

The Profession of Faith (Creed, Pt. 2)

Fall 2024 Confirmation Prep Session #3 – Home Make-Up Session

Our Support: The Church

REVIEW: Last month we spent time looking at why we believe that God is real. We examined evidence for the fact that Jesus was a living person who claimed to BE God, so had to either be lying, a lunatic, or really and truly the Lord. Your homework will look more at the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. We looked at the solid evidence for Jesus' resurrection from the dead. So now we'll do the same thing as we look to life BEYOND Jesus' death. We'll ask the important question: *How do we know the Catholic Church is the One True Church – the one that Jesus founded?*

The first evidence we look to is right in Scripture.

- **The Eucharist** → And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” (Luke 22:19) and John 6
- **The Forgiveness of Sins** → Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.” (John 20:21-23)
- **The Pope** → And I tell you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the powers of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 16:18-19a)
- **The Unfailing Help of the Holy Spirit** → But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

VIDEO: [Fr. Mike – Why Be Catholic and Not Just Christian \(8:51\)](#)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What did you hear Fr. Mike saying is the biggest difference between the Catholic Church and other Protestant/Christian denominations?
(Authority – Jesus gave the apostles authority to continue to teach and guide in his name, and the Catholic Church is directly connected to this line of the apostles established by Jesus)

- What book of the Bible do we look to for the evidence of this? (*Acts of the Apostles – the book that documents the life of the earliest Christians in the time after Jesus' resurrection*)
- What are some of the beliefs that Christians commonly share now because of decisions made at Catholic Church councils? (*Belief that Jesus is fully God and fully man; belief in the Trinity; which books of the Bible are validly inspired by the Holy Spirit and which are not; the Apostles Creed*)
- What would happen if there wasn't a structure in place to help guide the Church on earth? And to help guide us in how we interpret the Scripture that God gave us? (*Chaos – eventually there would be so much fracturing that people would no longer be unified. And this has played out in history – since the Protestant Reformation occurred, there are now thousands of different sub-branches of Christianity.*)
- What has your relationship with the Church been like so far? Are there teachings that you struggle to accept or that you disagree with? Is it difficult for you to trust in the authority of the Church? (*Leader Note – be sure to mention that it's okay – and important! – to be honest about this. But if that's where they are, moving forward as a confirmed Catholic it will be important for them to reflect on this and ask God to help them grow in trust of His Church and its teachings. We're here to be of support in that!*)

Our End: The Last Things

- **The Big Picture: Eternity**
 - The Church exists to help us get to heaven!
 - The reason that all of this matters so much is that we are more than our bodies. We are body and soul. And so the way we use our bodies and live our lives on earth will have an eternal effect on our soul.
 - We believe that at the end of our lives, we will go before God and account for how we've used the time and the gifts given to us.
 - And then He'll ask us a simple question: do you want to be with me forever? And we respond yes, or no.
 - If the answer is yes and our soul is truly purified – if we're perfectly free from all our sins and attachments to things on earth – then we get to be with Him immediately in **Heaven!**

- If the answer is yes but our soul is still bound up by some sins and attachments to things on earth, we go to **Purgatory**. We're promised here that we WILL end up in Heaven, so there's still joy here! But there's also some ongoing purification to help prepare us.
- If you are so attached to sin and things of the earth that you say no... God will respect your choice.
- In this case, we end up in **Hell**. Hell is not a punishment that God inflicts, but a state of separation from God that we choose.
- **VIDEO:** [Hell is for Real](#) (Fr. Mike, 6 mins)
 - One major question we get is this: If God is all loving, why does Hell exist? Here's Fr. Mike's response.

- **Review next steps toward Confirmation!**

- This fall, we've more or less walked through the entire Creed.
- Yes, we crammed a lot into a short amount of time. The truth is, we've only had time to just barely scrape the surface - there's so much more to learn and to explore!
- So now you have a choice. In this next stage before continuing with Confirmation preparation, you need to decide: Do you believe these core teachings of the Church? What questions do you still have?
- ***Most importantly... What are you doing to seek the answers? How are you actively growing in your faith outside of these sessions? Do you feel prepared to live out the 5 precepts of the Church after your Confirmation?***
- We won't meet again until Confirmation interviews in January, followed by sessions with your sponsor in the spring. That's a LOT of time. So we're going to ask you to take on one of 3 challenges between now and your interview in January:
 - **See challenges sheet**
 - **January Interview**
In January, you'll sign up for a Confirmation interview, and we will ask you about this challenge and about what you've been doing to grow in faith outside of these Confirmation sessions. These interviews are not meant to be intimidating, but are an opportunity for us to talk with you about where you're at on your faith journey so we can be of extra support in your final spring preparations for Confirmation.
- Your sponsor form is also due at the time of your interview!

- **Closing Prayer**

The Nicene Creed

Pray it like you mean it! It's easy for words that we say all the time to lose their meaning and become background noise. But now, spend your few minutes in silent prayer really reflecting on these words and what they mean for us. People have fought and died for these words – these core beliefs that define who we are as Catholics. As we close out, let's PRAY these words together.