

'Credo' is Latin for 'I believe'. The 'Credo of the People of God' was proclaimed by Pope St Paul VI on 30 June 1968. This 'Solemn Profession of Faith' closed the 'Year of Faith' that Pope Paul had called in the years following the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). It restates the unchanging ancient faith of the Church, incorporating the language and perspectives of Vatican II. The 1992 'Catechism of the Catholic Church' tells us (nn.192-193): 'Through the centuries many professions or symbols of faith have been articulated in response to the needs of the different eras: ... e.g. the 'Credo of the People of God' of Paul VI. None of the creeds from the different stages in the Church's life can be considered superseded or irrelevant. They help us today to attain and deepen the faith of all times by means of the different summaries made of it.' This Creed is a very appropriate way for us as Catholics to express in the contemporary era our faith and unity as the believing People of God.

CREDO OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

The Most Holy Trinity: God, One and Three

*We believe in one God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
Creator of things visible - such as this world in which our brief life runs its course -
and of things invisible - such as the pure spirits which are also called angels -
and Creator in each man of his spiritual and immortal soul.*

*We believe that this only God is absolutely one in His most holy essence as in His other perfections,
in His omnipotence, His infinite knowledge, His providence, His will and His love.
'He is Who is', as He Himself revealed to Moses; (Ex 3:14) and He is 'Love', as the Apostle John teaches us: (1 Jn 4:8)
so that these two names, Being and Love, express ineffably the same divine reality of Him
who has wished to make Himself known to us, and who, 'dwelling in light inaccessible,' (1 Tim 3:16)
is in Himself above every name and every created thing and every created intelligence.*

*God alone can give us right and full knowledge of Himself
by revealing Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
in whose eternal life we are by grace called to share,
here below in the obscurity of faith and after death in eternal light.*

*The mutual bonds which eternally constitute the Three Persons,
each of whom is one and the same divine Being,
are themselves the blessed inmost life of the most holy God,
infinitely beyond all we can humanly understand.*

*We give thanks, however, to the divine goodness that very many believers can testify with us before men
to the Unity of God, even though they know not the mystery of the most holy Trinity.*

*We believe therefore in God, who eternally begets the Son;
in the Son, the Word of God, who is eternally begotten;
in the Holy Spirit, the uncreated Person who proceeds from the Father and the Son as their eternal Love.
Thus in the three divine Persons, 'co-eternal and co-equal with one another', (Athanasian Creed)
the life and beatitude of God perfectly one superabound and are consummated in the supreme excellence and glory
proper to uncreated Being, and always 'both unity in Trinity and Trinity in unity must be worshipped'. (Athanasian Creed)*

Jesus Christ, true God and true man, our Saviour

*We believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
He is the Eternal Word, born of the Father before all ages,
and consubstantial with the Father, 'homoousios to Patri', (Nicene Creed, original Greek)
and through Him all things were made.*

*By the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man:
therefore he is 'equal to the Father as to His divinity, less than the Father as to His humanity';
and Himself one, 'not by a confusion of substance' (which is impossible), 'but by the unity of person'. (Athanasian Creed)*

*He dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. He proclaimed and established the Kingdom of God,
and made us know in Himself the Father. He gave us His new commandment to love one another as He loved us.
He taught us the way of the beatitudes of the Gospel: poverty in spirit, meekness, suffering borne with patience,
thirst after justice, mercy, purity of heart, will for peace, persecution suffered for sake of justice.*

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate, the Lamb of God bearing on Himself the sins of the world,
and He died for us nailed to the Cross, saving us by His redeeming blood.*

*He was buried, and, of His own power, rose on the third day,
raising us by His Resurrection to that sharing in the divine life which is the life of grace.*

*He ascended into heaven, whence He will come again, this time in glory, to judge the living and the dead,
each according to his merits - those who have responded to the love and compassion of God going to eternal life,
but those who have refused them to the end being consigned to the fire that is never extinguished.*

And His Kingdom will have no end.

The Holy Spirit

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets;
He was sent to us by Christ after His Resurrection and His Ascension to the Father;
He illuminates, vivifies, protects and guides the Church;
He purifies the Church's members if they do not shun His grace.
His action, which penetrates to the inmost of the soul, enables man to respond to the call of Christ:
'Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect'. (Mt. 5:48)*

The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God

*We believe that Blessed Mary, who remained ever a virgin,
was the Mother of the Incarnate Word, of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and that by reason
of this singular election, she was, in consideration of the merits of her Son, redeemed in a more eminent manner,
preserved immune from all stain of original sin and filled with the gift of grace far surpassing all other creatures.*

*Joined by a close and indissoluble bond to the Mysteries of the Incarnation and Redemption,
the most Blessed Virgin Mary, the Immaculate, was at the completion of the course of her earthly life
assumed body and soul to heavenly glory, and likened to her risen Son in anticipation of the future lot of all the just;
and we believe that the most holy Mother of God, the New Eve, Mother of the Church,
now continues in heaven her maternal role with regard to Christ's members,
cooperating with the birth and growth of divine life in the souls of all the redeemed.*

Original Sin, Redemption and Baptism

*We believe that in Adam all have sinned,
which means that the original offence committed by him caused human nature, common to all men,
to fall to a state in which it bears the consequences of that offence,
and which is not the state in which it was at the beginning in our first parents -
established as they were in holiness and justice, and in which man knew neither evil nor death.*

*It is human nature so fallen, stripped of the grace that clothed it,
injured in its own natural powers and subjected to the dominion of death,
that is transmitted to all men, and it is in this sense that every man is born in sin.*

*We therefore hold, with the Council of Trent, that original sin is transmitted with human nature,
'not by imitation, but by propagation' and is, therefore, incurred 'by each individually'. (Council of Trent, Decree on Original Sin)*

*We believe that Our Lord Jesus Christ, by the Sacrifice of the Cross
redeemed us from original sin and from all those personal sins to which we confess,
so that, in accordance with the word of the Apostle, 'where sin increased, grace abounded all the more'. (Rom 5:20)*

*We believe in one Baptism instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.
Baptism should be administered even to little children who have not yet been able to be guilty of any personal sin,
in order that, though born deprived of supernatural grace,
they may be reborn 'of water and the Holy Spirit' to the divine life in Christ Jesus. (Jn 3:5)*

The One Church of Christ

*We believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church,
built by Jesus Christ on that rock which is Peter.*

*She is the Mystical Body of Christ;
at the same time a visible society instituted with hierarchical organs, and a spiritual community;
the Church on earth, the pilgrim People of God here below, and the Church filled with heavenly blessings;
the germ and the first fruits of the Kingdom of God,
through which the work and the sufferings of Redemption are continued throughout human history,
and which yearns for its perfect fulfilment after the end of time in the glory of heaven.*

*In the course of time, the Lord Jesus forms His Church by means of the Sacraments emanating from His plenitude.
By these she makes her members participants in the Mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ,
in the grace of the Holy Spirit who gives her life and movement.*

*She is therefore holy, though she has sinners in her bosom,
because she herself has no other life but that of grace:
it is by living by her life that her members are sanctified;
it is by removing themselves from her life that they fall into sins and disorders
that prevent the radiation of her sanctity. This is why she suffers and does penance for these offences,
of which she has the power to free her children through the Blood of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

Heiress of the divine promises and daughter of Abraham according to the Spirit, through that Israel whose Scriptures she lovingly guards, and whose Patriarchs and Prophets she devoutly venerates; founded upon the Apostles, and faithfully handing on through the course of the ages their ever-living word and their powers as Pastors in the Successor of Peter and the Bishops in communion with him; perpetually assisted by the Holy Spirit, she has the charge of guarding, teaching, explaining and spreading the truth which God revealed to men in a then-veiled manner by the Prophets, and fully by the Lord Jesus.

*We believe all that is contained in the word of God whether written or handed down, and that the Church proposes for belief as divinely revealed, whether by a solemn judgment or by the ordinary and universal Magisterium. We believe in the infallibility enjoyed by the Successor of Peter when he teaches *ex cathedra* as Shepherd and Teacher of all Christians, (Vatican I) and which is assured also to the Episcopal Body when it exercises with him the supreme Magisterium. (Vatican II)*

We believe that the Church founded by Jesus Christ and for which He poured forth prayers is indefectibly one in faith, worship and the bond of hierarchical communion.

In the bosom of this Church, the rich variety of liturgical rites and the legitimate diversity of theological and spiritual heritages and special disciplines, far from injuring her unity, make it more manifest.

Recognizing also the existence, outside the organism of the Church of Christ, of numerous elements of truth and sanctification, which, as gifts belonging to her as her own, impel to Catholic unity; and believing in the action of the Holy Spirit who stirs up in the hearts of all the disciples of Christ desire for this unity; we cherish the hope that those Christians who do not yet enjoy the full communion of the one only Church will one day be united in one flock with one Shepherd.

We believe that the Church is necessary for salvation, because Christ, who is the sole Mediator and way of salvation, renders Himself present for us in His Body which is the Church. (Vatican II) But the divine design of salvation embraces all men; and those who without fault on their part do not know the Gospel of Christ and His Church, but seek God in sincerity of heart, and under the influence of grace endeavour to do His will as recognized through the dictates of their conscience, they too, in a number indeed known only to God, can obtain eternal salvation. (Vatican II)

The Most Holy Eucharist: Sacrifice and Real Presence

We believe that the Mass, celebrated by the priest in the person of Christ by virtue of the power received through the Sacrament of Orders, and offered by him in the name of Christ and the members of His Mystical Body, is indeed the Sacrifice of Calvary rendered sacramentally present on our altars.

We believe that as the bread and wine consecrated by the Lord at the Last Supper were converted into His Body and His Blood which were to be offered for us on the Cross, likewise the bread and wine consecrated by the priest are converted into the Body and Blood of Christ enthroned gloriously in heaven, and we believe that the mysterious presence of the Lord, under what continues to appear to our senses as before, is a true, real and substantial presence.

Consequently, in this Sacrament there is no other way in which Christ can become present except by the conversion of the entire substance of the bread into His Body, and the conversion of the entire substance of the wine into His Blood, leaving unchanged only the properties of the bread and wine which our senses perceive. This hidden conversion is appropriately and justly called by the Church 'transubstantiation'.

Every theological explanation which seeks some understanding of this mystery must, in order to be in accord with Catholic faith, maintain firmly that in the order of reality itself, independently of our mind, the bread and wine have ceased to exist after the Consecration, so that it is the adorable Body and Blood of the Lord Jesus that from then on are really before us under the sacramental species of bread and wine, as the Lord willed it, in order to give Himself to us as food and to bind us together in the unity of His Mystical Body.

The unique and indivisible existence of Christ the Lord glorious in heaven is not multiplied but is rendered present by the Sacrament in the many places on earth where the Eucharistic Sacrifice is celebrated. And this same existence remains present after the Sacrifice in the Most Blessed Sacrament which is reserved in the tabernacle, the living heart of each of our churches. And it is our very sweet duty to honour and adore in the Holy Host, which we see with our eyes, the Word Incarnate Himself, whom we cannot see, but who, without leaving heaven, is made present before us.

Concern for this world, in light of Eternity

*We likewise confess that the Kingdom of God begun here on earth in the Church of Christ
is not of this world whose form is passing, (Jn 18:36; 1 Cor 7:31)
and that its proper growth cannot be confounded
with the progress of civilisation, of science or of human technology,
but that it consists in an ever more profound knowledge of the unfathomable riches of Christ,
an ever stronger hope of eternal blessings,
an ever more ardent response to the love of God,
and an ever more abundant diffusion of grace and holiness among men.*

*But it is this same love which impels the Church
to also constantly hold in her heart the true temporal welfare of human beings.
Without ceasing to warn her children that they have not here on earth a lasting city, (Heb 13:14)
she also urges them to contribute, each according to his vocation and his means,
to the welfare of their earthly city, to promote justice, peace and fraternal concord among people,
to give their help generously to their brothers and sisters,
especially to the poorest and most unfortunate.*

*The deep solicitude of the Church, the Spouse of Christ, for the needs of human beings,
for their joys and hopes, their griefs and labours,
is therefore nothing other than her intense desire to be present to them,
in order to illuminate all people with the light of Christ
and to gather and join them all in Him, their only Saviour.
This solicitude can never mean that the Church conform herself to the things of this world,
or that she lessen the ardour of her expectation of her Lord and of His eternal Kingdom.*

Eternal Life

*We believe in life eternal.
We believe that the souls of all those who die in the grace of Christ
- whether they must still make expiation in the fire of Purgatory,
or whether from the moment they leave their bodies
Jesus takes them to Paradise as He did for the Good Thief -
are the People of God established beyond death,
death which will be totally destroyed on the day of the Resurrection
when these souls will be reunited with their bodies.*

*We believe that the multitude of those souls
gathered around Jesus and Mary in Paradise
forms the Church of Heaven
where enjoying eternal beatitude they see God as He is, (1 Jn 3:2)
and where they also, in different degrees and ways,
together with the holy Angels share in the divine rule exercised by Christ in glory,
interceding for us and helping our weakness by their fraternal care.*

*We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ,
whether they are pilgrims on earth,
whether, their life complete, they are being purified,
or whether they enjoy heavenly beatitude.
One and all they go to form the one Church.*

*We likewise believe that in this communion
we are surrounded by the merciful love of God and of His Saints
who always listen to our prayers, even as Jesus told us: 'Ask and you will receive'. (Jn 16:24)*

*Confessing this faith and sustained by this hope,
we look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.*

Blessed be God: Holy, Holy, Holy.

Amen.