



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The next section of the Creed looks at the Last Judgment:

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

As Catholics we believe in two judgments: the personal judgment when we die; and the Last Judgment at the end of time. At the personal judgment, our lives will be judged, and we will be sent on our way, either to hell, directly to heaven, or to heaven by way of purification in Purgatory. We believe that if we are friends with God, but not completely purified of attachments to sin when we die, by God's mercy, we have the opportunity for purification after death. At the Last Judgment, Purgatory will be opened up and all the souls still there will enter heaven. We will also see all of the consequences of all of our actions throughout history – how every act everyone chose affected everyone else. We'll also see God's Providential Hand moving through all of history. At this time, we know that Jesus will come in glory, and there will be no end to His Kingdom (see Matthew 25:31-46).

The next section of the Creed is on the Holy Spirit:

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

Here we proclaim our faith that God is not binary, but a Trinity of persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Each person in the Trinity is God – fully, totally, in all ways – yet the Father is not the Son nor the Holy Spirit, the Son is not the Father nor the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father nor the Son. Yet, there is only one God. He is Lord, the Father is Lord and Jesus is Lord. He is the giver of life, which means that the Holy Spirit was part of creation, as the Father and Son were.

We now have to deal with finding human language to describe divine things. With the Son, we refer to how He is "begotten" of the Father. Here we speak of the Holy Spirit "proceeding" from the Father and the Son. Somehow, He comes forth from the Father and the Son, yet for all eternity, so that there never was a time when He was not. The traditional analogy is of love: The Father is the Lover, the Son is the Beloved, and their love is so real that it is a person – the Holy Spirit, love itself.

The Creed makes it clear that the Holy Spirit is fully God, for He is to be adored and glorified in the same way as the Father and the Son. It goes on to add that He spoke through the prophets. Prophetic utterances come through the Holy Spirit moving in the world. This might be better understood through another analogy for the Trinity – the bungee jump: The Father is the bridge, the Son is the jumper, and the Holy Spirit is the bungee cord connecting bridge to jumper. When we connect with the Holy Spirit, when the Spirit is living within us, we have the very life of God within, and the work of the Son (redemption on the Cross) now becomes real for our lives right here, right now. As such, the Holy Spirit then is the voice of God in our souls, and speaks through the prophets – those recorded in the Scriptures (for instance, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Elijah), and all of the prophets even through today.

Next week, we'll look at the last section of the Creed, including the four marks of the Church.