

The Christian Faith is not a human innovation. It is not through human cleverness, but rather by the grace and mercy of God that we have come to faith, and to know the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal relationship. We believe in the way we believe because God has come to seek us out and made himself known to us. God has revealed himself through the Scriptures. God has revealed himself most clearly through the gift of his son Jesus Christ. God makes himself known personally to each believer through the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles' Creed is an early statement of Christian belief. It affirms a belief in the God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. It is thought that it was first used in the form as we know it between 710 and 714 AD and was known as the "Excerpt from individual Canonical books". The earliest form of the Creed, known as the Rule of Faith was first mentioned in circa 180 AD. This then formed the basis for the Old Roman Creed or Old Roman Symbol found in approximately 390 AD which was used as declaration of faith in baptism. There was a belief in the 4th century that, inspired by the Holy Spirit, each of the Twelve Apostles contributed an article to the 12 articles of the creed. I didn't realise there are 12 articles to the creed. Can you number them in the Creed? I needed some help, but they are there. There is no debate that the creed is based on the Christian theological understanding of the Gospels, the letters of the New Testament and to a lesser extent the Old Testament.

Today, a creed, be it the Apostles' Creed or one similar, is used widely in both Baptism and the Eucharist. Saying the Creed each time we celebrate the Eucharist is familiar and comforting to us, to me. It gives us an opportunity on a regular basis to reaffirm our faith and to deliberately place our confidence and trust once again in a living and loving God, father son and Holy Ghost. It is like we have a new beginning as we make a new commitment to our faith. And it is necessary to keep making that new commitment because, as human beings, we are fallible in our journey through life. All kinds of things happen every day. Some of those things bring us closer to God and some edge us or even drive us away. Our faith may even be outright challenged by what we encounter. By coming together and saying the Creed, we are given an opportunity to say out loud and remind ourselves what the very core being Christian is, remind ourselves of what we believe.

The Apostles' Creed is just one of the creeds that is used. The other most well-known to us is the Nicene Creed. But there are many others equally as old and ones more modern. We have chosen to focus on the Apostles' Creed over the next 10 weeks, looking at each part in a bit more detail. Think of the Creed as a big box full of carefully wrapped presents. Each week, we are going to take one, unwrap it and dig a little deeper into its meaning. By the end of the journey, we will each have a whole treasure trove of new resources for living a Christian life, understanding the faith and knowing God better.

I invite you to join me in saying the Apostles' Creed. And as you do, think about every word you are saying, what each article means and what questions you might have about that meaning. Let each word sit in your heart this week and keep you close to our Lord.