

The Nicene Creed and Commentary

God the Father	
I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,	<p><i>I believe in one God . . . Almighty</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is one God, so we need not worry that "another God" will come and unseat God from his throne or compete for our affections. • In the ancient world's understanding of the divine, a god was never almighty but was always battling for superior status with other gods. Our God really does have all of the power and is focused on his creation rather than on fighting with other gods. We can call on God at any time. <p><i>I believe in . . . the Father</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When we profess that God is our Father, we acknowledge that he is the source of all life, that all creation exists because of God. • Jesus' relationship with God was filial, a father-son relationship. • In the Gospels Jesus calls God <i>Abba</i>, which, in his native language of Aramaic, means "Father." (This is an intimate way to address God the Father, who is almighty!) • Jesus actually invites us to call God "Father" ourselves! • To say that God is our Father does not mean that God is literally male. "God is Spirit" (John 4:24).
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible	<p><i>maker of heaven and earth . . .</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God the Father is the Eternal Source of all that exists. • Because God created all that is, Catholics believe it is possible to encounter God's presence in every and any situation (this is an aspect of holding a sacramental worldview), which means that there is never a situation that is too bleak or too dark for God to be found. <p><i>all things visible and invisible</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In addition, this statement makes it clear that everything God has created does not meet the criteria of "matter" to be seen or felt. There is a spiritual world where "real things happen" even though they are unseen.
Jesus Christ, the Son	
I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,	<i>Jesus</i> means "God saves." <i>Christ</i> means "Anointed One." In the ancient world, anointing with oil symbolized being chosen by God for some special mission or purpose.
the only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages,	Jesus Christ has a unique relationship with God the Father: he is the only, and the Eternal, Son of God. Jesus was begotten, or fathered, by the Father.
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,	Jesus and the Father relate to each other as a source of light relates to the light it shines.
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;	Because the Father "fathered" Jesus, Jesus was not made or created in such a way that he is a creature as humans and animals are.

