

Why is There a Different Creed Sometimes Used at Mass Now?"

Ever since 1973, permission has been granted to use an alternative form of the "Symbol," that is, the Profession of Faith, at Masses with Children (*Directory for Masses with Children*, # 49), instead of the Nicene Creed. The alternative form is what is commonly called the "Apostles' Creed," a formula that is used to begin the Marian Rosary, but is also used in a question and answer format at the rite of baptism and in the renewal of baptismal promises at confirmation and on Easter. The Nicene Creed is a longer text and is a form widely used throughout the various Christian Churches of East and West, Catholic and non-Catholic. The Apostles' Creed is known primarily in the Western, Roman tradition.

Because the Apostles' Creed is often used in catechesis of children and is part of the rite of baptism of adults, several countries, including Canada, received permission from Rome years ago to make use of the Apostles' Creed at all Masses in which the Creed is prescribed, rather than only at Masses with children.

The revised 2002 Roman Missal now gives general permission to make use of the "baptismal symbol of the Roman Church," the so-called "Symbol of the Apostles" in place of the Nicene Creed. It also notes that this is appropriate "especially during the Season of Lent and the Season of Easter." Nevertheless, the use of the Apostles' Creed is in no way prohibited at other times, whenever a profession of faith is prescribed by the rubrics. The Roman Church has had a long tradition of two forms of a profession of faith being regularly used in a form during various liturgical rites. The Apostles' Creed has traditionally been associated with baptism, and the Nicene Creed has traditionally been associated with the eucharist. Now, at Mass, the community is free to choose either form for use on Sundays and other major feasts.

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