



Praying the Mass Anew

*The New Translation of The Roman Missal
and Our Actual Participation at Mass*

14. Professing our Faith.

At Sunday Mass and at Masses for those more noteworthy days in the year that are designated “solemnities,” the profession of faith is made by singing or reciting of the Creed. Typically, we recite the “Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed.” This creed receives its name from the two ecumenical councils in the 4th Century: the Council of Nicea in 325, and the Council of Constantinople in 381. Generally speaking, it is from these two councils that the formulations of faith that are recited in this creed were more clearly articulated. The option for use of the “Apostles’ Creed” also exists for use as a profession of faith, particularly during Lent and Easter. The name “Apostles Creed” implies that the words of this prayer contain the faith of the Apostles. While the Apostles Creed is

unchanged in its formulation in the new translation, the translation of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed has significant changes, as shown on the back side of this page.

The creed is at times called the “Symbol,” as the word symbol, in its Greek origin means to “bring together.” The Creed brings together in a single profession of faith the statement of all that we believe and live by as Catholic Christians. As we profess our faith, we give voice to our commitment and assent of the truth of God that we have just heard and meditated upon in the readings and the homily. Likewise, this placement of the Creed within the Mass after the readings and homily places it in close relationship to the Eucharistic Prayer, wherein the words of faith spoken in “symbol” are then accomplished in the Eucharist.

Question of the Week:

➤ ***Are there ever any times when the Creed is not said on Sunday?***

As a matter of fact, on Easter Sunday, the dioceses in the United States replace the reciting of the Creed with the renewal of baptismal promises (that contains the faith professed in the words of the Creed in the form of questions). While this renewal of baptismal promises properly is offered at the Easter Vigil, in the U.S. we have the well established custom of Saturday evening Masses “in anticipation of” Sunday, which serve to aid people in fulfilling their Sunday obligation on Saturday evening (after 4:00 pm). In the case of Easter, where the Easter Vigil Mass serves this purpose for some, and so that all might be able to properly renew their baptismal promises (not only those who attend the Easter Vigil Mass), the renewal is also offered on Sunday in place of the Creed. On all other Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, the Creed is to be included.

The Profession of Faith

The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God.
begotten, not made, **consubstantial** with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

*At the words that follow, through
and including “and became man,” all bow.*

**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate
of the Virgin Mary,**
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he **suffered death** and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is **adored** and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

- **Overall:** As we look at the words of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, there are notable changes and style and in particular words that are used:
- **“I” believe** – The very word in the Latin version is “credo,” not “credimus,” (which would be “We believe.”) The “I” is not meant to make our act of professing faith individualistic. Rather, it might be understood as the Body of Christ, of which we are all members, professing faith as one. Note also that we say “I believe,” at the beginning of each new section of the creed.
- **“consubstantial with the Father”** – “consubstantial” literally means “one in being,” as the former version had us say. The use of “consubstantial” more properly reflects the traditional, elevated language of Church teaching on the reality that God the Father and God the Son are one “in substance;” they are united in being.
- **“by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary”** – that God takes on human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ is a mystery properly called the Incarnation. That Jesus “was incarnate of the Virgin Mary” more truly reflects that he was not simply “born,” but truly takes on human flesh through Mary.
- **Regarding the style of the prayer** – another notable change is the way that some phrases, which in the previous translation were given as complete sentences, are now parts of larger sentences. While this style is more literal, the connecting of phrases unifies the prayer more properly, better connecting related statements.