

Faith

Core Activity

Creeds and the Apostles' Creed



1. Before you conduct this activity, make a copy of the handout “Statements from the Apostles’ Creed” (Document #: TX003176) and cut apart the copy as scored.

2. Begin this activity by dividing the class into groups of four or five, and asking the members of each group to work together to create a list of things they all believe in. Have each group record its list of beliefs. The following focusing questions may be helpful:

- What do you set your heart on?
- What would you stand up for in the face of opposition?

After several minutes, have someone from each group share the group’s list of beliefs.

3. Conduct a presentation on the faith and the Catholic Church, using summary points taken from chapter 4 of *The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, Third Edition (CFH)*. If you have a recording of the song “Creed,” by Rich Mullins, or “Profession of Faith,” by Tom Booth, use it as part of the presentation. Invite the students to share their reactions to the song, including phrases that stand out and their sense of the performer’s conviction.

4. Together with the students, read the Apostles’ Creed aloud. Note that sometimes we can repeat words until they are meaningless or until we forget the significance of what we are saying. Emphasize that as Catholics, “we do not believe in formulas, but in those realities they express” (CCC, 170).

5. Give each small group one or two sections of the handout, one or two sheets of newsprint, and markers (if necessary, recombine the groups to ensure that all the sections of the creed are distributed). Tell the groups to write their assigned statements at the tops of separate newsprint sheets. Explain that they are to discuss the statements and put them into their own words, recording their rewritten versions on the corresponding newsprint sheets and adding any symbols or images that help convey the meanings of the phrases.

6. Invite each small group to share its work with the entire class, posting its statements where everyone can see them. The statements should be presented and posted in the order they appear in the text.

7. Display or distribute copies of the Nicene Creed, and either briefly explain the difference between it and the Apostles' Creed, or refer the students to the discussion of the Nicene Creed on pages 52–53 of the *CFH*.

8. Suggest the students use the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed as an outline to explore their beliefs. Conclude with a prayerful reading of the students' rewritten passages.

(This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Core Activity Extension

Difficult Phrases

As homework or class work, urge each student to identify a section or phrase in the Apostles' or Nicene Creed that is difficult to understand. Invite the young people to work on gaining a better understanding by asking other people about the creed or by reading about the creed in the *CFH* and in other resources that are available in your setting. Consider providing the students with copies of the article "Connect the Creed to Your Life," by Michael J. Daley (order no. Y0395; available from St. Anthony Messenger Press, 800-488-0488, catalog.americancatholic.org). Have your students turn in a brief paper or journal entry that includes the section or phrase of the Apostles' or Nicene Creed that they have difficulty understanding, and two or three questions they would like answered concerning that part.

Additional Activities

"Faith Is . . ."

Have your students complete the sentence "Faith is . . ." in small groups or as individuals. Invite them to share the end of the sentence that they develop. Then have them read the section "The Characteristics of Faith," on pages 50–51 of the *CFH*. Compare their sentence endings to those in the *CFH*, and discuss the similarities and differences. Conclude by stressing that "faith is the human person's response to God's loving invitation to believe in him" (*CFH*, p. 50). (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

The Good News about Being Catholic

As homework or class work, invite the students, individually or in small groups, to come up with one way the Catholic Church spreads the Good News—preferably a way they have personally experienced. Then ask them to create an advertisement for the Good News that uses the medium they have named. They could do one of the following projects, or come up with an alternative:

- Create a TV or newspaper ad.
- Design a highway billboard.
- Write new lyrics to a popular song.
- Create a Top 10 list.

Invite each individual or group to share the completed advertisement with the class. (This activity is adapted from Maryann Hakowski, *Getaways with God*, p. 125.)

Media Connection: Exploring Catholic Beliefs

Invite the students to visit www.disciplesnow.com, click on “Catholic 411,” explore the Web site’s questions about the Church’s beliefs, and write a reflection paper on what they learn about a specific belief listed on the site. You might also have them explore a creed of another faith and write a paper comparing the beliefs it expresses with Catholic beliefs. As part of this alternative, have your students read the Catholic Wisdom article “Other Religions,” on page 50 of the *CFH*. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Logo Design

Invite the class to design a logo that professes Christian faith. If the students did the previous activity “The Good News about Being Catholic,” you might want to select one or two of their best ideas from it. This is an especially good activity if it corresponds with a genuine need for a logo to use on T-shirts, bandannas, banners, or advertisements to promote a school event such as a class retreat or Catholic Schools Week. Help the young people to develop the logo and to then make every effort to use it in a way that students will have occasion to observe it. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Local Outreach

Have your students read the section “Faith Is Our Response to God’s Love,” on pages 47–48 of the *CFH*. Lead the class in a discussion about living our faith. Identify various groups in your area that work to make sure people are treated with dignity, such as the Red Cross, foster families, or organizations that work to end domestic violence or shelter and feed the poor. Challenge everyone to find at least one way to contribute to the efforts of one of the groups. (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

Faith in the Liturgy

Distribute copies of the Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation I from the *Sacramentary* (or another Eucharistic prayer from the *Sacramentary*), or display the prayer for the class. Encourage your students to find expression of the truths from the Apostles' Creed in the Eucharistic prayer. Have them look for the following specific points:

- God as creator
 - Jesus as atonement for sin
 - the power of the Holy Spirit
 - the resurrection of the body and life everlasting
- (This activity is adapted from the *TC: Creed* manual.)

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