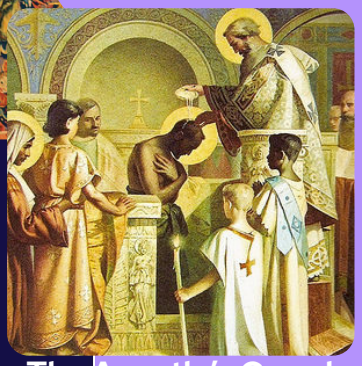
I BELIEVE

THE CREED:
AN INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW



The Apostle's Creed was developed in response to the needs of the early Church.

The Nicene Creed was developed to clarify doctrine.

Last week we had the first of our Lent talks exploring the theme "I Believe – The Creed." These six talks stand alone, but together they form a deeper reflection on what we profess every Sunday at Mass. These evenings are not about penance (you can handle that in your own way!). Instead, they are designed to stimulate both the mind and the heart.

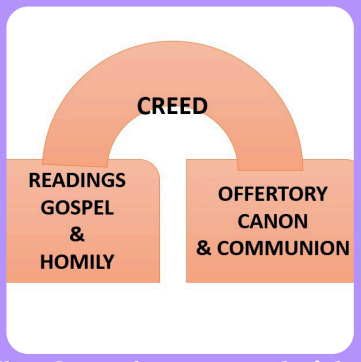
Today, skeptics dismiss belief as irrational, outdated, or unscientific. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our faith is both logical and transformative. Christianity is unique among world religions in its emphasis on doctrine as well as right action. From its earliest days, the Church sought to define what it believes with clarity. This gave birth to the Creeds, shaped through centuries of debate, councils, and theological reflection.

What is the Creed?

We recite the Creed every Sunday, standing as one, proclaiming our faith together. But how often do we really reflect on the words? The Creed is not a personal prayer like the Our Father or Hail Mary. Instead, it is a public declaration of faith, an act of unity with the Church past and present. This is why it is recited at key moments: baptism, confirmation, the Easter Vigil—but never in private prayer.

The Creed acts as a bridge in the Mass. After the Liturgy of the Word (Scripture readings and homily), we proclaim our faith before moving into the Eucharist. It is a moment of response, an affirmation that we accept what we have heard and prepare to participate in Christ's sacrifice.

The word "Creed" comes from the Latin Credo, meaning "I believe." But there's an important nuance: in Latin, in with the accusative case implies movement towards something. When we say "I believe in God," it is not a static statement. It expresses a journey, a movement towards Him.



The Creed acts as a bridge in the mass, linking the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.

A Tale of Two Creeds

There are two great universal Creeds:

1. The Apostles' Creed – the older, simpler version, rooted in the baptismal confessions of the early Church.
2. The Nicene Creed – formulated at the Council of Nicaea (325 AD) to combat Arianism, a heresy denying Christ's divinity.

This year marks the 1700th anniversary of Nicaea, where bishops from across the Roman Empire gathered to settle one burning question: Is Jesus truly God, or merely an exalted creature? The debate was fierce, but the result was a clear doctrinal statement:

"God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father."

Watch a recording of the talk by scanning this QR code.

Join us in the Conference Centre, for the second of the six talks this Wednesday 19th March when we will be exploring the topic:
'I believe in God the Father.'
7pm - 8.30pm

'An interesting insight into our faith that we possibly take for granted. Thank you.'