

# PREPARING FOR THE NEW TRANSLATION THE APOSTLES' CREED AND THE GENERAL INTERCESSIONS



The *Roman Missal* allows for the option of saying the Apostles' Creed at certain times. This rubric or instruction was changed in the *Third Typical Edition of the Roman Missal*, the Latin edition of which was published in 2002 as can clearly be seen in the two translations

Current Translation	New Translation
<i>In celebrations of Masses with children, the Apostles' Creed may be said after the homily.</i>	<i>Instead of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, especially during Lent and Easter time, the baptismal Symbol of the Roman Church, known as the Apostles' Creed, may be used.</i>

## COMMENTARY:

In many places in the United States this option is not often used, so the instruction for when the Apostles' Creed may suitably replace the Nicene Creed at Mass may have little noticeable impact in most parishes. Because of the former rubric's mention of Masses with children, in some countries the custom had arisen of always saying the Apostles' Creed in place of the Nicene Creed; at least some children, after all, are present at most public Masses. The Nicene Creed, as is obvious, is more extensive in its articulation of the faith. As we have seen, it has been used in the Mass in certain areas of the Western Church going back to the 500s. The change in this rubric seeks to preserve this tradition. This being said, there is reason to use the Apostles' Creed during the seasons of Lent and Easter, when the Church properly celebrates the Baptism of new believers. In the ancient Roman Church, the Apostles' Creed was traditionally used to instruct the catechumens who were preparing for Baptism at Easter in the faith entrusted to the Church by Jesus Christ and handed down through Apostolic Succession. The Apostles' Creed is the framework for the presentation of the faith in the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* and for the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

## CHANGES IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE APOSTLES' CREED

The New Translation also contains certain very minor changes in the English version of the Apostles' Creed. For

those of you who have the Apostles' Creed memorized and use it in your regular recitation of the Rosary, the New Translation may actually be closer to (or exactly the same as) the translation that you know. In short, the New Translation tries to preserve the longer sentence structure as found in the Latin version of the Apostles' Creed. There are only two places where the New Translation actually does something more than replace "He" with the relative pronoun "who." To save space, we will simply look at these lines of the Apostles' Creed.

Current Translation	New Translation
He was conceived by <b>the power of</b> the Holy Spirit.	...who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.	...he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of <b>God</b> the Father <b>almighty</b> ; <b>from there</b> he will come to judge the living and the

## COMMENTARY:

In the New Translation, the article of the Apostles' Creed that concerns the Incarnation is treated as a relative clause, as it is in Latin, instead of starting a new sentence. The same may be seen in the later article listed above regarding Christ's Ascension and the expectation of His Second Coming.

The New Translation no longer uses the words "**the power of**" in reference to the Holy Spirit's role in the Incarnation. Although these words do not alter the understanding of this text, they are absent from the Latin text. You will also notice that in the articles on the Ascension and the Second Coming the words **God**, **almighty**, and **from there** appear in the New Translation while they are mysteriously absent from the Current Translation of the Apostles' Creed.

## THE PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

The Liturgy of the Word concludes with the Prayer of the Faithful. The New Translation refers to these petitions, referred to as General Intercessions in our Current Transla-

tion, as “the Universal Prayer”, “the Prayer of the Faithful”, or “Bidding Prayers.” The instructions for these prayers are as follows:

Current Translation	New Translation
<p><i>Then follow <b>the general intercessions</b> (prayer of the faithful). <b>The priest presides at the prayer. With a brief introduction, he invites the people to pray; after the intentions he says the concluding prayer. It is desirable that the intentions be announced by the deacon, cantor, or other person.</b></i></p>	<p><i>Then follows <b>the Universal Prayer, that is, the Prayer of the Faithful or Bidding Prayers.</b></i></p>

**COMMENTARY:**

The instructions governing the Prayer of the Faithful are found in *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* and not the rubrics of the Mass. This change is entirely cosmetic; the instructions in the Current Translation are simply found elsewhere in the *GIRM*. The New Translation simply attempts to give a literal translation of the Latin typical text. The New Translation does not take liberties by repeating instructions found elsewhere in the *Roman Missal*.

This being said, perhaps this is a good place to reflect on what is to take place at this point in the Mass. The *GIRM* notes that the Prayer of the Faithful is a response by the faithful in a certain way to the word of God and an exercise of their baptismal priesthood in which they offer prayers to God for the salvation of all. The *GIRM*, in paragraph 69, goes on to say, “It is fitting that such a prayer be included, as a rule, in Masses celebrated with a congregation, so that petitions will be offered for the holy Church, for civil authorities, for those weighed down by various needs, for all men and women, and for the salvation of the whole world.”

The Prayer of the Faithful responds to St. Paul’s instruction in 1 Tim. 2:1-4:

*First of all, then, I ask that supplications, prayers, petitions, and thanksgivings be offered for everyone, for kings and for all in authority, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all devotion and dignity. This is good and pleasing to God our Savior, who wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth.*

Some of you may know or remember the Extraordinary Form of the Mass, or the Mass as it was celebrated prior to the liturgical changes that followed the Second Vatican Council. Apart from Good Friday, there was/is no Prayer of the Faithful apart from the petitions found in the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer I). The restoration of the Prayer of the Faithful “especially on Sundays and feasts of obligation” was one of only a handful of reforms specifically mandated by the Second Vatican Council’s *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, paragraph 53. The language of the *GIRM* indicates these should normally be included in Masses with a congregation, but it does not mandate them in every instance.

The Universal Prayer should generally begin with the needs of the Church, progress to mention of public authorities and the salvation of the world, progress with the inclusion of those suffering with burdens, and conclude with the needs of the local community. Special occasions, e.g. marriages and funerals, may have intentions that more closely reflect the nature of those celebrations. The *GIRM* in paragraph 71 instructs that the petitions should be “sober, be composed freely but prudently, and be succinct, and they should express the prayer of the entire community.”

The intentions are to be presided over by the priest from the chair, with the priest giving both the introduction and the concluding prayer. If a deacon is present, it is primarily his position to say the intentions. In the absence of a deacon, a cantor, a lector, or a member of the lay faithful should read the petitions. The congregation stands during the Prayer of the Faithful and gives its assent through an invocation, such as ‘Lord, hear our prayer’ or ‘Lord, have mercy’, or by praying in silence.

