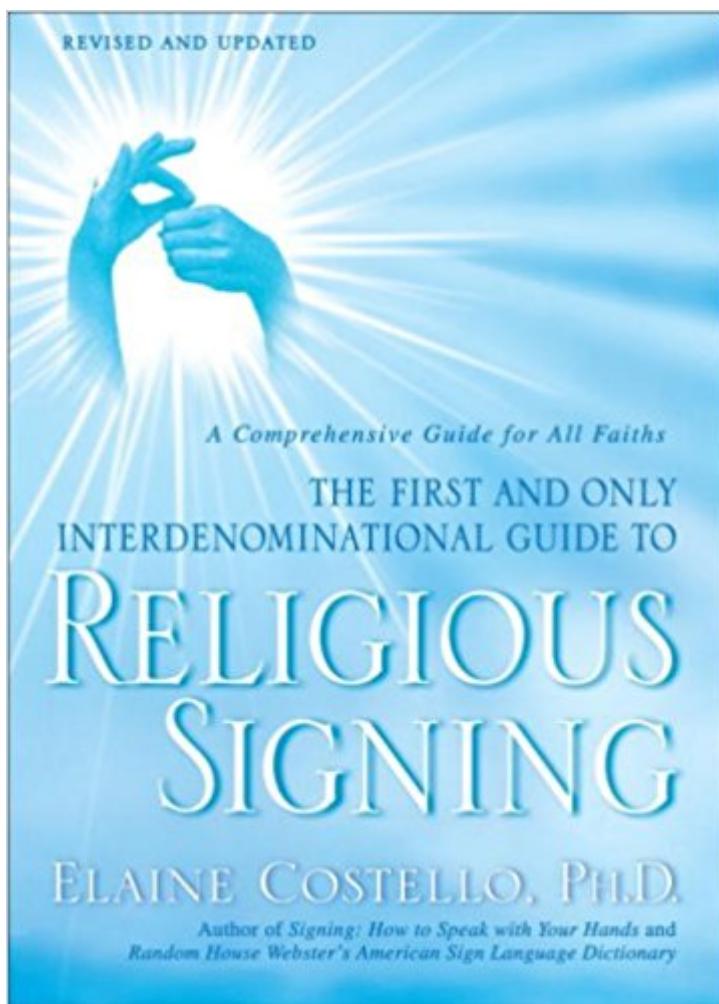


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# Religious Signing: A Comprehensive Guide For All Faiths



## Synopsis

Since the fourth century, when Spanish monks first started signing to communicate during their vows of silence, sign language has been used in religious communities of all faiths. Present-day American Sign Language (ASL) carries on that tradition. Like any living language, it continues to grow and change to meet the communication needs of an ever more diverse religious population. This comprehensive guide, newly revised, updated, and expanded, gives you all the vocabulary you need to communicate effectively in any religious setting. From Alleluia to Zizith, more than 750 signs and their specific meanings Large, clear, upper-torso illustrations that show the corresponding movements of hands, body, and face Easy-to-follow instructions to help you master the art of expressing signs A complete index for quick access to any signWith an essential section of religious name signs, the addition of signs for the Muslim faith, and an expanded selection of favorite verses, prayers, and blessings, this book is an indispensable resource for signers of all denominations. Written with expertise by an educator and author associated with the field of deafness for more than thirty years, it makes communicating by ASL in a religious setting simple and easy, no matter your level of experience.

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## Customer Reviews

Dr. Elaine Costello has been an educator and author associated with the field of deafness for more than twenty years. For ten years she was a classroom teacher and supervisor in schools for the deaf. She is now the director and editor in chief of the Gallaudet College Press at Gallaudet College

in Washington, D.C., the world's only liberal arts college for the deaf.

**SIGN ENTRIESABIDE (A)** This sign indicates a place where one is to remain or stay for a period of time. Formation: Move the right Y hand, palm facing down, downward in front of the right side of the body with a deliberate movement. Same sign for **STAYABIDE (B)** See **LIVEABOVE**, **OVERT** The hand moves to a position above the other hand and symbolizes the area on high from where God rules the world. Formation: Starting with the palm of the right open hand lying on the back of the left open hand, elbows out and palms facing down, bring the right hand upward in a spiraling movement. **ABRAHAM, IBRAHIM** (Hebrew) The formation of this sign represents God staying Abraham's arm as he raised the knife to slay his son Isaac. Formation: The right A hand, palm facing left, is brought deliberately down at a forward angle from in front of the right shoulder. The left C hand, palm up, moves upward to clasp the right forearm and stop it abruptly as it descends. **ABSOLUTION (A)** This sign is a combination of **ANNOUNCE** and **FORGIVE** signifying the declaratory statement that sins are forgiven after confession or penance. Formation: Start with both extended index fingers touching each side of the mouth, palms facing in. Twist the wrists to bring the fingers outward past the shoulders, palms facing forward and fingers pointing upward at an angle. Then brush the fingers of the right open hand across the palm of the left open hand from heel to the fingers with a repeated movement. **ABSOLUTION (B)** See **BLESS (A)(B)**, **FORGIVEABSTAIN** See **FAST (A)** **ABUNDANT (A)**, **BOUNTY**, **PLENTY** The hands indicate a cup that is full and overflowing. Formation: Push the palm of the right open hand, palm down and fingers pointing forward, across the thumb side of the left S hand, palm right, curving the hand downward as it goes over the left index finger. Related forms: **ABUNDANCE**, **ABUNDANTLY**, **BOUNTIFUL**, **PLENTIFULABUNDANT (B)**, **BOUNTIFUL** The hands in this sign seem to hold a large quantity. Formation: Beginning with the fingertips of both curved hands touching in front of the body, palms facing each other, bring the hands outward to in front of each side of the chest. Related form: **ABUNDANCE** Same sign for **A LOTACCOMPLISH** See **FULFILLACCUSE**, **AT FAULT**, **BLAME** This is a directional sign that seems to push responsibility or blame at whomever it is directed. Formation: Move the right A hand, palm left and thumb extended upward, in a downward arc toward the referent across the back of the left open hand, palm down. Note: If you are the one being accused, direct the right thumb back toward oneself. The left hand may be an S hand instead of an open hand. **ACKNOWLEDGE** See **CONFESS (A)** **ACQUIRE** See **OBTAINADAM (A)** This is an initialized sign in the masculine position and signifies Adam's position as the first man. Formation: Touch the right temple with the thumb of the right hand, palm facing forward. **ADAM (B)** This is the

Islamic sign for Adam, the father of humankind and God's first prophet. In Islam, Adam is considered God's vice-regent (caliph) on earth. Formation: Move the right B hand, palm facing left and fingers pointing up, upward in front of the right shoulder. **ADMIT** See **CONFESS** **ADMONISH**, **WARN** The sign represents a slap on the wrist as a warning. Formation: Slap the back of the left open hand with the fingers of the right open hand, both palms facing down. Related forms: **ADMONITION**, **WARNING** **ADORE** See **WORSHIP** **ADULTERY (A)** This is an initialized sign and the movement indicates the alternating attention that an unfaithful married person gives his or her spouse and then another person outside the marriage. Formation: Tap the heel of the right A hand, palm facing forward, alternating on each finger of the left V hand held in front of the chest, palm facing in and fingers pointing up. **ADULTERY (B)** The sign seems to show someone slipping around the corner or behind someone's back for an affair. Formation: Move the palm side of the right open hand, palm facing right and fingers pointing forward, around the little-finger side of the left open hand, palm facing right and fingers pointing up. **ADVENT**, **COMING** This is a directional form of **COME** and signifies the birth of Christ and the preparation period of four weeks before His Coming at Christmas. Formation: Beginning with both extended index fingers pointing up in front of the head, palms facing in, bring both hands down simultaneously. **ADVERSARY** See **ENEMY** **ADVOCATE**, **FOUNDATION**, **SUPPORT** The action of the right hand pushing the left hand upward shows active support for a cause. Formation: Bring the knuckles of the right S hand upward under the little-finger side of the left S hand, both palms facing in, pushing it upward in front of the chest. Same sign used for **ADVOCACY**, **IN FAVOR OF** See also **HELP** and **VICAR** for signs formed in a similar manner. **AFFILIATE** See **UNITE** **AFFLICTION**, **PATIENT**, **SUFFER** The movement of the hand in this sign indicates a person keeping quiet or without complaint while enduring suffering. Formation: Move the thumb of the right A hand, palm facing left, downward from the mouth to the chin. Same sign for **BEAR**, **ENDURE**, **TOLERATE** **AFAIR** See **FEAR (A)(B)(C)** **AGAPE** This sign is a combination of **GOD** and **LOVE** signifying the Greek word meaning "selfless love." Formation: Move the right B hand, palm left, from above the front of the head downward in an arc toward the forehead and down in front of the face. Then with both palms facing the body, hold the right S hand across the left S hand, which is held on the chest over the heart. **AGONY** See **SUFFER (B)** **AISLE**, **WAY** The hands outline a passageway, such as between rows of seats in a church. Formation: Move both open hands forward simultaneously, palms facing each other and fingers pointing forward and held several inches apart in front of the waist. Same sign for **PATH**, **ROAD** **LIVE** See **ALLAH**, **GOD** This is the foremost name for the supreme being according to Islamic belief. Humans are called to worship and devote

their faith only to him; hence he is the object of Islam (Àçâ Ñ“submissionÀçâ Ñ•).Formation: Move the extended right index finger, palm facing left and finger pointing up, upward in front of the right shoulder. **ALLELUIA, HALLELUJAH** As an expression of praise of thanksgiving to God, this sign is a combination of PRAISE and CELEBRATION. Formation: Bring both open hands, palms facing each other and fingers pointing up, together in front of the chest. Then raise both modified A hands near each shoulder, moving them in small circles outward. **ALMIGHTY (A), OMNIPOTENT** This sign is a combination of ALL and POWER, an attribute referring to GodÀçâ Ñâ„cs unlimited universal power. Formation: With the right open hand, palm facing forward, near the left shoulder, make a large loop to the right ending in the upturned palm of the left open hand. Then move both S hands, palms facing in, from near each side of the chest forward with a deliberate movement, ending abruptly. See also POWER and MIGHTY for alternate signs. **ALMIGHTY (B)** See POWER (A)(B) **ALONE** The single finger moving in a circle is an emphatic form of the sign ONE. Formation: With the right extended index finger pointing up, palm facing in, rotate the arm and hand in a counterclockwise circle. **ALTAR** The sign is an initialized form of TABLE. The hands outline the shape of the altar, the structure before which the divine offices are recited and upon which the Eucharist is celebrated. Formation: With the thumbs of both A hands touching each other in front of the chest, palms facing forward, move the hands apart to about shoulder width and then downward a short distance without changing orientation. **ALWAYS, CONSTANTLY, EVER** The circular motion of this sign shows something never ending. Formation: Move the extended right index finger, palm angled up, in small clockwise circles near the right shoulder. See also ETERNAL for an alternate sign. **AMAZE** See ASTONISH **MEN** See PRAYAMISH See MENNONITE **ANGEL, CHERUB, SERAPH** The hands represent the movement of wings traditionally attributed to angels, the immortal spiritual beings attending to GodÀçâ Ñâ„cs will. Formation: Touch the fingertips of both bent hands to the shoulders, palms facing down and elbows close at the sides. Turn the wrists outward and bend the hands up and down. Same sign for **WINGSANGER, FURY, RAGE, WRATH** The tense fingers represent angry emotions rased up in the body. Formation: Bring both claw hands, palms facing in and fingers pointing toward each other, upward from near each other at the waist and out toward each shoulder. **ANGLICAN CHURCH, THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND** This sign is a combination of ANOINT (A) and CHURCH and refers to the form of Christianity that was shaped when, during the reign of Henry the VIII, England broke away from the Catholic Church by dissolving allegiance to the Pope. Formation: Draw the thumbnail of the right A hand, palm down, first downward on the forehead a short distance and then from left to right. Then tap the thumb side of the right C hand on the back of the left open hand, palm facing down. **ANNOUNCE,**

ANNUNCIATION, CONFESS (FAITH), DECLARE, EVANGELISM, NOEL, PROCLAIMThe fingers indicate taking words from the mouth and declaring them broadly. Formation: Start with both extended index fingers touching each side of the mouth, palms facing in. Twist the wrists to bring the fingers outward past the shoulders, palms facing forward and fingers pointing upward at an angle. Related form: ANNOUNCEMENT ANNUL See CONDEMN (A) ANNUNCIATION (A) This sign is a combination of ANNOUNCE and MARY and refers to the angel's announcement to the Virgin Mary that she would bear a son, Jesus. Formation: Start with both extended index fingers touching each side of the mouth, palms facing in. Twist the wrists to bring the fingers outward past the shoulders, palms facing forward and fingers pointing upward at an angle. Then bring the right M hand, palm down, in an arc following the shape of the head from the top of the left side of the head to the right shoulder. ANNUNCIATION (B) See ANNOUNCE ANOINT (A), LENT The sign symbolizes how a priest anoints a person's forehead with oil as a sign of consecration in a religious ceremony. Formation: Draw the thumbnail of the right A hand, palm down, first downward on the forehead a short distance and then from left to right. ANOINT (B), ATONE, OIL The hand seems to pour oil over another as is done as a sign of consecration in a religious ceremony. Formation: Move the thumb of the right A hand over the back of the left A hand, both palms facing down. Related form: ATONEMENT ANOINTING THE SICK This sign is a combination of ANOINT and SICK. It is used in the Roman Catholic Church to indicate the sacrament formerly known as Last Rites, which is administered to terminally ill people. Formation: Draw the thumbnail of the right A hand, palm down, first downward on the forehead a short distance and then from left to right. Then touch the bent middle finger of the right 5 hand to the forehead while touching the bent middle finger of the left 5 hand to the stomach, both palms facing in. ANSWER, REPLY, RESPOND The sign shows words directed from the mouth in reply. Formation: Beginning with the right extended index finger in front of the mouth and the left extended index finger somewhat lower and forward, bring both fingers downward simultaneously by bending the wrists forward. Note: RESPONSE and REPLY are often initialized with R hands. Related form: RESPONSE See also COMMAND (A) for a related sign formed in a similar manner. ANTHEM See HYMNANTIC CHRIST This sign is a combination of OPPOSITE and CHRIST and refers to an enemy of Christ who usurps Christ's name and rights. Formation: Beginning with the fingertips of both extended index fingers pointing toward each other in front of the body, palms facing in, pull the hands apart sharply. Then touch the index-finger side of the right C hand, palm left, first to near the left shoulder and then to near the right hip. APOLOGETICS This sign is a combination of PROVE and TRUE and refers to the defense of a faith based on intellectual grounds. The word comes from a Greek term meaning

“defense.”  
Formation: Move the fingertips of the right open hand, palm facing in, from in front of the mouth downward, ending with the back of the right hand on the palm of the left open hand, both palms facing up in front of the chest. Then bring the right extended index finger, palm facing left and finger pointing up, forward from in front of the mouth.  
**APOSTASY** See **BACKSLIDE**, **STRAY** (A)  
**APOSTLE** See **DISCIPLE** (B)  
**APOSTOLIC** This sign is a combination of **SINCE** and **FOLLOW**, indicating Christians follow the faith, teachings, and practices of the apostles.  
Formation: Begin with both extended index fingers touching near the right shoulder. Move the fingers forward in an arc, ending with the fingers pointing forward and palms facing up. Then with the right A hand behind the left A hand, palms facing each other, move both hands forward.  
**APPEAR** The right index finger popping up through the left hand indicates a sudden coming into view.  
Formation: Push the right extended index finger, palm facing forward, upward deliberately between the index and middle fingers of the left open hand held in front of the chest, palm facing down.  
Related form:  
**APPEARANCE** Same sign for **SHOW UP**, **POP UP** See also **PRESENCE** for the sign to use if referring to an appearance that is less sudden.  
**APPEARANCE** See **PRESENCE**  
**APPOINT** (A), **CHOSEN**, **ELECT**, **SELECT** The fingers seem to select one out of available options.  
Formation: Bring the bent thumb and index finger of the outstretched right 5 hand back toward the right shoulder while closing the thumb to the index finger. Same sign for **PICK**, **CHOOSE**  
**APPOINT** (B), **CHOSEN**, **ELECT**, **SELECT** The fingers seem to pick one out of many.  
Formation: Bring the bent thumb and index finger of the right 5 hand from touching the palm of the left open hand back toward the right shoulder while closing the thumb to the index finger.

I have been looking around for a reference book with religious and theological signs in it. I finally found this and I got the Kindle edition. It would be nice if the publication date appeared somewhere in the Kindle edition. To date, this is the only book of it's sort that I have been able to find. I was a bit disappointed to find that most of the unique theological concepts of Eastern Orthodoxy are not covered. The information is all there but accessibility is a bit of a problem...If it ever gets X-Ray enabled, I will be right back to change my rating to 5 stars! My solution was to by a paperback edition as well as a Kindle edition. The paperback gets 5 STARS and is just what I was looking for!

One reviewer stated, "Elaine Costello isn't going to offer wrong signs!" but since this book as not been revised in 20 years, there are several signs that have simply fallen out of favor and are really no longer in use. Additionally, many concepts shown seem to favor an initialized signed English form of the sign. Yes, I do agree that no ASL dictionary can be exhaustive but the signs here seem

to have been pulled from a limited geographic area (namely, the central east cost, New York, Washington, Maryland, etc.) Not entirely bad as many signs are used in many regions, but the signs used only in this area will not be useful to most. I also see a couple signs in the book that I would say are not only outside of common use but also conceptually inaccurate (e.g. Justification which is depicted as the concept of justice - as in judicial equality and fairness for all, not the forgiveness of all believers which is a different concept). Perhaps if this reference were revised, updated and maybe arranged not only with an alphabetical glossary of each concept in English but then with each sign classified and listed by handshape, it would be a much improved resource. As it is now, I would not highly recommend it. Again, as many have said it does not address ASL grammar, but that is not the function of a dictionary and I find that to be acceptable.

Don't know a lot of the words never heard of them but, I use the first ones of multiple signs on one word to use. A lot of the signs are NOT ASL. They don't even come close to the ASL Signs. This book was only a tiny help to me.

awesome book if you're looking to start an interest in signing in the church

I really like this revised version. It is helpful to the Deaf in our congregation. Also helpful to learn signs from other religious organizations. Many time as an interpreter I encounter a preacher comparing a belief to another, usually a belief that I'm not very familiar with. This book has many words of other beliefs and it is easy to familiarize myself with these words before the worship service . Our Deaf also many time will ask to look at the description of these words after service in order to become more familiar. A very helpful and well organized tool.

as described.

Thanks

Not what I thought it would be. Still looking for a better book.

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