

Nicene Creed: The Profession of the Christian Faith

Summary of professions:

- The Father almighty
- The Trinity
- Christ & his mission of salvation
- Immaculate conception and nature of Christ
- Resurrection and Second Coming of Christ
- Judgment
- The workings & presence of the Holy Spirit
- The Catholic Church, Baptism & Resurrection of the Dead
- Heaven

The Nicene Creed

Part 1: The first divine Person and the wonderful work of creation	
<p><i>I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The faithful first profess their belief in God” (CCC 199) • The confession of God's oneness, which has its roots in the divine revelation of the Old Covenant, is inseparable from the profession of God's existence and is equally fundamental. God is unique; there is only one God: "The Christian faith confesses that God is one in nature, substance and essence.“ (CCC 200)
<p><i>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.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus affirms “the one Lord” (Mk 12:29-30) and also that he himself is the Lord (Mk 12:35-37) • confession of Jesus as Lord (or of the Holy Spirit) in no way contradicts belief in One God (CCC 202) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “He was in the beginning with God. (Jn 1:2) • Jesus Christ is true God and true man” (CCC 464) • “begotten not made” = the Son is of the Father and not created; (CCC 465) • Jesus says, “No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” (Mt 11:27 from CCC 240) • “All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be” (Jn 1:3)

Part 2: The second divine Person and the mystery of his redemption of men

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, [bow during the next two lines:] and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

- The Good News: God has sent his Son ([CCC 1, 2:2](#))
- The Word became flesh so that thus we might know God's love ... "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." ([Jn 3:16](#) from [CCC 458](#))
- so that we may be "partakers of the divine nature" ([2 Pet 1:4](#) per [CCC 460](#))
- the Son of God assumed a human nature in order to accomplish our salvation in it. ([CCC 461](#))
- "And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross" ([Phil 2:7-8](#) per [CCC 461](#))
- The Annunciation to Mary inaugurates "the fullness of time", the time of the fulfillment of God's promises and preparations. ([CCC 484](#))
- The Virgin Mary "cooperated through free faith and obedience in human salvation" (LG 56). She uttered her yes "in the name of all human nature" (St. Thomas Aquinas, STh III, 30, 1). By her obedience she became the new Eve, mother of the living. ([CCC 511](#))

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.

- For overview of Catholic belief in Christ, see [CCC 423](#)
- God's saving plan was accomplished "once for all" by the redemptive death of his Son Jesus Christ. ([CCC 571](#))
- CHRIST'S REDEMPTIVE DEATH IN GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION ([CCC 1, 2,4](#))
- The Scriptures had foretold this divine plan of salvation through the putting to death of "the righteous one, my Servant" as a mystery of universal redemption, that is, as the ransom that would free men from the slavery of sin. ([CCC 601](#))
- "Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living." ([Rom 14:9](#), from [CCC 668](#))
- Christ is Lord of eternal life. Full right to pass definitive judgment on the works and hearts of men belongs to him as redeemer of the world. He "acquired" this right by his cross. The Father has given "all judgment to the Son". Yet the Son did not come to judge, but to save and to give the life he has in himself. By rejecting grace in this life, one already judges oneself, receives according to one's works, and can even condemn oneself for all eternity by rejecting the Spirit of love. ([CCC 679](#))

Part 3: The third divine Person, the origin and source of our sanctification

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.

- "Holy Spirit" is the proper name of the one whom we adore and glorify with the Father and the Son. The Church has received this name from the Lord and professes it in the Baptism of her new children. ([CCC 691](#))
- Through his grace, the Holy Spirit is the first to awaken faith in us and to communicate to us the new life, which is to "know the Father and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ. ([CCC 684](#))
- To believe in the Holy Spirit is to profess that the Holy Spirit is one of the persons of the Holy Trinity, consubstantial with the Father and the Son: "with the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified." ([CCC 685](#))
- The mission of Christ and the Holy Spirit is brought to completion in the Church, which is the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. ([CCC 737](#))
- For the symbols of the Holy Spirit see [CCC 694-701](#)

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

- To believe that the Church is "holy" and "catholic," and that she is "one" and "apostolic" (as the Nicene Creed adds), is inseparable from belief in God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. ([CCC 750](#))
- The Church is both the means and the goal of God's plan: prefigured in creation, prepared for in the Old Covenant, founded by the words and actions of Jesus Christ, fulfilled by his redeeming cross and his Resurrection, the Church has been manifested as the mystery of salvation by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. ([CCC 778](#))
- Summary [CCC 866-870](#): the "Four Marks of the Church"
 - **The Church is one:** she acknowledges one Lord, confesses one faith, is born of one Baptism, forms only one Body, is given life by the one Spirit, for the sake of one hope...
 - **The Church is holy:** the Most Holy God is her author; Christ, her bridegroom, gave himself up to make her holy; the Spirit of holiness gives her life. ... Her holiness shines in the saints; in Mary she is already all-holy.
 - **The Church is catholic:** she proclaims the fullness of the faith. She bears in herself and administers the totality of the means of salvation. She is sent out to all peoples. She speaks to all men. She encompasses all times.
 - **The Church is apostolic.** She is built on a lasting foundation: "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" ([Rev 21:14](#)). She is indestructible (cf. [Mt 16:18](#)). She is upheld infallibly in the truth: Christ governs her through Peter and the other apostles, who are present in their successors, the Pope and the college of bishops.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith is necessary for salvation. The Lord himself affirms: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mk 16:16 from CCC 183) All the sacraments, and principally those of Christian initiation, have as their goal the last Passover of the child of God which, through death, leads him into the life of the Kingdom. Then what he confessed in faith and hope will be fulfilled: "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come." (CCC 1680)
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Notes on the history of the Nicene Creed:

- The Nicene Creed is derived of the language adopted by the Church at the Councils of Nicaea (325 AD) and Constantinople (381 AD)
- the Councils were instrumental in affirming the Christian faith, especially against the heresies that distorted or denied the nature of God and Jesus Christ
- The heresies corrected heterodox (different, incorrect) beliefs
- The primary heretical (wrong) beliefs were based on misunderstandings of the Triune nature of God, i.e., the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
- The primary proponent of the heresies that were corrected by the Councils was the gnostic heretic, "Arius," whose followers were called "Arians" and his teachings "Arianism".
 - St. Nicholas slapped Arius at the Council of Nicaea

Beliefs affirmed by the Councils (“orthodox” for “straight, right way” or “accepted”)	Heretical beliefs (“heterodox” for “other,” “wrong teaching”)
The Father is "maker of heaven and earth, all things visible and invisible."	That the earth is corrupt and ungodly, and only heaven is divine. This “dualism” condemns what is of the earth (“mortal”) and accepts only the heaven and the unseen as divine.
The Lord Jesus Christ is "born of the Father before all ages... begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father... and was incarnate of the Virgin Mary"	Some heretics claimed that Jesus was either 1) not God; or 2) not Man; and thereby not both
The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are “from the substance of the Father” (from Council of Nicaea of 325, meaning, the same, or “consubstantial”).	Some heretics considered Christ as a creation of God, not equal or “consubstantial” with the Father and not having always existed with the Father.
	Arius taught the Christ is the Son of God but that he did not always exist.
Affirms the Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit	Some heretics did not recognize the Holy Spirit
<u>Notes:</u>	If the Son and/or the Holy Spirit are not of the “same substance” as the Father, then belief in the Son and the Holy Spirit becomes polytheistic and allows for belief in other gods.
	“Strict” monotheistic religions such as Judaism and Islam reject the divinity of Christ.