

## The Apostles' Creed

A NEW TRANSLATION of the Apostles' Creed was issued on 23rd June, 2008, by the Pope's Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, as part of the new Order of the Mass (i.e. most of the fixed parts of a normal Sunday Mass).

Its liturgical use will be especially in Lent and Easter time, when the priest may replace the Nicene-Constantinople Creed with it, perhaps for catechetics or catechumens whose instruction has been on it.

**These new texts may not be used at Mass until the rest of the English Missal is translated and authorized, perhaps in 2010.** Their early release is to give time to prepare music; for priests and deacons to familiarize themselves with the new texts; and for catechesis in advance for the laity.

The official text for the Apostles' Creed since 1970 till now has been that of ICET/ICEL — hence its use in all officially approved catechesis, e.g. the Catechism of the Catholic Church and its Compendium, and in all editions of the Catholic Family Catechism; and earlier in the Apostles of Christ High School Program (1972).

With the early release of the new translation for catechetical explanations, it seems reasonable to use this Creed at once in non-liturgical devotions.

Those who never budged from the pre-1970 Creed as used in the Rosary will find little change — mainly replacing 'thence' with 'there'. However, the changes from ICET/ICEL are more extensive.

Ironically, the new text is almost that of 44 years ago, as found in the Ritual for Baptism in 1964.

### Compare the texts, Current, New and Old

#### ICET/ICEL TEXT 1970-2008: though official, not used much

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived

by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into Heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again 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 the life everlasting. Amen.

#### COMMENTS

This translation was influenced by their Nicene-Constantinople Creed translation:-

- It adds "I believe" before Christ.
- It adds "by the power of..."

It omits various words/ phrases. It has "to the dead", which the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its *Compendium* change to "hell".

NOTE: All three translations have "rose again" — a puzzle for some folk who think it implies that He rose twice, especially in the accurate translations with "rose again from the dead". It simply means, "rose again to life", or "came back to life"

#### NEW TEXT released 2008: may be used in private devotions at once

I<sup>1</sup> believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth,

and<sup>2</sup> in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who<sup>3</sup> was conceived

by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered<sup>4</sup> under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;

he<sup>5</sup> descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead;

he<sup>6</sup> ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand

Of God the Father almighty;

from<sup>7</sup> there he will come

To judge the living and the dead.

I<sup>8</sup> believe in the Holy Spirit, the<sup>9</sup> holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the<sup>10</sup> forgiveness of sins, the<sup>11</sup> resurrection of the body, and<sup>12</sup> life everlasting. Amen.

#### COMMENTS

Numbers are decoded in the shaded box.

This is very literal translation of the Latin, hence quite like the old text pre-1970.

- It substitutes "Spirit" for "Ghost" as was mandated in Australia by the late 1960s.
- It has "died" for the pre-1970 "dead", and "hell" for ICET/ICEL's "to the dead".

With today's suppression of the 2nd person singular, it replaces "sitteth"

#### OLD TEXT pre-1970: with private variants still used by many

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth;

and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived

by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;

he descended into hell; the third he rose again from the dead;

he ascended into heaven, sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

from thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, And life everlasting. Amen.

#### COMMENTS

The traditional translation is still usual in the Rosary.

It does not capitalize pronouns for Divine Persons — and current Church discipline on this is still undecided.

"Modernism" in catechetics plus the continuing elimination of catechisms have kept the Apostle's Creed quite unknown to many in Catholic schools.

Old churches had pictures of 12 apostles holding scrolls with the articles of faith: 1. St Peter; 2. St Andrew; 3.- St James the Great; 4. St John; 5. St Thomas; 6. St James the Less; 7- St Philip; 8. St Barth-olomew; 9< St Matthew; 10. St Simon; H, St Jude; 12, St Matthias

THE NICENE CREED (Nicene-Constantinople Creed) will start *I believe* - (not *We believe*), and not repeat it for the other Divine Persons: thus *And in one Lord Jesus Christ, And in the Holy Spirit.*

*Consubstantial* replaces of *one Being* (i.e. *with the Father*).

The present wording of *For us men and for our salvation, and became man* is preserved, thus reaffirming that *man* and *men* are already generics. Also, *adored* replaces *worshipped* in describing the Holy Spirit. It is very like the translations in most of the people's Missals before 1962.

**THE APOSTLES' CREED** is the **catechetical creed** of the Western or Roman Rite of the Catholic Church. It is not used in the Eastern Rites.

It is early 3rd century, before the Creed of the Council of Nicea in A.D. 325 and its enrichment at the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 381.

It expanded Matthew 28:19, "in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", as a simple summary of the whole Bible. At first it was even shorter, and as three questions before Baptism.

### FIVE POINTS OF DOCTRINE

It has at least five points of doctrine not specifically expressed in our usual Sunday Mass Creed.

1. **Creator** is a stronger expression than 'Maker': all things were "made from nothing to start with"; cf. 2 Maccabees 7:28.
2. **Our Lord** rather than 'one Lord', to subtly express

personal faith. Only a believer can utter these two words, cf. 1 Corinthians 12:3.

3. **Descended into hell** (*infernium*, hell, the underworld, the abode of the dead). There is nothing equivalent in the Nicene creed to imply Original Sin, which prevented the Old Testament saints entering Heaven until the Redeemer came.
4. **The communion of saints**, a rich expression with nothing quite equivalent in the Nicene creed — though the latter is enhanced with "one, holy, Catholic and apostolic", the four marks of the true Church, of which the Apostles' Creed has only two.
5. **The resurrection of the body** (in Latin, *carnem*, 'flesh'), which is more specific than "the resurrection of the dead" in the Nicene Creed.

## HERE IS THE NEW TRANSLATION SET OUT FOR A MORE ADVANCED CATECHESIS

**I BELIEVE IN GOD, the Father Almighty,**  
 Creator of heaven and earth,  
 And in **Jesus Christ**, His only Son, Our Lord,

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.

The arrows link the Mysteries of Christ with the Mission of the Holy Spirit. Christ *re-capitulates* Himself in His Church. His mysteries become our mysteries, and we become "sons in the Son".

- I believe in the *Holy Spirit*, (a)  
 the *Holy Catholic Church*, (b)  
 the communion of saints,  
 the *forgiveness* of sins, (c)  
 the *resurrection* of the body, (d)  
 and *life everlasting*. Amen. (e)

### HOW TO PRAY THE CREED

**THE APOSTLES' CREED** should be our daily Act of Faith. It should be said slowly, thoughtfully, using the imagination to **picture the Glory of God the Father** in "the things He has made" (Romans 1:20); "The whole earth is full of His glory", (Isaiah 6:3).

Make mental pictures of the life of the historical God-man: Annunciation, Birth, Sufferings, Crucifixion, Resurrection, Ascension, and "seated at the right hand of the Father" (Colossians 3:1), and "coming again to judge the living and the dead" (2 Timothy 4:1).

The Holy Spirit can also be 'pictured' in His works in the Church in the brief list in the last part.

Little children, too, conjure up mental images of the unseen God and the events of Christmas, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Ascension and Pentecost.

If children have difficulty with *conceived by the Holy Spirit*, explain that it means God the Father was the only Father of the Lord Jesus; that He had no human father, so St Joseph was His foster father.

Note the miracles which God alone can accomplish: CREATION, INCARNATION, RESURRECTION.

These are vital points for doctrine, devotion and apologetics.

### EXPLANATORY NOTES on (a) to (e) above:

- (a) Both Christ and the Church were "conceived by the Holy Spirit"; cf. Matthew 1:20; Acts 2:4.
- (b) Our Lady gave birth to Christ, and Our Lady and the Church give birth to Christians; cf. John 19:26,27.
- (c) Christ died so that our sins be forgiven; "died for our sins," 1 Corinthians 15:3; cf. 1 Timothy 1:15.
- (d) Christ will share His Resurrection with our bodies, too; cf. John 6:54.
- (e) The ascended Christ "prepares a place for us" John 14:2-3, and "ever lives to intercede for us," Hebrews 7:25.

**Christ's Body** was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He becomes really present with us in His **Eucharistic Body**. He continues to act in our world through His 'Church-Body', His **Mystical Body**.

Each Christian is a cell in His Body, and it is as though each of these cells had the *genetic coding* of Jesus Christ Himself. In other words, the baptismal 'character' conforms us to Christ in His Mysteries. A key text on this 'genetic' relationship of Our Lord to us is Ephesians 1:10, which Pope St Pius X took as his papal motto: "to restore all things in Christ", to bring everything together, to unite, to re-establish, to re-capitulate all things in Himself.