



DIPPING INTO THE CATECHISM

based on *Compendium of the Catechism*:
paragraphs 33-38

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE “SYMBOLS OF FAITH” ARE ? (*they may not be what you think*)

Answer: They are formulas, also called “professions of faith” or “creeds”. From the very beginning the Church used them to set forth and hand on her own faith in a language common to all the faithful.

The origin of the word “symbol” comes from the Greek: a “sumbolon” means a ‘mark’ or ‘token’, and in latin, the word “symbolum” means a symbol or a Creed (as the mark of a Christian). It is a statement that has power of Truth that you can touch and hold onto.

THE MOST ANCIENT SYMBOLS OF THE FAITH ARE: **The baptismal creeds**

THE MOST IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF THE FAITH ARE:

The Apostles’ Creed, (the ancient baptismal creed of the Church of Rome) and the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed which comes from the first 2 ecumenical Councils (Nicea in 325 AD, and Constantinople in 381 AD). Even now they are the same in all the great Churches of the East and the West.

WHY DO THE SYMBOLS OR CREEDS BEGIN WITH THE WORDS, “I BELIEVE IN GOD” ?

Because it is the most important truth. It is the source of all the other truths about man and about the world, and about the entire life of everyone who believes in God.

WHY DO WE SAY THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD ?

Because He has revealed Himself to the people of Israel and the ONLY ONE when he said “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord” (Deuteronomy 6:4) and “there is no other” (Isaiah 45:22). Jesus Himself confirmed that God is “the One Lord” (Mark 12:29). To say that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are also God and Lord does not introduce any division into the One God.

WITH WHAT NAME DOES GOD REVEAL HIMSELF ?

To Moses, God said He was the living God “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob” (Exodus 3:6). God also revealed to Moses His mysterious name

“I Am Who I Am” (In Hebrew it is known by 4 letters which we transcribe as YHWH – called the Tetragrammaton.)

WHAT DOES GOD’S NAME TELL US ?

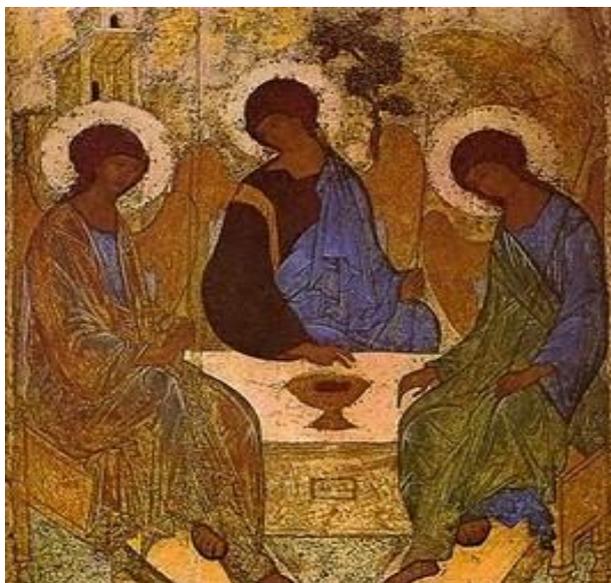
He alone is from everlasting to everlasting. He made Heaven and Earth. He is the highest holiness, “rich in mercy” (Ephesians 2:4), always ready to forgive. He is the One who is spiritual, transcendent, omnipotent (all-powerful), eternal, personal and perfect. He is Truth and Love.

IN WHAT WAY IS GOD THE TRUTH?

God is Truth itself and as such He can neither deceive nor be deceived. He is “light and in Him there is no darkness” (1 John 1:5). The eternal Son of God, the incarnation of wisdom, was sent into the world “to bear witness to the Truth” (John 18:37).

IN WHAT WAY DOES GOD REVEAL THAT HE IS LOVE ?

God told Israel His love is stronger even that parent’s love for their children or husbands’ and wives’ love for their spouses. God “is love” (1 John 4:8,16). He gives Himself totally and gratuitously. He “so loved the world that He gave His only Son so that the world might be saved through Him” (John 3:16 – 17). By sending His Son and the Holy Spirit, God reveals that He Himself is an eternal exchange of Love.



The Holy Trinity by Andrei Rublev

It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access to these and online or real group sessions contact Deborah.VanKroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk Department of Evangelisation and Catechesis.