

On the Revised Translation of the Mass
Bulletin Insert 11
“The Creed 2”

The first major change to the Nicene Creed in the forthcoming retranslation of the Mass will be difficult to miss. Currently it begins, “We believe in one God...” This is repeated four times through the Creed. The new translation will replace “we believe” with “I believe.”

Greek was the original language of the Liturgy celebrated in Rome because it was what the people spoke. As the centuries passed, Latin became the common language and so the prayers were translated from Greek into Latin. When the Liturgy was translated into Latin the “We believe” of the original Greek version of the Creed became “I believe.”

In the centuries between when the Creed was first written and when Latin became the common language, the Church developed the understanding that attending Mass is an extension and expression of the faith entered into at Baptism and so the Creed was added to the Mass as a verbal expression of this understanding.

When we are Baptized we die to ourselves as Jesus died in His humanity. This is symbolized by entering into the water of Baptism three times – the number of days Jesus laid in the tomb. We then rise above the waters as Jesus was Resurrected back to life.

Christians belong to a community of believers, but the Sacraments are received individually. Professing the Creed at Mass gives us the chance to declare our own acceptance of this Faith. When we salute the flag of our country, we say “I pledge allegiance...” Saying “I believe” instead of “We believe” is a way of professing the same allegiance to our Faith. We need to take ownership of our faith by saying “I believe” to show personal acceptance in the heart, mind, and soul of the faith that has been given to us.