

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.^[1]

The third day he arose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit;

I believe in the holy catholic church,^[2]
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

[1] The phrase "He descended into hell" appears in many modern versions of the Apostles' Creed after this line, but there are strong reasons to reject it as an original line in the Creed. In fact, "descended into hell" cannot be found in any of the early versions of the Creed, such as those used in Rome and the rest of Italy, or in Africa, until AD 390 when it surfaced in one of two versions from Rufinus. Even Rufinus rejected the idea of a descent by Jesus Christ into hell, understanding the line to mean instead that he was buried. After 390, it fails to appear in any version of the Creed in the manuscript tradition until AD 650. Especially given the serious theological problems with the idea of Christ going to hell, it is best to reject this line entirely.

[2] The word "catholic" refers not to the Roman Catholic Church, but to the universal church of the Lord Jesus Christ.