

Understanding the Mass

The Creed

Each week, we are explaining the different parts of the Mass - what is in the church, what we use in the Mass, and why (and how) we celebrate Mass the way we do.

*Today our topic is the **Creed**.*

After the homily, the priest returns to the presidential chair and invites the congregation - all of us - to join him in the **Creed**, a word that comes from the Latin *credo*, meaning “belief”. We do not just say the Creed, we *profess* it - which means we publicly declare that we believe all the words that we are saying.



The Creed is a statement of our faith in the Word of God that we have heard proclaimed in the Scripture and the homily, and a declaration of our Catholic faith that leads us to give our lives for one another as Christ gave His life for us.

It is not only those of us at Mass who declare these beliefs. The Creed connects us to all Catholics around the world - and those have professed the same faith throughout the ages: when we pray the Creed, we are joined by the saints and all those of our faith who have gone before us.

Generally we will profess the Nicene Creed at Sunday Mass, which is named after two gatherings of Christian bishops that took place in Constantinople (in modern-day Türkiye) in 325 and 381. The Apostles' Creed, which is even older and dates to the earliest days of the Christian Church, may sometimes be professed at Mass instead of the Nicene Creed.

We stand when we profess the Creed as a sign of our respect, and a reflection of our belief in the words that we are saying. There is also a moment when we bow our heads as an even deeper sign of respect.

In the Nicene Creed, we bow our heads when we say the words “By the power of the Holy Spirit, He was born of the Virgin Mary and became man”.

In the Apostles Creed, we bow our heads when we say the words “who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary”.

Which creed did you profess at Mass today? _____