

of Lent and Easter and so we can use the Apostles' Creed at Mass during these times.

Consubstantial with the Father

The Nicene Creed helps focus on who God the Son is and on his Incarnation. We speak of him as God from God, Light from Light etc. We use the word 'consubstantial' to say that Jesus has the same nature as God and that he is God himself. Our faith in the Trinity means we believe in three persons who are not three Gods but one God. In Jesus, God took our human nature so that the person who is the eternal Son of God was born in time and is the person who is the Son of Mary. We bow as a sign of respect (at Christmas, we genuflect) at the words, 'and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man'.

The Creed is a sign we are in God's family, it is important we know it and love it.

Q *Pray through the Creed and think about the meaning of the words.*

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The Creed

Can you remember when you first heard the Creed? Chances are you don't. It is used at baptism which, for many, takes place when we are small. At every baptism either the parents and godparents or the persons being baptised profess their faith.

There are two Creeds used regularly; the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene. The Apostles' Creed was first used at baptisms in ancient Rome. The Nicene Creed was drawn largely from the work of the Councils of Nicea and Constantinople which affirmed that Jesus is both God and a human being. Originally it too was used with those who were to be baptised. Because of this it began with I believe.

We believe, I believe

The Nicene Creed was introduced at Mass in the Eastern Church and the 'I' was altered to 'We' for congregations to recite. We started reciting it at Mass in Rome and the west of Europe much later. We have always used the version written for baptism and in Latin it begins 'credo' - 'I believe'. The creed is said towards the end of the Liturgy of the Word as we remember and respond to the call and message of God.

Beginning with 'we believe' helps us say that we share our faith with others. On the other hand, using 'I believe' reminds me of the promises made at baptism. As I pray the creed I remember that I am a member of the family of the Church. We emphasise this at Easter when we renew our baptismal promises by using the question and answer form based on the Apostles' Creed. We think about Baptism a great deal in the seasons



Nicene 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 up to 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.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

*At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary,
all bow.*

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

