

# Nicene Creed

# What I have learned

- + Understanding God
- + The mystery of the God and the trinity
- + The more we try to understand it on our own terms
  - + Danger of getting it wrong

## + Fr. Mike Introduction

- + Tried to explain God through Cultural lens
  - + Like a Greek god - Jesus is half human and half divine
  - + Fully divine because anything divine can't be muddied with humanness (Gnostic and Docetism)
  - + Jesus is fully human and not divine - just the best among men

- + Arius of Alexandria in Egypt
  - + Jesus not divine in the same way as the Father is divine
  - + Jesus is not eternal
    - + There was a time when he was not
  - + Jesus is human and had some aspects of divinity within him but he was not divine in the same way as the Father
  - + Jesus was created by the Father - so he is subordinate to the Father

# Heresies - False Religious Teachings

- + All heresies have something in common
  - + They take part of the truth and make it the whole truth
  - + Here he was correct in saying Jesus was fully, truly human
  - + But Arius leaves out another part of the truth - Jesus is fully divine
- + Arius was a good speaker and his false teaching spread widely - just because you're popular doesn't mean you are speaking the truth

## Setting the Political Stage

- + Constantine was ruling the Roman empire
  - + He thought Christianity would unify his kingdom and this teaching from Arius was causing a division
  - + So Constantine called for the church to have a council
  - + Nicene Council - between 200 - 300 Bishops
    - + Arius was there too
- + Constantine and the religious leaders knew this issue had to be addressed
- + Nicene Creed we say at Sunday Masses comes from
  - + Nicene Council (325 AD) &
  - + Constantinople Council (381 AD)

I believe in . . .

- + Personal but also communal. This is unity and harmony - the Church united in its belief. Yet, no one can believe for us. We have to choose to believe ourselves. Each of us together so we profess this faith together as a community.
- + Deacon Morlino - we say it together, intentionally, in harmony as a parish as a community as Church
- +

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,  
the Only Begotten Son of God,  
born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
and by the Holy Spirit was  
incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified  
under Pontius Pilate,  
he suffered death and was buried,  
and rose again on the third day  
in accordance with the Scriptures.  
He ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of  
the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead  
and his kingdom will have no end.



# One Lord Jesus Christ

- + **Jesus** - Yeshua (יֵשׁוּעַ) is the original Hebrew/Aramaic name for Jesus, meaning "salvation" or "to rescue"  
-Joshua
- + Joshua means God saves
- + Jesus is the one who is going to bring to a sin sick world a divine healing -
- + The savior is the one who brings the healing balm - salve
- + A type of Joshua - He lead the Israelites into the promised land
- + A warrior and a spiritual leader

# One Lord Jesus Christ

- + Christ - Cristos - Meshiach - the anointed one
  - + The Jewish kings were anointed
  - + The Meshiach par excellent - was King David
    - + United tribes
    - + Expanded empire
    - + Brings Ark of Covenant into Jerusalem
    - + But he was also a fallen and compromised king
      - + Israel longs for true anointed one par excellent
        - + Warrior
        - + King
        - + Priest

# One Lord Jesus Christ

- + Lord - Adoni - used for God
  - + We are putting our faith in a human figure
    - + more than a human figure because he is also One Lord
- + A Davidic King will come to rescue them but also hear
- + God is going to come and rescue his people
- + Jesus is both - God - the Good Shepherd coming to save His people and the king who comes to rule over the people and guide them.

# Only begotten Son of God

- + Son of God -
  - + This phrase was used other times -
    - + Just and pious men, descendants of Seth
    - + Angels - Job 1:6
    - + Solomon - 2 Samuel, Psalm 2
    - + Israel - Exodus 4:22
    - + Kings, leaders, judges
- + **Jesus is different - not one among many but the only begotten Son**

# Only begotten Son of God

- + Jesus is different - not one among many but the only begotten Son
  - + Speaks with Authority
  - + Forgives sins
  - + I Am statements - Gospel of John - 7 I AM statements - Ego Eimi
    - + I AM the Bread of life - John 6
    - + I AM the Light of the World - John 8
    - + I AM the gate - John 10
    - + I AM the good shepherd - John 10
    - + I AM the resurrection and the life - John 11
    - + I AM the way, the truth and the life - John 14
    - + I AM the true vine - John 15
    - + I AM - In the garden when arrested- John 18:4-8

**born of the Father before all ages.  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
consubstantial with the Father;  
through him all things were made.**

# Specifically addressing Arius' heresy

- + Making it clear by saying it in a number of ways
  - + You are wrong Arius
  - + Jesus is not created
  - + Jesus is not just a great human
  - + Jesus is fully divine and fully human

Arius said - there was a time when he was not

+ John 1:1 - 6

+ “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it”.



# Arius said - there was a time when he was not

- + John 1: 14-17

- + And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. John testified to him and cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, **'The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.'**" From his fullness we have all received, grace in place of grace, because while the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Arius said - Jesus was created by God

The Creed says -

**begotten, not made**

**consubstantial with the Father**

**through him all things were made**

- + We are created in the likeness and image of God
  - + We are an image or reflection but we don't share perfectly in God's being
- + Jesus is begotten - he shares fully and perfectly in God
  - + Consubstantial - of the same substance as God
  - + Christianity is dependent on this truth!
- + When God created everything - Jesus was there and part of the creating process - John 1

For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

- + Jewish tradition - make offerings for sin
  - + Sinful people can't save people from sin
  - + Made it over and over
- + Once the Messiah comes - only the Todah offering
  - + Todah - Thanksgiving
  - + Eucharist - Thanksgiving

For us men and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,  
and became man.

- + Agape love - wills the good of the other
- + Jesus came all the way down -
  - + Into our sinful world
  - + Took the form of a slave
  - + Think of Jesus baptized in the Jordan

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# **Incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man**

- + Jesus is truly man but it is not through a human father - truly the work of God
- + This is a re-creation - it is a new covenant
- + Virginity of Mary - Ark of the Covenant
  - + Ark of the Covenant - contains the presence of God
    - + Manna - bread of life
    - + Rod of Aaron - High Priest
    - + 10 Commandments - the Law, the Word of God

Mary bears in the fullest sense the presence of God

## Became man

- + Philippians 2:6-7
  - + Who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave; coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance . . .
- + God takes to himself a human nature
- + God became human that we might become God
- + God becomes human so he could heal us and change us so much that we become so like Him and love like Him - sons and daughters of God

# **For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate**

- + Why is Pilate mentioned
  - + Only 3 names mentioned - Jesus, Mary, Pontius Pilate
  - + Gives historical context
  - + Verifies the truth of what is being said - it happened
  - + Pilate presides over the trial and crucifixion of Jesus
    - + So much of the passion revolves around this truth
    - + Story of how God's way and the world are often opposed
    - + Pilate represents all the people who opposed God's purpose and Jesus's life
    - + Opposed by political, religious leaders & Satan himself



# He suffered death and was buried

- + Crucifixion about the worst thing you could imagine - humiliating, painful
- + The horror and reality of Jesus' suffering
  - + The scourging
  - + The abandonment by his followers
  - + The mocking and joy that religious and political leaders took in Jesus' suffering
- + We wear it as jewelry and decorate our homes but it is horrid

# He was buried

- + This was real and historical and the scripture gives us details
  - + Joseph of Arimathea
  - + Tomb that was never used
  - + Nicodemus

## **and rose again on the third day**

- + This truth is essential to our faith
- + If Jesus just died but didn't rise - then he is just one teacher among many - one prophet among many
- + He rose - He appeared to people
- + Acts -
- + Peter and Paul professes who Jesus is and back it up by saying there were witnesses
- + Paul tells us to go ask Peter or the 500 witnesses - 1 Corinthians 15:5-8
- + The apostles gave their lives for this truth.

## in accordance with the Scriptures

- + Between 300 and 400 Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah - depends on how you count them
- + The chances that a person would fulfill even 8 Old Testament prophecies is 1 in a 100 quadrillion!
- + That's 1 in a 100,000,000,000,000,000 chance!!! Scientists have estimated that there have been approximately 100 billion people that have lived on planet earth since its inception, which is a small fraction of the calculated probability!
- + Jesus fulfills ALL of the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah. What are the chances of that happening

## **He ascended into heaven**

- + Jesus was in heaven and went all the way down to Earth**
- + Philippians 2:9-11**
  - + Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**
- + Now Jesus is raised above He has a vantage point where He can see how everything unfolds**

**and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**What does it mean to be at the right hand**

**+ Act with authority of the Father -**

**He will come again in glory**

**+ What does this mean**

**+ Jesus will return**

# **to judge the living and the dead**

- + Final judgement - what does this mean
- + Will bring justice - the justice that is longed for in the Old Testament
- + Everything will be set right. Even though in our world justice doesn't always happen. Truth and righteousness do not always prevail on Earth but when Christ returns. He will set it all right

**and his kingdom will have no end.**