

**Topic:** The importance of doing the cross

**Abstract:** When I was a child I lived by the border of Mexicali .I was thought how to do the cross by an old lady name Dona Librada and my grandmother would always take me to church .I grew up in a religious family where I was thought he importance of Christianity .Thanks to my grandmothers aunt I learned to understand the importance of this which now has become a culture to me.

**Key words:** Grandmother, God, Sunday, Mexicali Church, blessing, great impact, stories, afraid, cross, importance, remember.

**Ethnic designation:** Mexicana

**Cultural Category:** religion

### Persinarse

When I was a child I lived in a little town by the border of Mexicali and Calexico. My grandmother's house was just next door I spend most of my time at her house, she had a huge backyard with a tree that cover the top of the roof with it's branches and leaves .This was my favorite places to play my grandmother's name was Maria she was a short lady with gray hair: she was a really religious person her house was decorated with pictures of Chris and The Virgin Marry. On church Holydays she would have the matachines dance for the Virgin Marry; they had a man dressed as the devil I was always scare when they were present. There was not Sunday that my grandmother wouldn't go to church every Sunday mornings and Thursday afternoons she would get me ready an take me with her. Church was only 5 minutes away so we would walk over there it was always crowed with old people and some kids who couldn't stop crying. My

grandmother would always tell me to behave and listen she wanted me to learn the word of God .After church my grandmother would hangout I was always running around especially behind church I remember there was an altar made up of rock and *nopales*, on the top of the alter there was a huge statue of the virgin marry it was a really nice I loved playing around there.

My grandmother had a friend name LibradaI called her *Dona Librada* she lived right in front of my house .Her front yard was cover with plants and rocks my friends and I played there every afternoon but ,when *Dona librada* would come out of her house to go to church she would called us over no one wanted to go .We weren't afraid of her but we knew she wanted us to walk her to church I was always the one that would scarified my play time to help her .*Dona librada* was an old lady she was about 115 years old and still walked her face had scars and sometimes dry blood my dad said this was due to her age .She was really short and wore a *velo* and a *baston*. She would never come out only to go to church and she would only walked there .When I would walked her to church she would tell me ,"*Nos tenemos que persinar.*" so she would grab my hand cross my two fingers and start like this

*"Por la senal de la santacruz de nuestrosenemigos  
libranos senior diosnuestro  
en el nombre del padre del hijo y del espiritosanto amen."*

She would always do this before we walk once I asked her why did we have to do the cross , she told me that we never know what could happen and this was like blessing ourselves and that it was important to do it before we go to bed and after we wake up because in the night the devil could kiss you and that causes to have the nightmares we have at night .Still I never did

it took me some time until I learned how to do it myself .But it wasn't until my grandmother sister came to visit us that I found a great importance to this.

My grandmother had a younger sister name Ramona she lived in a farm about an hour away she had short hair like a boy she was a good cook. Every time she would come and visit I would be super excited and I liked to stay up late listening to her stories .Sometimes she would tell me scary stories so I would go to bed she knew I was afraid in the nights .She would see me playing with my dolls at night and she would tell me that it wasn't good to play with toys at night because they would come alive during night I believed her and I would immediately put them away. But there was time when she told me a story about a kid who would stay up all night playing with an imaginary kid well that's what his parents believe .Because he wouldn't sleep in the nights he would never do the cross at night or morning like Dona librada would say we should do before we are going to bed .So one they while the kid played with his friend ; his friend told him if he wanted to go with him home and the kid said yes .His friend took him somewhere far and turn him into stone and his parent never found him again . I was really scare so after I heard this story every night before I would go to bed *me persinaba* I made it a habit .when my grandmother would take me to church and before church was over the Priest would make us do the cross and I would do it too. I learned the importance of the cross When I moved to California with my older sister it was a huge change for me. My niece and I share rooms and I notice that she would go to bed without doing the cross so I tried to teach her how to do it but she didn't understand the words I said. She knew little Spanish but I explain to her what they meant and why we had to do it .My sister didn't practice much of the religion so my words meant nothing to my niece but even though I was far from home I never forgot how to persinarme.I still remember Dona librada's words and the stories my aunt told me .Sometimes I feel silly when I

do this at night because now I know that all the stories and myths that I was told as a child weren't true .But this has become part of my culture I might not be as religious as my grandmother and Dona Librada were but I still remember the importance of God in my culture.