

The Year of Faith

Catechesis on the Mass

The Creed

On Sundays and Solemnities, the Profession of Faith (the Creed) follows the homily. Creeds were originally baptismal professions of faith. They were lengthened over the years to clarify precisely what each Christian believes. The Creed is recited in the first person singular “I” instead of “We”; it as an *individual* profession of faith.

While popularly called the *Nicene Creed*, the Creed which we recite at Mass, is the *Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed*. It reflects revisions to the original Creed made by the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AND revisions made by the First Council of Constantinople in 381. Since that time, The only change to the Creed was that a single word, *filioque*, that is, “with the Son” was added in the seventh century.

The Creed is recited by each individual, as part of the Liturgy of the Word. We recite the Creed at this particular point in the Mass because, as Baptism is the gateway to all of the other Sacraments, so the Profession of Faith is the gateway to the Liturgy of the Eucharist which follows.

Once we each affirm our unity in the Creed (and thus our identity as a member of the faithful), we then place our various needs and petitions before God in the Prayers of the Faithful. This brings the Liturgy of the Word to a close, and we are prepared to enter the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

The recitation of the Creed serves to unite each of us in faith. Only those who are completely united in faith can truly participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice that follows.

Next week, we begin the Liturgy of the Eucharist with the Presentation of the Gifts and Prayer Over the Offerings...

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