

Catholic

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The Nicene Creed

What WE Believe

BY GREG FRIEDMAN, OFM



The new English translation of the Mass, introduced in 2011, invited Catholics to take a second look at the Nicene Creed. Phrases such as “consubstantial with the Father” and “incarnate of the Virgin Mary” replaced more familiar words we’d been using for decades.

ur Creed was born in fierce debates about what we believe. The ancient words invite our *Amen* to the faith forged by the early Church. It's like a handshake across the centuries—"a sign of recognition and communion between believers" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 188).

***I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.***

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We live in a secular age. The media avoid endorsing religion or belief in a power that controls "things visible and invisible." God is largely absent from official public debate. We become skeptical when politicians play up their religion only to disappoint us later with scandals. Science, too, seems to dominate our culture. Recent discoveries about the origins of the universe avoid mention of a "maker of heaven and earth."

Yet, when disaster strikes, people ask, "Where is God?" Even when they express doubts about a loving creator, their words betray a longing for God.

The faith of ancient Israel stood out among the beliefs of its neighbors, who worshiped many gods. Abraham and his nomadic tribe came to know God as one who was loving and willing to travel with them. Theirs was a personal God, who invites people into relationship.

Our Creed assures us that, like Abraham, we're invited into a relationship with God—our Creator, all-powerful, eternal—that is personal and loving.

***I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.***