

Why is the Apostles' Creed Important?

What is an apostle?

“Apostle” comes from a Greek word meaning *messenger*. In the Bible, this word is used to mean Jesus’ disciples, the ones chosen specifically by Him.

Some religious groups call their leaders “apostles.” But the early church recognized Jesus’ disciples and Paul (Romans 1:1)—the first century apostles—as a special category.

An apostle was a person who

- was chosen by Christ (Matthew 10:1-4; 1 Cor. 1:1) and
- was an eyewitness of Christ (Acts 1:21-25; Acts 22:1-6, 15) and
- did signs, wonders and miracles (2 Cor. 12:12).

What is a creed?

A creed is a short, simple summary of belief. The Apostles’ Creed is a summary of the apostles’ most basic teachings about God found in the bible. The creed was written by early church leaders about AD 100. It was used to help people see the difference between Christianity and other beliefs and religions. New Christians were often required to know the Apostles’ Creed in order to prepare for their baptism. For nearly 2000 years, this creed has been used by millions of Christians worldwide.

Why learn the Apostles’ Creed today?

Although the *Nicene Creed* (which we profess at Mass every Sunday) is a more detailed expression of our Christian faith, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* uses the Apostles’ Creed as the main formula to teach the Faith (CCC 196). The Apostles’ Creed is a summary of the faith of the apostles and, as such, contains the most fundamental beliefs of Christianity. We also use this prayer at the start of the Rosary.