign of the cross is very ancient both in the Greek and Latin Liturgies. Tertullian (*De. Cor. Mil. III.*) says:—"In all our journeys, when we go out or come in, when we put on our shoes, at the bath, at table, when the lamps are lighted, and when on the point of retiring for the night we sign our foreheads with the sign of the cross."

St. Augustine says also:—"We ought at our rising in the morning give thanks to Christ, and perform all our actions with the sign of the cross."

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, who was an ocular witness of the discovery of the true cross by St. Helen, mother of Constantine the Great, writes (*Contra Julianum lib. VI.*): "Since Christ the Lord and Saviour of all divested Himself of His Divine majesty, and, leaving His Father's throne, was willing to take upon Him the form of a servant and to be made in the likeness of man, and to die the cruel and ignominious death of the cross, therefore, we being reminded of these things by the sight of the cross, and taught that one died thereon that we all might have life, value the symbol as productive of thankful remembrance of him." We bless ourselves in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, we sign ourselves with the symbol of man's redemption, in order to keep fresh within our Christian hearts the memory of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, confessing publicly by this solemn act that we are faithful followers of His life, and loving children of the Church He established on earth. The Sign of the Cross is the outward and visible testimony that we are members of the Christian faith and children of the Catholic Church. In the early years of Christianity, when to be a Christian was an act of high treason against the Roman power, and when, concealing themselves from the fury of the pagan populace, the Christians were forced to worship God in the wild fastnesses of the