BLESS YOURSELF WITH THE HOLY CROSS AND SAY:
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

SAY THE APOSTLES' CREED
I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAY THE MORNING OR EVENING PRAYER
Morning. I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Evening. I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have graciously kept me this day; and I pray that You would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into Your hands, I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.
The Thankfulness Wrought by the Spirit

The Word of the Lord works. St. David teaches his son Solomon the ABC’s of the faith in Psalm 119. Everything, for David and for us, is epitomized by the reality that the Word of the Lord does work. David says the Word of the Lord, “is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” In Luke and John Jesus works by driving out the devil and the corruption of Sin while establishing the reign of God on earth among Israel and the creation by His Word. In Acts and Galatians we observe that the work of God continues through preaching. The Apostles are driven by the Holy Spirit to preach Christ. Now we are caught up in God’s kingdom and rule by that same Word and Spirit. Thank God.


The sinner in us says, “If I could only experience healing like the lepers I would have faith and return thanks like the ‘one.’” This is just a lie we tell ourselves. In the first place, we deceive ourselves into thinking that somehow the Word of our preacher is different from the Word of Jesus. But, the preaching today drives out demons and undoes death and hell just as it did in and through Jesus—by faith. In the second place, it is a lie to think that our faith depends on our experiences. Our faith depends on God alone. His Work. His Will. His Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. Giving thanks, as the leper does, is one beautiful fruit of faith. It is not the ground of faith. Only Jesus is. O Lord, let me trust in Your Word and not my experience. Amen.

Psalm 119:105-112 (NUN): Word and Sight

There is a lot of talking going on these days. But the voices we hear come from nothing more than finite human beings filling our ears with opinions and conjecture. We don’t need more human talking. We don’t need to put our trust in princes or the words of man. St. David knew this all too well, which is why he instructs his son Solomon in the bedrock of faith. He says, “[The LORD’s] Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” All other words are darkness. They have no life in them. The words and promises of men lead to confusion and decay. Only the speaking of God gives light in darkness and life in the midst of death. O God, speak so that Your servants might listen and live in the Light and Life. Amen.

Galatians 5:16-22: Spirit and Life

Moralism is what happens when we reduce the Christian faith to our right actions. It is the old idolatry of our works. They are, after all, most likely the most dangerous sins because we are tempted to trust in them more than anything. It looks like St. Paul is urging us toward right action by telling us to, “keep in step with the Spirit.” We must get our act together and keep our noses clean. This isn’t merely what Paul is proclaiming. The Holy Spirit’s job is also to drive Christ into our hearts and souls by the effective Word. So, when Paul urges us to, “keep in step with the Spirit,” he is also telling us to go to church, listen, and believe. O God, grant Your Spirit to drive Christ into my heart and soul so that I might be right in faith, thought, word, and deed. Amen.

Psalm 66: Jesus + Nothing = Everything

The old sinner in each of us doesn’t want to see our God as a good gift giver. We don’t want to see the good He lavishes upon us. We cherry-pick the bad and begin to believe this is the true nature and character of God. We start believing God isn’t a good gift giver and we can do better. Psalm 66 gives us a corrective. God does awesome deeds all over the earth and to all peoples, but especially for His Elect. He preserves them. He keeps them. Though He gives us sorrows, He does not know the number of them. He gives us sorrow and then fills us with joy. He does this because He loves us in Christ. In the end His Will is to bring us to heaven. Maybe we gain riches in this life, maybe not. He only promises us Jesus. Give me Jesus. He’s Enough. Amen.