

The Apostles' Creed
("Symbolum Apostolorum",
"Symbolum Apostolicum")

Background:

The Symbolum Apostolorum was developed between the second and ninth centuries. It is the most popular creed used in worship by Western Christians. Its central doctrines are those of the Trinity and God the Creator.

Legend has it that the Apostles wrote this creed on the tenth day after Christ's ascension into heaven. That is not the case, though the name stuck. However, each of the doctrines found in the creed can be traced to statements current in the apostolic period. The earliest written version of the creed is perhaps the Interrogatory Creed of Hippolytus (ca. A.D. 215). The current form is first found in the writings of Caesarius of Arles (d 542).

The creed was apparently used as a summary of Christian doctrine for baptismal candidates in the churches of Rome. Hence it is also known as The Roman Symbol. As in Hippolytus' version it was given in question and answer format with the baptismal candidates answering in the affirmative that they believed each statement.

I BELIEVE in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary: Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; The third day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty: From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost: The holy Catholic Church; The Communion of Saints: The Forgiveness of sins: The Resurrection of the body: And the Life everlasting.

Amen.

Latin Version (ca. A.D. 700):

Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem; Creatorem coeli et terrae.

Et in Jesum Christum, Filium ejus unicum, Dominum nostrum; qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria virgine; passus sub Pontio Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus, et sepultus; descendit ad inferna; tertia die resurrexit a mortuis; ascendit ad coelos; sedet ad dexteram Dei Patris omnipotentis; inde venturus (est) judicare vivos et mortuos.

Credo in Spiritum Sanctum; sanctam ecclesiam catholicam; sanctorum communionem; remissionem peccatorum; carnis resurrectionem; vitam oeternam.

Amen.