

God Calls Abraham

The Lord called Abraham:
“Go forth from your home
to a land I will show you.
I will make you a great nation,
and I will bless you.
I will make your name great,
so that you will be a blessing.
All nations shall find blessing in you.”

Abraham did as the Lord said. He took his wife Sarah, his nephew Lot, and all their possessions. They set out for the land of Canaan. When they got there, others were living there. But God said, “I will give this land to those who will be descended from you.”

What I Have Learned

What is something you already know about these faith concepts?

Divine Revelation

the Covenant

God the Father

Faith Terms to Know

Put an X next to the faith terms you know.
Put a ? next to faith terms you need to learn more about.

- _____ faith
- _____ creed
- _____ canon
- _____ inspiration
- _____ original holiness
- _____ Redemption
- _____ Original Sin
- _____ temptation



The Bible

What do you know about the two accounts of creation in Genesis?

The Church

What would you like to know about the creed we say at Mass?

Questions I Have

What questions would you like to ask about the mystery of God?

Looking Ahead

In this chapter, the Holy Spirit invites you to ▶



EXPLORE how Catholic youth around the world respond to the gift of faith.



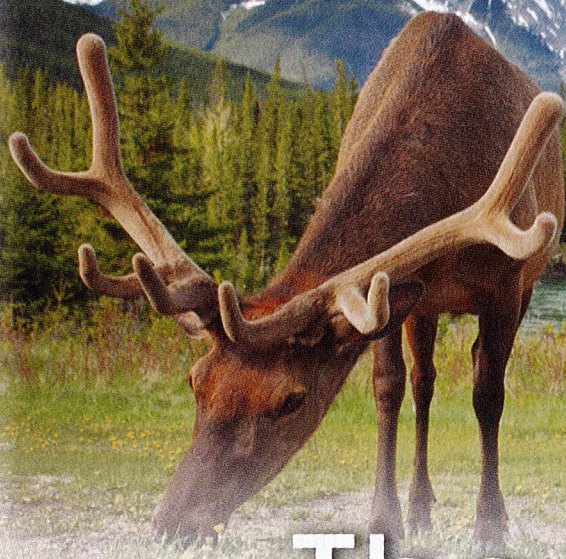
DISCOVER that the gift of faith involves trusting in God's love.



DECIDE how you will profess your faith in word and in action.

CHAPTER

1



The Gift of Faith

? We get to know a person gradually. How did you get to know your best friend?

God has made himself known to us in many ways. Read and think about these words:

*Praise the LORD from the earth,
you sea monsters and all deep waters. . . .*

*You mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars;*

*You animals wild and tame,
you creatures that crawl and fly. . . .*

*Young men and women too,
old and young alike.*

*Let them all praise the LORD's name,
for his name alone is exalted,
majestic above earth and heaven. PSALM 148: 7, 9-10, 12-13*

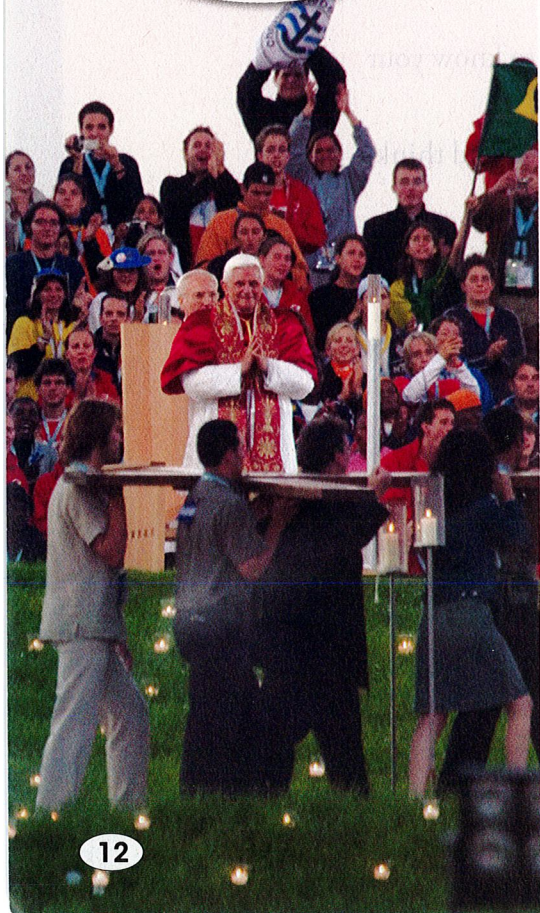
? How can viewing a scenic landscape help you to know more about God?



Disciple Power

Perseverance in Faith

This gift is the ability to remain steadfast in one's beliefs because of the strength and Gifts of the Holy Spirit working within us. This gift is also helpful when someone is struggling with difficulties and doubts.



THE CHURCH FOLLOWS JESUS

World Youth Day

Every two to three years, Catholic youth from all over the world gather in different places to profess and share their faith in Jesus Christ. They gather at the invitation of the Pope to grow joyfully in their faith and friendship with Jesus and to celebrate the faith of the Catholic Church.

In 2011, Catholic youth from around the world gathered with the Pope in Madrid, Spain, to celebrate that they are disciples of Jesus. The focus was "Planted and Built Up in Jesus Christ, Firm in the Faith" (see Colossians 2:7). Some previous World Youth Days were celebrated by 400,000 people in Sydney, Australia (2008) and by 500,000 in Denver, Colorado (1993).

During World Youth Day, Catholic youth celebrate their faith. Moved by the Holy Spirit, they experience an encounter with Christ. Those in attendance deepen their understanding of the Catholic Church and discuss ways to live their faith. They return home to persevere in faith. They are inspired to share the truth about Jesus Christ with the support of the Church.

Activity

Name some of the ways that your parish brings youth together to celebrate, grow in, and live their faith.

Growing in Faith


God places his Word in our hearts. He plants his love deep in our souls. Jeremiah the Prophet shared this truth about God and us when he wrote:

[God said:] "I will give them a heart with which to understand that I am the LORD." JEREMIAH 24:7

Whether we are happy or sad, successful or in trouble, God is always with us and speaking to us. His Word within us acts like the sun to light up our days and like the moon to help us see at night. God's Word within us is his grace. The grace of God helps us to recognize and to accept his love. Our challenge is to respond and grow in faith.

Here are some ways to help us respond and grow in faith:

1. **Pray to the Holy Spirit.** The Holy Spirit lives in our hearts and gives us the power to call God "Abba, Father."
2. **Personally know Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word of God.** Faith in Jesus Christ, the only Son of God and our Lord, is necessary for Salvation. Everything God wants to say to us is revealed through Jesus Christ.
3. **Study the Bible, the inspired Word of God.** We can better understand who God is by reading his Divine Revelation in Sacred Scripture.
4. **Learn the teachings of the Church.** Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture are sources of the Word of God. Together they are like a mirror in which the Church looks and contemplates God.
5. **Listen to the Pope, the bishop in your diocese, and the priests in your parish.** Through their writings, speeches, and homilies, they teach us in the name of Christ to help us understand God's Revelation more clearly and live it in practical ways.

 What ways have you responded to God's invitation to grow in faith?

FAITH FOCUS

How can you persevere and grow in your faith?

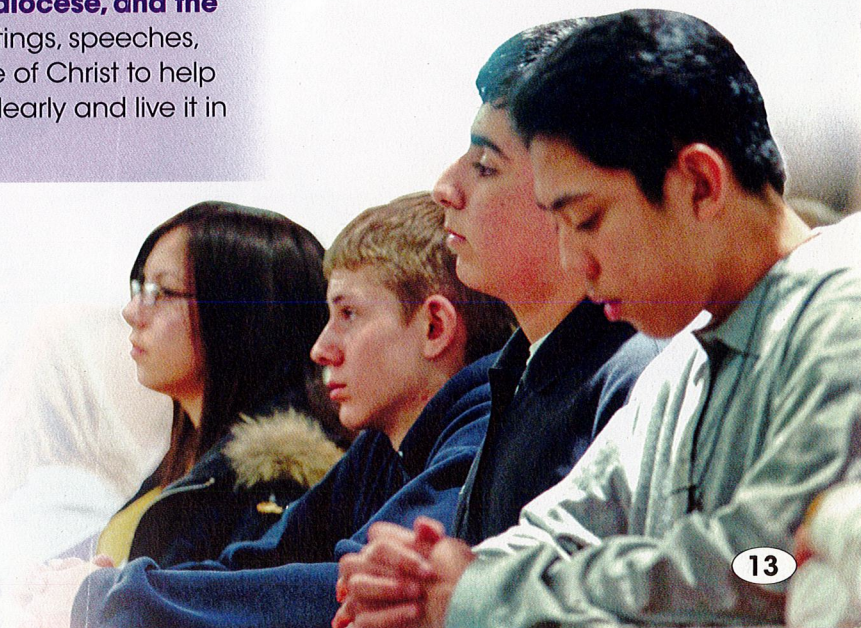
FAITH VOCABULARY


creed

A creed is a statement of beliefs, a profession of faith, a summary of the principal beliefs of the Church.

faith

Faith is one of the three Theological Virtues. It is the gift of God's invitation to us that enables us to know and believe in him and the power God gives us to respond freely to his invitation.





Faith-Filled People


Miriam

Miriam the Prophet was the sister of Moses and Aaron. After the Israelites crossed the Red Sea during the Exodus, Miriam gathered the women of Israel. With tambourine in hand, she led the women in song and dance as she sang, "Sing to the Lord, for he is gloriously triumphant" (Exodus 15:21).

The Gift of Faith

Faith is a supernatural gift, meaning a gift from God. It is one of the three Theological Virtues, which are **faith**, hope, and charity. Faith is not something that we can earn or deserve. We cannot achieve a deep faith through only our own efforts. We need the grace, or help, of the Holy Spirit. We must pray for his grace to truly know God and respond to his love. This kind of faith is not easy or automatic.


God created us with a desire for him in our hearts. God also gave us the freedom to choose or reject him and his love. Accepting the gift of faith often seems difficult; however, God gives us his grace to encourage and strengthen us. God's grace helps us to persevere, or remain strong, in our faith. We can grow in faith by learning more about God. We can also choose to accept his love by living a Christian life. Ultimately, God calls us to accept the gift of faith by opening our hearts and minds to live according to his will.

 Why did God place his Word in your heart?

Trust in God

Believing in God relates to trusting God. Jesus revealed that God is our Father who created us out of love, for love, and to be loved. In his love, God reveals himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God knows everything about us and knows our needs before we do. He wants only what is best for us.

The Gospel tells us that Jesus' whole life on Earth showed us that God wants our happiness. Our happiness is ultimately found in God. He created us to live in communion with him now on Earth and forever in Heaven. God gave us the Church to help and support us in our journey of faith.

 Describe someone whom you trust who has helped you grow in faith. What did this person do to help you? How did you respond?



Catholics Believe



Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed is the creed we usually profess at Mass on Sundays. This creed was written by the Church at the Council of Nicaea in A.D. 325 and the Council of Constantinople in A.D. 381. The Nicene Creed clearly states that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are One God in Three Divine Persons. Jesus Christ is true God and true man and is equally God as the Father is God.

Professing Our Faith

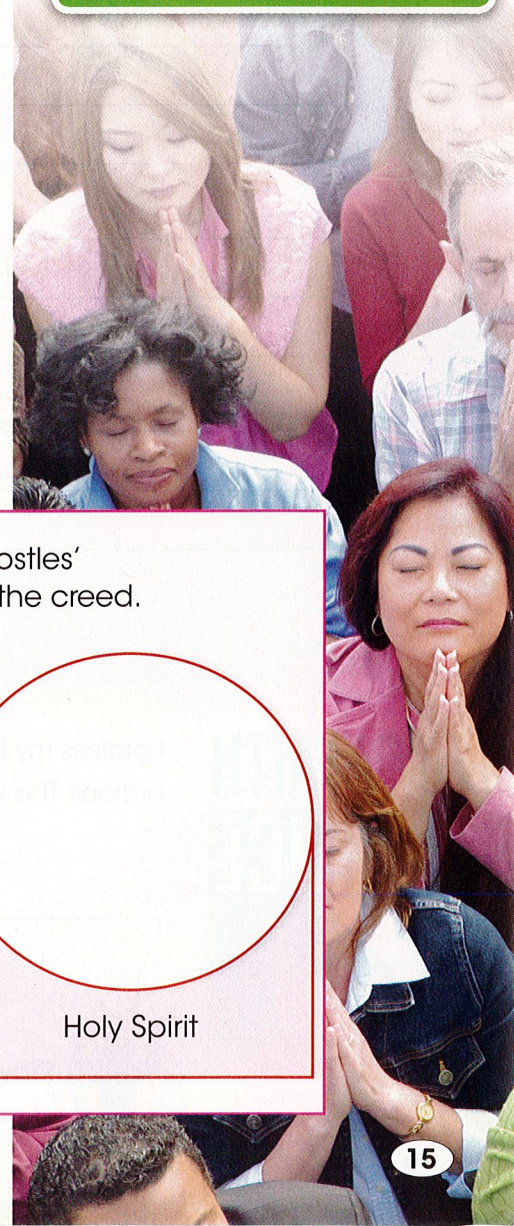
From the beginning, the Church has proudly proclaimed her faith in God in the form of a **creed**. A creed includes the language of the faith as a heartfelt expression of the Church's faith. As members of the Church, we profess our faith together through statements of faith in a creed. We celebrate and pass on the Word of God alive in our hearts and minds. The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed are the two main creeds of the Church.

The Apostles' Creed is one of the earliest creeds of the Church. It is divided into three parts:

- The first part professes our faith in God the Father, who created all that exists, Heaven and Earth.
- The second part professes our faith in God the Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed humanity from the eternal death of sin.
- The third part professes our faith in God the Holy Spirit and speaks of our sanctification. Our sanctification is the gift of sharing in God's life and love. This is possible by growing in friendship with God.

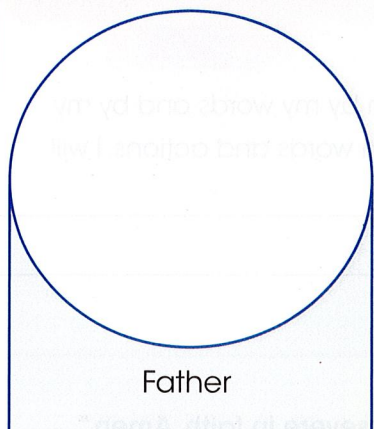
The Nicene Creed is more detailed than the Apostles' Creed, yet both equally express the faith of the Church. When we proclaim the Nicene Creed, we offer our hearts in faith to God, the Holy Trinity. Because we profess the Nicene Creed together as the Body of Christ, we unite ourselves with Christians throughout the world.

Each time that we profess our faith, God seals in our hearts the gift of faith. This seal is a symbol of our faith and a reminder of God's love in our lives.

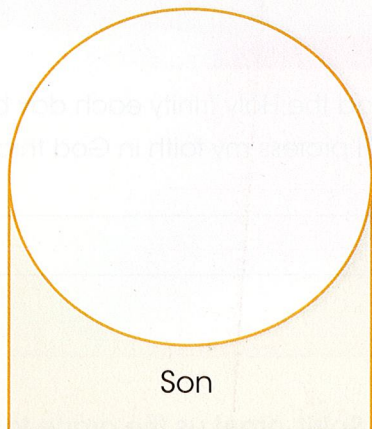


Activity

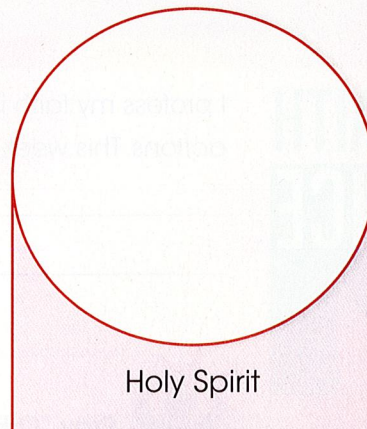
In the circles, draw a symbol for each part of the Apostles' Creed. Tell a partner how the symbol relates to that part of the creed.



Father



Son



Holy Spirit

I FOLLOW JESUS

Jesus promised the disciples that he and the Father would send the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and helper. You received the gift of the Holy Spirit at Baptism. The Holy Spirit continuously invites you to grow in your faith and friendship with God. The Holy Spirit helps you to persevere and to live the gift of faith with all of your heart, mind, and spirit.

I BELIEVE IN GOD

Read the full text of the Apostles' Creed on page 258. Then write a short reflection about your faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

I Believe in God

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

MY FAITH CHOICE

I profess my faith in God the Holy Trinity each day both by my words and by my actions. This week, I will profess my faith in God through words and actions. I will



Pray, "O Holy Spirit, grant us the grace to persevere in faith. Amen."

Chapter Review

Match each term in Column A with its definition in Column B.

Column A	Column B
_____ 1. faith	a. our acceptance of God and our willingness to receive his Revelation
_____ 2. Holy Trinity	b. the gift of sharing in God's life and love
_____ 3. Nicene Creed	c. the saving activity of God through Christ, delivering humanity from the eternal death of sin
_____ 4. Redemption	d. a summary of the principal beliefs of the Church that we profess at Mass
_____ 5. sanctification	e. the mystery of One God in Three Divine Persons

TO HELP YOU REMEMBER

1. God placed in our hearts a desire to know, love, and serve him.
2. Jesus' whole life on Earth invited us to have faith in God. Faith is the gift from God to believe in him and the grace to respond freely to that gift.
3. The creeds of the Church are both a profession and a summary of the Church's faith in God.

We Believe in God

At Baptism, we first profess our faith in God with the Church. Pray this profession of faith, which is taken from the Rite of Baptism.

Leader: Let us profess our faith. Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you reject the glamour of evil and refuse to be mastered by sin?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in God the Father?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord?

All: I do.

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

All: I do.

Leader: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

BASED ON THE "PROFESSION OF FAITH," RITE OF BAPTISM

With My Family

This Week . . .

In Chapter 1, “The Gift of Faith,” your child learned:

- ▶ God invites us to know him and believe in him. God invites us to make him the center of our lives and to discover the experience and meaning of true happiness.
- ▶ The whole life of Jesus Christ on Earth most clearly and fully reveals that divine invitation. God created us to know, love, and serve him and to be happy with him now on Earth and forever in Heaven.
- ▶ The Apostles’ Creed and the Nicene Creed are the two principal creeds of the Church.
- ▶ The virtue of perseverance strengthens us to remain strong and steadfast in our faith.

For more about related teachings of the Church, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 26–49, 142–197, and the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, pages 2–9, 36–47.

Sharing God’s Word

Read together Jeremiah 24:7. Emphasize that God created us, his Word is alive in our hearts, and his love is deep in our souls.

We Live as Disciples

The Christian home and family is a school of discipleship. Choose one of the following activities to do as a family, or design a similar activity of your own:

- ▶ Make a puzzle to help your child learn the Apostles’ Creed by heart. Write the words of the creed on a piece of paper. Then cut the paper into pieces, and together assemble the puzzle pieces.

- ▶ Share ideas of ways your family shows that God is at the center of the life of your family. Discuss how family members are signs to others that they are disciples of Christ.

- ▶ Visit **BeMyDisciples.com**. Look up the profiles of several martyrs of the Church. Discuss how they persevered in their faith, even to freely suffering death for their faith.

Our Spiritual Journey

In this chapter, your child prayed a profession of faith based on the “Profession of Faith” in the Rite of Baptism. Read and pray together this prayer on page 17.



For more ideas on ways your family can live as disciples of Jesus, visit

www.BeMyDisciples.com