

**FROM NAZARETH TO NICAEA**

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**Steps**

1. Writing a contemporary creed
2. A creed for myself
3. The Nicene and Constantinopolitan Creeds
4. Some contemporary creeds
5. Some resources
6. Towards a conclusion

**1. Writing a contemporary creed**

- Why a creed in the first place?
- What content should be included for today?
- Why style would best be used?
- Who is the “we” of the creed?


**2. A creed for myself**

### 3. The Nicene and Constantinopolitan Creeds

NICAIA	CONSTANTINOPLE
We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible.	We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, begotten of the Father [the only-begotten; that is, of the essence of the Father, God of God,] Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;	And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds (æons), Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
By whom all things were made [both in heaven and on earth];	by whom all things were made;
Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down and was incarnate and was made man;	who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost and of the Virgin Mary, and was made man;
He suffered, and the third day he rose again, ascended into heaven;	he was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered, and was buried, and the third day he rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead.	from thence he shall come again, with glory, to judge the living and the dead;
And in the Holy Ghost.	And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets.
	In one holy catholic and apostolic Church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.
[But those who say: 'There was a time when he was not;' and 'He was not before he was made;' and 'He was made out of nothing,' or 'He is of another substance' or 'essence,' or 'The Son of God is created,' or 'changeable,' or 'alterable'— they are condemned by the holy catholic and apostolic Church.]	

- Of its time, of course.
- In response to issues emerging before and after Nicaea.
- Language of the time (philosophy, gender etc.)
- What was “left out”?
- What we would surely like to include today.
- The “shape” of a creed?

#### 4. Some contemporary creeds

##### *Example 1*

We believe in God the Creator, who created and is creating everything: the universe, the world, the plants and animals, and us; each of us, unique, individual and beloved of God.

We believe in God the Christ, who saved and is saving everything: the universe, the world, the plants and animals, and us: each of us; unique, individual and beloved of the Christ.

We believe in God the Holy Spirit, who guided and is guiding everything: the

##### *Example 2*

We believe in one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We proclaim Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen One, confessing him as Lord to the glory of God the Father.

In the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we acclaim Jesus as the Lord of the Church, the Head over all things, the beginning of a new creation.

We acknowledge that we live and work between the time of Christ's death and resurrection and the final consummation of all things which he will bring.

We are a pilgrim people, always on the way towards a promised goal; on the way Christ feeds us with word and sacraments,

##### *Example 3*

We are not alone,  
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:  
who has created and is creating,  
who has come in Jesus,  
the Word made flesh,  
to reconcile and make new,  
who works in us and others by the Spirit.  
We trust in God.

universe, the world, the plants and animals, and us; each of us, unique, individual and beloved of the Spirit.

We believe that this one God in three persons, is present among us, working directly in our lives and the lives of all who are born into this world, striving to bring us back into harmony with all creation and with God: forgiving, healing, touching everyone, never rejecting any who willingly receive this freely offered gift of love and grace and eternal life. Amen.

and we have the gift of the Spirit in order that we may not lose the way.

We will live and work within the faith and unity of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, bearing witness to that unity which is both Christ's gift and his will.

We affirm that every member of the Church is engaged to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

Together with all the people of God, we will serve the world for which Christ died. And we await with hope the day of the Lord Jesus.

We are called to be the Church:  
to celebrate God's presence,  
to live with respect in Creation,  
to love and serve others,  
to seek justice and resist evil,  
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,  
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,  
God is with us.  
We are not alone.  
Thanks be to God.

**Example 4**

We believe in God the creator,  
who is always creative and invites us to  
affirm and explore who we are, with all  
our differences; and who is the source of  
our faith.

We believe in God the Saviour revealed in  
the world as Jesus the Christ who died  
and is risen, the one Lord of the church.

We believe in God the Reconciler, the  
Holy Spirit, who is always with us bearing  
witness with our spirits that we are the  
children of God.

We believe that our smallness can never  
diminish God's vastness; that our frailties  
can never overcome God's will for  
wholeness; that our sin can never crush  
God's power for new life even in the face  
of death.

We believe, and in this belief, we need  
one another, as a choir needs every voice  
and every part for the harmony to be  
complete. We believe - that in the Holy  
Spirit, in Jesus Christ and in the love of  
God - we are one!

We believe - And may our lives reflect our  
belief.

**Example 5**

O God, the source of our being and the goal of all our longing,  
we believe and trust in you.

The whole earth is alive with your glory  
and all that has life is sustained by you.

We commit ourselves to cherish your world and to seek your face.

O God, embodied in a human life,  
we believe and trust in you.

Jesus our brother, born of the woman Mary,  
you confronted the proud and the powerful,  
and welcomed as your friends those of no account.

Holy Wisdom of God, firstborn of creation,  
you emptied yourself of power,  
and became foolishness for our sake.  
You laboured with us upon the cross,  
and have brought us forth to the hope of resurrection.

We commit ourselves to struggle against evil and to choose life.

O God, life-giving Spirit, Spirit of healing and comfort,  
of integrity and truth, we believe and trust in you.

Warm-winged Spirit, brooding over creation,  
rushing wind and Pentecostal fire,  
we commit ourselves to work with you and renew our world.  
Amen.

**Example 6**

We believe in God, Creator of the world;  
and in Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of  
creation.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, through  
whom we acknowledge God's gifts, and

we repent of our sin in misusing these  
gifts to idolatrous ends.

We affirm the natural world as God's  
handiwork and dedicate ourselves to its  
preservation, enhancement, and faithful

use by humankind. We joyfully receive for ourselves and others the blessings of community, sexuality, marriage, and the family.

We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of all persons.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so

doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress. We dedicate ourselves to peace throughout the world, to the rule of justice and law among nations, and to individual freedom for all people of the world.

We believe in the present and final triumph of God's Word in human affairs and gladly accept our commission to manifest the life of the gospel in the world. Amen.

*A litany to go with this creed*

God in the Spirit revealed in Jesus Christ,  
calls us by grace

to be renewed in the image of our Creator,  
that we may be one  
in divine love for the world.

Today is the day

God cares for the integrity of creation,  
wills the healing and wholeness of all life,  
weeps at the plunder of earth's goodness.

And so shall we.

Today is the day

God embraces all hues of humanity,  
delights in diversity and difference,  
favours solidarity transforming strangers into friends.

And so shall we.

Today is the day

God cries with the masses of starving people,  
despises growing disparity between rich and poor,  
demands justice for workers in the marketplace.

And so shall we.

Today is the day

God deplores violence in our homes and streets,  
rebukes the world's warring madness,  
humbles the powerful and lifts up the lowly.

And so shall we.

Today is the day

God calls for nations and peoples to live in peace,  
celebrates where justice and mercy embrace,  
exults when the wolf grazes with the lamb.

And so shall we.

Today is the day

God brings good news to the poor,  
proclaims release to the captives,

gives sight to the blind, and  
sets the oppressed free.  
And so shall we.

**Example 7**

I believe in God  
who created the world not ready made  
like a thing that must forever stay what it  
is who does not govern according to  
eternal laws that have perpetual validity  
nor according to natural orders of poor  
and rich, experts and ignoramuses,  
people who dominate and people  
subjected.

I believe in God  
who desires the counter-argument of the  
living and the alteration of every  
condition through our work through our  
politics.

I believe in Jesus Christ who was right  
when he “as an individual who can’t do  
anything” just like us worked to alter  
every condition and came to grief in so  
doing Looking to him I discern how our  
intelligence is crippled, our imagination  
suffocates, and our exertion is in vain  
because we do not live as he did Every day  
I am afraid that he died for nothing

**Example 8**

We believe in God.

Despite his silence and his mystery,  
We believe that he is living.

Despite evil and suffering,  
We believe that he made the world for happiness and for life.

Despite the limits of our reason and the resistance of our hearts  
We believe that he is Father.

We believe in Jesus Christ.

Despite the centuries that separate us from him we believe in his Word.

Despite his weakness and his poverty,  
we believe that his death is our life.

Despite our incomprehension and our refusal to believe  
we believe in his resurrection.

We believe in the Holy Spirit.

Despite appearances, we believe that he guides the Church.

Despite the incredulity of the world,  
we believe that he fosters through it  
the hunger for prayer, justice and love.

We also believe that God gives eternal life to all those who search for,  
and believe in the name of, the Son of God. Amen.

because he is buried in our churches,  
because we have betrayed his revolution  
in our obedience to and fear  
of the authorities.

I believe in Jesus Christ who is  
resurrected into our life so that we shall  
be free from prejudice and  
presumptuousness from fear and hate  
and push his revolution onward and  
toward his reign

I believe in the Spirit who came into the  
world with Jesus, in the communion of all  
peoples and our responsibility for what  
will become of our earth: a valley of  
tears, hunger, and violence or the city of  
God.

I believe in the just peace that can be  
created, in the possibility of meaningful  
life for all humankind, in the future of  
this world of God. Amen

**Example 9**

We believe in God, the Creator!  
Maker of everything,  
Author of the Universe,  
And Mystery behind every matter.

We believe in Jesus Christ!  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God and true human,  
One with the Creator.

He is the Word made flesh and the Saviour  
of all creation!

We believe in the Holy Spirit!  
Breath of God moving among us,  
One with the Creator  
and one with Christ,  
He is our Guide and  
the Mentor of all creation! Amen.

**Example 10**

*Presider*

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is the one true Church, apostolic and universal,  
whose holy faith let us now declare:

*All*

We believe in God the Father, infinite in wisdom, power and love, whose mercy is over  
all his works, and whose will is ever directed to his children's good.

We believe in Jesus Christ, Son of God  
and Son of man, the gift of the Father's  
unfailing grace, the ground of our hope,  
and the promise of our deliverance from  
sin and death.

We believe in the Holy Spirit as the divine  
presence in our lives, whereby we are  
kept in perpetual remembrance of the

truth of Christ, and find strength and help  
in time of need.

We believe that this faith should manifest  
itself in the service of love as set forth in  
the example of our blessed Lord, to the  
end that the kingdom of God may come  
upon the earth. Amen.

**Example 11** The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed as recited at Nicaea 2025.

**We believe** in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.  
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father.  
Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made;  
of one Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.  
For us all, and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven;  
and was incarnate  
of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,  
and was made **human**.  
For our sake he was crucified  
under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried.

On the third day  
he rose from the dead  
in accordance with the scriptures.  
He ascended to 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.  
We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the Lord, the giver of life,  
**who proceeds from the Father.**  
Who, with the Father and the Son,  
is worshipped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one, holy,  
catholic and apostolic Church.  
We confess one baptism  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look forward to the resurrection of the dead,  
and to life in the age to come. Amen.

## 5. Some resources

Donal DORR, *A Creed for Today*, Dublin: Veritas, 2021

Martin KOCHANSKI, *The Creed in Slow Motion: An exploration of faith, phrase by phrase, word by word*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2022

Rupert SHORTT, *The Eclipse of Christianity: and why it matters*, London: Hodder & Stoughton 2024

## 6. Towards a conclusion

- The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed has stood the test of time.
- It is accepted by the vast majority of churches (Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and Reformed).
- It would be hard to imagine any agreed statement gaining the same level of support across the traditions today.
- The core teaching is the identity of Jesus, Son of God and Son of Man.
- This teaching was encapsulated in the expression “homoousios”, “one in being” or “consubstantial.”
- It is of its time, of course.
- It does not “say” everything and was hardly intended to.
- The core teaching of the Trinity, the incarnation and the Holy Spirit still stands.