Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

Prayer and symbolism come together in one of the most familiar gestures of our faith: the Sign of the Cross. Its simplicity makes it accessible for even the youngest members of our Church; its power keeps it always significant. Today we mark the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Use this time as an opportunity to renew students' understanding of the Sign of the Cross as a prayer unto itself rather than just a flourish to start and finish other prayers with. If it is not already, make the Sign of the Cross a part of your daily devotionals. A simple Sign of the Cross traced by thumb on the forehead of a child is a meaningful sending; having children sign themselves at the start of each day gets them centered.

Try this coloring page and activity to help young children learn the Sign of the Cross. Kids sometimes get confused about which shoulder to touch first (in the Latin Rite it is the left; in the Eastern Rites it is opposite). One trick is to teach them to "cross over first" when making the Sign of the Cross. This works when using the right hand in the Latin style.

Create Salvadoran Wooden Crosses to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. Talk about the Sign of the Cross and the importance of reverence while making the prayer. You can even incorporate math by drawing a bar graph that depicts preferences for how to hold the hand while making the Sign of the Cross.