

# Why is there a different Creed sometimes used at Mass now?

Ever since 1973, permission has been granted to use an alternative form of the “Symbol,” that is, the Profession of Faith, at Masses with Children (Directory for Masses with Children, n. 49), instead of the Nicene Creed. The alternative form is what is commonly called the “Apostles’ Creed,” a formula that is used to begin the Marian Rosary, but is also used in a question and answer format at the Rite of Baptism and in the renewal of baptismal promises at Confirmation and on Easter. The Nicene Creed is a longer text and is a form widely used throughout the various Christian Churches of East and West, Catholic and non-Catholic. The Apostles’ Creed is known primarily in the Western, Roman tradition.

Because the Apostles’ Creed is often used in catechesis of children and is part of the rite of baptism of adults, several countries, including Canada, received permission from Rome years ago to make use of the Apostles’ Creed at all Masses in which the Creed is prescribed, rather than only

at Masses with Children.

The revised 2002 Roman Missal now gives general permission to make use of the “baptismal symbol of the Roman Church, the so-called Symbol of the Apostles” in place of the Nicene Creed. It also notes that this is appropriate “especially during the Season of Lent and the Season of Easter.” Nevertheless, the use of the Apostles’ Creed is in no way prohibited at other times, whenever a profession of faith is prescribed by the rubrics. The Roman Church has had a long tradition of two forms of a profession of faith being regularly used in a form during various liturgical rites. The Apostles’ Creed has traditionally been associated with baptism, and the Nicene Creed has traditionally been associated with the Eucharist. Now, at Mass, the community is free to choose either form for use on Sundays and other major feasts.

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## *The Apostles Creed*

*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.*



Office of Liturgy  
Catholic Diocese of Saginaw

## *The Nicene Creed*

*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,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
one in Being with the Father.  
Through him all things were made.*

*For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven:*

*(bow) by the power of the Holy Spirit  
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.  
(Genuflect on Christmas and the Annunciation of the Lord)*

*For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered, died, and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in fulfillment of 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*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son  
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.  
He has spoken through the Prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*