

Worksheet 12
“One Catholic Church”
Reading and Worksheet

Please prayerfully and slowly read the Nicene Creed, and then watch the videos, read the article below, and answer the questions.

Nicene Creed

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

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with 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.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. **I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.** I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

I Believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church

When God made covenants with Abraham, Moses, David, and the prophets, he was gradually preparing a people to live in communion with him. These covenants find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ and in the new and everlasting covenant established through his death and resurrection. **The Church is the fruit of that covenant and the instrument through which Christ continues his saving work in the world.**

The Church is both visible and invisible, human and divine. She is a real community of believers, but she is also the dwelling place of God among his people. In and through the Church, heaven and earth meet in a profound way. **The Nicene Creed describes the Church by four essential characteristics, traditionally called the Four Marks of the Church: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.** These marks tell us who the Church is and how Christ continues to act through her.

One

The Church is one because Christ is one. He established only one Church and gave to her the fullness of his revelation and the means of salvation. This does not mean that God abandons those who are not visibly united to the Catholic Church. The Church teaches:

- “Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience — those too may achieve eternal salvation” (CCC 847).

This means that a person may be ignorant of Christ or the Church without personally rejecting the truth. God can still work in that person’s heart through grace. Whenever people sincerely

seek truth, goodness, and love, they are already responding, in some measure, to God's action within them.

The Catholic Church also recognizes that elements of truth and goodness can be found in other religions and Christian communities. For example, if another religion teaches that we should love our neighbor, Catholics can affirm that as a genuine truth. God's grace is not limited by human boundaries. **Yet the Church teaches that the fullness of God's revelation subsists in the Catholic Church. In her, the fullness of faith, sacramental life, and apostolic teaching is found.**

Holy

The Church is holy because her founder is holy. Jesus Christ gave himself to sanctify his people, and he continues to pour out his grace through the Church. The Church is holy not because all her members are sinless, but because she is united to Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit.

At the heart of holiness is love. As we grow in charity, mercy, and communion with God, we grow in holiness. Jesus is the perfect model of holiness because he is perfect love. **The Church, as his Body, is called to reflect that love in her worship, teaching, and life.**

The saints show us what the holiness of the Church looks like in practice. In them we see the Gospel made visible. The holiness of the Church is therefore both a gift and a calling: a gift received from Christ, and a calling that all Christians are invited to live.

Catholic

The word catholic means universal. The Church is catholic because Christ came to save all people, and the Church is sent to every nation, race, and culture. No one is excluded from God's invitation to salvation. This diversity does not destroy unity. Rather, it reveals the richness of the Church. **Unity is not sameness. True unity is found at a deeper level: in a shared faith, a shared sacramental life, and a shared communion in Christ.** We may look different on the surface, but we are one in the Lord.

Apostolic

The Church is apostolic because she is founded on the Apostles, entrusted with the teaching of the Apostles, and guided by the successors of the Apostles. Jesus chose the Apostles in a unique way, formed them personally, and sent them out to preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth. Before ascending into heaven, Jesus said to them:

- “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:18–20).

This mission did not end with the death of the Apostles. **Through apostolic succession, their authority to teach, sanctify, and govern was handed on to the bishops. In communion with the pope, the bishops continue this apostolic ministry today.** Priests and deacons share in this mission through their service to the bishop and the faithful.

To be apostolic also means that the Church must always be missionary. She is sent into the world to proclaim Christ. This happens in many ways: parents teaching their children to pray, catechists passing on the faith, missionaries evangelizing, and clergy preaching and celebrating the sacraments. In a special way, the preaching of the Gospel within the liturgy holds a privileged place, because there Christ speaks to his people and nourishes them with his truth.

Conclusion

To say, “I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church,” is to profess faith in the Church Christ founded and continues to sustain. The Church is one because Christ is one. She is holy because Christ is holy. She is catholic because Christ came for all people. She is apostolic because she remains rooted in the teaching and mission of the Apostles. The Church is not merely a human institution. She is the Body of Christ, the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and the sacrament of salvation in the world. **Through her, Christ continues to teach, sanctify, and gather his people into the Kingdom of God.** Watch this video which gives additional background [Here](#)

Worksheet 12 Questions

If you need help answering the questions you may look at the answer sheet but please put it in your own words, and do not copy word-for-word what is on the Answer Sheet

How and why did God establish the Catholic Church?

What is the difference between partial participation in truth and the fullness of Revelation, and how does this relate to Catholics and non-Catholics?

What does it mean to be holy, and who is the supreme model of holiness in the Church?

How is the Church universal, and how is this related to unity?

What does it mean when we say that the Church is apostolic?