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Cross of St. Zacharias of Jerusalem, (Patriarch of Jerusalem—609-632)

The characters, arranged in the form of a cross, represent lines from a prayer against pestilence, attributed to St. Zacharias, and are exorcised and blessed. This prayer had been efficacious in obtaining mercy from God for Jerusalem when it had been devastated by a plague during St. Zacharias' Patriarchate. Almost one thousand years later, when a severe plague was raging in the city of Trent in 1546, it is reported that the fathers of the Council of Trent devoutly wore these characters, and found it was, as they described, an advantageous remedy against the contagion.

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