

I Believe in God

As Catholics we believe that we hold the “Truth,” the living Truth who is the risen Jesus. He is the only Truth. In fact his is The Word spoken by the Father from all eternity through whom everything came into being and everything is held in being. There is no truth outside him.

So far so good; but we don’t see Jesus or hear too much from him directly. How are we to know the truths that he wants us to know? This is where the Church comes in. It is the living Body of the risen Christ present in the world. Jesus speaks the truth and elaborates the truth through his Church.

As we said, the Church begins telling us the truth by proclaiming what it believes in. A simple summary of this, as we’ve said before, is the Apostles Creed. Let’s begin to look at the first line of the Creed, and ask questions:

Is there really a God? How do we know for sure?

What kind of God is he? Is he distant or close? Stern or lenient?

Does he have any power? Is he really a strong God?

How did the world, the heavens and all in them come to be?

- 1) Yes, there is a God and there is just one God. He spoke through the prophet Isaiah (45:5,6,18) and said: *“I am the Lord, and there is no other.”* In the Old Testament there are over one hundred verses which begin “I am the Lord.”

How did Isaiah and the other Old Testament writers know that there is one God and no other? Did they think it up one day? No, God entered into a living relationship with them and spoke to them. We say he “revealed” himself. We believe in God because

He met us and introduced himself to us. He is not just an abstract idea to be discussed.

- 2) What kind of God is he? A “Father.” In fact he a unique kind of Father—one who is *“merciful, gracious, slow to anger, abounding with steadfast love and faithfulness”* (Read Exodus 34:6,7). He is a forgiving Father, a tender Shepherd, a patient Lover. Wow! Who wouldn’t want to have him as their God?
- 3) He is an all-powerful God. When God appeared to Abram, he said to him, *“I am God Almighty.”* (Genesis 17:1). It is interesting that the first adjective God used to describe himself was “Almighty.” We believe that nothing is out of the scope of his power: the Angel Gabriel told Mary that *“nothing is impossible with God”* (Luke 1:37).
- 4) How did things come into being? *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”* (Genesis 1:1). John goes into the how God created all things: *“In the beginning was the Word...All things came into being through him...”* (John 1:1,3). Though we use our reasoning powers to try to guess how everything began, we use our “faith power” to know that there is a creator who spoke all into being.

If this first sentence of the creed is all we believe, we would have reason to rejoice. To know that there is one God, to know that he is a “Father” who loves us and is at the same time all powerful, and to know that he spoke us into being goes beyond all insights and theories of religion-makers and philosophers through the generations.

Do we appreciate the gift of our Catholic faith? Do we take for granted these great truths when we recite them at Mass? Have we let these truths go beyond words and become alive in our hearts?

