

# Basic Dogmas



R. J. M. I.

By

The Precious Blood of Jesus Christ,  
The Grace of the God of the Holy Catholic Church,  
The Mediation of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
Our Lady of Good Counsel and Crusher of Heretics,  
The Protection of Saint Joseph, Patriarch of the Holy Family,  
The Intercession of Saint Michael the Archangel,  
and the cooperation of

Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi

To Jesus through Mary

*Júdica me, Deus, et discérne causam meam de gente non sancta:  
ab hómine iníquo, et dolóso érue me*

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam



“For the question is not about some small portion of our Faith on which no very distinct declaration has been made: but the foolish opposition that is raised ventures to impugn that which our LORD desired no one of either sex in the Church to be ignorant of. For the short but complete confession of the Catholic Creed which contains the twelve sentences of the twelve apostles is so well furnished with the heavenly panoply, that all the opinions of heretics can receive their death-blow from that one weapon.”

(Pope St. Leo the Great, Letter 31 to Pulcheria Augusta)

Original version: 4/2012; Current version: 3/2013

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# The Basic Dogmas Catholics Must Know and Believe to Be Saved

## Abbreviations and Warning

AAC *The Apostolic Authorship of the Symbol*, by Bishop Alexander MacDonald (*American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. 28, 1903).

SOA *The Symbol of the Apostles, A Vindication of the Apostolic Authorship of the Creed on the Lines of Catholic Tradition*, by Very Rev. Alexander MacDonald, D.D., Vicar-General of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia. *Nihil Obstat*: Remigius Lafort, S.T.L., Censor. Imprimatur: + John Cameron, Bishop of Antigonish; + Joannes M. Farley, D.D., Archbishop of New York, August 3, 1903. Publisher: New York, Christian Press Association Publishing Company, 26 Barclay Street, 1903.

WARNING: Bishop Alexander MacDonald is a notorious heretic for denying the Salvation Dogma. In his above works he says the following:

Bishop Alexander MacDonald, *The Apostolic Authorship of the Symbol* and *The Symbol of the Apostles*, 1903: “An unbaptized person in good faith, who should have only attrition for his sins, would obtain the forgiveness of them by receiving Holy Communion from the hands of the Church.” (Part 4, p. 444) (Chapter 4, section 3, p. 137)

(See RJMI book *Bad Books on Salvation: Bishop Alexander MacDonald*.) He is also a formal heretic for glorifying the notorious heretics Origen, Tertullian, Rufinus, and Clement of Alexandria. Nowhere in these works of his does he refer them as heretics—all of whom have been declared heretics by popes.<sup>1</sup> Hence he gives the reader the impression that these heretics were Catholics. Nevertheless, his book presents a good defense of the ordinary magisterium dogma that the apostles were the authors of the Apostles’ Creed.

## Heresies regarding basic dogmas and the Apostles’ Creed

Beware of the heretics who deny the dogma that no man can be saved without knowing and believing in all of the basic dogmas. The worst teach that men can be saved without knowing and believing in any of the basic dogmas. Others undermine the basic dogmas by eliminating some as a necessity. The worst reduce the basic dogmas to the dogma that God exists and rewards and punishes, which is known by the natural law, and hence exclude all of the basic supernatural dogmas, such as the basic dogmas of the Most Holy Trinity and the Incarnation. Others limit the basic dogmas to belief in the Incarnation and the Most Holy Trinity and thus leave out the other basic dogmas stated in the Apostles’ Creed. St. Paul teaches that one of the conditions for salvation is belief in the resurrection of Jesus: “*For if thou confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him up from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*” (Rom. 10:9) Hence belief in the Incarnation and Holy Trinity is not enough to be saved. All the other basic dogmas must also be known and believed to be saved.

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<sup>1</sup> Pope St. Anastasius I, Pope Vigilius, and Pope Martin I condemned Origen as a heretic. Pope St. Zephyrinus condemned Tertullian as a heretic. Pope Anastasius II condemned Rufinus as a heretic. And Pope Clement VIII discovered heresy in Clement of Alexandria’s writings, removed his name from the Roman Martyrology, and took away his title as saint. (See RJMI book *Canonizations Are Not Infallible: Saints Who Were Not Saints and On Praying to the Damned*.)

Beware also of the heretics who deny the ordinary magisterium dogma that the apostles were the authors of the Apostles' Creed. This dogma began to be denied in the 15<sup>th</sup> century when the Great Apostasy was in full bloom:

*The Apostolic Authorship of the Symbol* [hereafter AAC], by Bishop Alexander MacDonald, p. 1: "Ancient tradition ascribes the authorship of the primitive Creed of the Church to the Apostles. Ever since the fifteenth century this tradition has been the object of much criticism at the hands mainly of men not of the household of the faith. To-day it is freely called in question even by Catholic scholars, among whom may be mentioned the Benedictine Baumer in Germany, the Benedictine Dom Morin in France, and the Barnabite Giovanni Semeria in Italy. The last-named, in a work fresh from the hands of the printer,<sup>2</sup> regards the received account of the origin of the Creed as legendary. He sets the old tradition aside, as not of a nature to win our belief on the score either of its antiquity or its universality, and follows Harnack in fixing upon the middle of the second century as the probable date on which our most ancient Symbol of Faith was formulated. I propose, first, to review briefly the explicit testimony that we have as to the apostolic authorship of the Creed; next, to point out how the Discipline of the Secret was rigidly enforced and religiously observed in regard to the Creed; and, lastly, to consider the bearing of this fact on the question of its authorship."<sup>3</sup>

One of the foremost heretic so-called Catholic theologians in the 15<sup>th</sup> century who introduced the heresy that the apostles were not the authors of the Apostles' Creed was the freethinker and humanist Lorenzo Valla:

*Catholic Encyclopedia*, Valla, Lorenzo, 1912: "Humanist and philosopher, b. at Rome, 1405; d. there, 1 Aug., 1457. ...In 1444 he had a controversy with Fra Antonio da Bitonto on the question of the composition of the Apostles' Creed by each of the Apostles. His philosophical and theological elucubrations caused him to be tried for heresy by the Curia at Naples..."

One of his heresies was his denial of the ordinary magisterium dogma that the apostles were the authors of the Apostles' Creed:

*Encyclopedia Britannica*, Valla, Lorenzo: "Valla had become embroiled in another controversy, theological this time, over his refusal to believe that the Apostles' Creed had been composed by the Twelve Apostles. As a result, he was denounced by the clergy and investigated by the Inquisition, which found him heretical on eight counts... Only Alfonso's personal intervention saved him from the stake."

His other heresies were the heresy of democracy, the heresy of modern biblical criticism, the heresy that virginity is evil and against the natural law, and the heresy that the pope and the Catholic Church have no right to temporal power. To defend this latter heresy, he and Nicholas of Cusa were the first ones to deny the authenticity of the Donation of Constantine which upholds the dogma of the pope and the Catholic Church's God-given right to temporal power. Until the 15<sup>th</sup> century when these heretics denied it, the Donation of Constantine was upheld by every pope and ruler. Valla was also idolater and formal heretic for glorifying philosophy and mythology and was extremely immoral. It is most likely that Valla was an infiltrator whose job was to undermine the Catholic faith and the spiritual and temporal power of the Catholic Church. And what is worse is that evil humanist apostate antipopes, such as Nicholas V, liked him and placed him in the papal court.<sup>4</sup> (See *Catholic Topic Index*: Heretics: Valla, Lorenzo.)

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<sup>2</sup> Footnote: "Dogma, *Gerarchia e Culto nella Chiesa primitiva*. Roma: F. Pustet. 1902."

<sup>3</sup> *The Apostolic Authorship of the Symbol* [hereafter AAC], by Bishop Alexander MacDonald (*American Ecclesiastical Review*, vol. 28, 1903).

<sup>4</sup> *The History of the Popes*, Dr. Ludwig Pastor, v. 1, intro., pp. 16-21.



## Jesus gave the apostles all of the basic supernatural dogmas

After Jesus Christ's resurrection and before His ascension into Heaven, He gave the apostles, the first Church Fathers, all of the basic supernatural dogmas, also known as the essential dogmas, that all Catholics must know and believe to be saved. The basic supernatural dogmas are as follows: the dogmas of the Most Holy Trinity, the Incarnation, and the redemption; the dogmas in the Apostles' Creed; the dogmas related to the Apostles' Creed by implication; the dogmas in the Lord's Prayer (the Our Father); the dogmas in the Renunciation of Satan; the dogma of the Most Holy Trinity as stated in the triple interrogatory (also called the Profession of Faith) and the baptismal form; and the dogma of the sacrament of baptism. The Apostles' Creed was also referred to as the Symbol, the Rule of Faith, the Rule of Truth, the Form of Doctrine, or the Doctrine of the Apostles. All the basic dogmas are taught to catechumens before they can be baptized and are contained in the baptismal ritual, which consists of the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Renunciation of Satan, the Profession of Faith (triple interrogatory), the baptismal matter and form, and the sacrament of baptism:

*The Symbol of the Apostles* [hereafter SOA], A Vindication of the Apostolic Authorship of the Creed on the Lines of Catholic Tradition, by Very Rev. Alexander MacDonald, D.D., Chapter 2, Section 4, pp. 82-83: "In his letter to Magnus, written before the middle of the third century, St. Cyprian declares that, while those who are cut off from the communion of the Catholic Church 'are baptized in the same Symbol as we are,' yet they 'have not the same law (interpretation) of the Symbol as we have, nor the same interrogatory.'<sup>5</sup> In the time of St. Cyprian, therefore, the Baptismal Creed was known as the Symbol.<sup>6</sup> And the Saint draws a clear distinction between this Creed and the *trina interrogatio* or triple interrogatory which is in use in the Church to this day. It is important to note this. The Symbol goes before the interrogatory in Cyprian, and this is the logical order. For the triple query of the minister of baptism supposes a knowledge of the Symbol in the candidate for baptism, else he could not make an intelligent reply. From this we may conclude that the Symbol is not derived from the interrogatory, but conversely, the interrogatory from the Symbol."<sup>7</sup>

SOA, Chapter 6, Section 9, p. 211: "The Symbol [Apostles' Creed], on the other hand, is a *lex credendi* or *regula fidei*, first because it embodies just such and so many Gospel truths as the law of Christ, promulgated by the Apostles, makes it obligatory on all Christians to believe explicitly and profess; secondly, because it serves as the 'rule' or standard of orthodoxy in the Christian Church."

### *Baptismal Ritual*

Questions:

- |   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Q. N., what dost thou ask of the Church of God? | A. Faith.            |
| Q. What doth faith bring thee to?               | A. Life everlasting. |

<sup>5</sup> Footnote 8: "*Ep. ad Magnum*, c. 7 (Migne, tom. 3, col. 1143)."

<sup>6</sup> Footnote 9: "Semeria says, in the work already cited: 'S. Cypriano... forse usa nello stesso nostro senso la voce simbolo.' Tutt'altro che 'forse.'"

<sup>7</sup> *The Symbol of the Apostles* [hereafter SOA], A Vindication of the Apostolic Authorship of the Creed on the Lines of Catholic Tradition, by Very Rev. Alexander MacDonald, D.D., Vicar-General of the Diocese of Antigonish, Nova Scotia. *Nihil Obstat*: Remigius Lafort, S.T.L., Censor. Imprimatur: + John Cameron, Bishop of Antigonish; + Joannes M. Farley, D.D., Archbishop of New York, August 3, 1903. Publisher: New York, Christian Press Association Publishing Company, 26 Barclay Street, 1903.

Minister: "If then thou desirest to enter into life, keep the commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart and with thy whole soul and with thy whole mind and thy neighbor as thyself."

Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only 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. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father:

Our Father, who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Renunciation of Satan, Profession of Faith, and Baptismal Vow:

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| Q. N., dost thou renounce Satan?   | A. I do renounce him.  |
| Q. And all his works?  | A. I do renounce them. |
| Q. And all his pomps?  | A. I do renounce them. |
| Q. N., dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth?  | A. I do believe.       |
| Q. Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, who was born and who suffered?  | A. I do believe.       |
| Q. Dost thou believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting? | A. I do believe.       |
| Q. N., wilt thou be baptized?  | A. I will.             |

The basic dogma of the Most Holy Trinity is taught in the Profession of Faith (triple interrogatory) and the form of the sacrament of baptism itself—"I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The basic dogma of the Incarnation is explicitly stated in the Apostles' Creed—"Jesus Christ...our Lord (God)...who was born of the Virgin." The basic dogma of the redemption is implied in the Apostles' Creed—"I believe in...Jesus Christ...who was crucified and died" and "the remission of sins." And the basic dogmas that the sacrament of baptism remits all sins, makes men members of the Church, and is necessary for justification and salvation are taught in the baptismal ritual and by the very purpose of receiving the sacrament of baptism. The rest of the basic supernatural dogmas are taught in the Apostles' Creed, the dogmas that directly relate to the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Renunciation of Satan. It is an ordinary magisterium dogma, which hence is taught by the unanimous consensus of the Church Fathers, that before Pentecost Sunday the apostles had formulated the Apostles' Creed and baptismal ritual before they began to make converts. Therefore they would all have the same basic rule of faith and method of receiving converts into the Catholic Church throughout the whole world.

### **All men know the basic natural dogmas by the natural law**

The other basic dogmas are the basic dogmas of the natural law (basic natural dogmas), which all men know because they are written in their hearts:

"For when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature those things that are of the law; these having not the law are a law to themselves: Who shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness to them, and their thoughts between themselves accusing, or also defending one another..." (Rom. 2:14-15)

Catholic Commentary on Rom. 2: "Ver. 14-15. When the Gentiles...do by nature, or naturally, that is, without having received any written law, these men are a law to themselves, and have it written in their hearts, as to the existence of a God, and their reason tells them, that many sins are unlawful: they may also do some actions that are morally good, as by giving alms to relieve the poor, honouring their parents, &c. not that these actions, morally good, will suffice for their justification of themselves, or make them deserve a supernatural reward in the kingdom of heaven; but God, out of his infinite mercy, will give them some supernatural graces, by which they could come to know, and believe, so that he may reward their souls for eternity."

Hence no man can rightly claim that he does not know the basic natural dogmas because all men have these laws written in their heart. However, the only way men can know and believe the basic supernatural dogmas is by hearing or learning about them. St. Paul says,

"How then shall they call on him, in whom they have not believed? Or how shall they believe him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear, without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent, as it is written: How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, of them that bring glad tidings of good things! ...Faith then cometh by hearing; and hearing by the word of Christ." (Rom. 10:14-15, 17)

Therefore unless men hear, know, and believe in all of the basic supernatural dogmas, they lack one of the necessary conditions for salvation.

## The original form of the Apostles' Creed (the Old Roman Creed) and the recent form of the Apostles' Creed

The Apostles' Creed was also referred to as the Symbol, the Rule of Faith, the Rule of Truth, the Form of Doctrine, or the Doctrine of the Apostles. The original Apostles' Creed is also called the Old Roman Creed. The Apostles' Creed we now have is called the recent Apostles' Creed and contains minor additions to the original Apostles' Creed, additions that were implied in the original creed. The following is from ACC, pp. 253-254, and SOA, Chapter 3, Section 4, pp. 107-108:

### Old Roman Creed.

- (1) I believe in God the Father Almighty;
- (2) And in Christ Jesus, His only Son, our Lord,
- (3) Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary,
- (4) Crucified under Pontius Pilate, and buried;
- (5) Rose again the third day from the dead;
- (6) Ascended into heaven,
- (7) Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
- (8) whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
- (9) and in the Holy Ghost,
- (10) the holy Church,
- (11) the remission of sins,
- (12) the resurrection of the flesh.

### Apostles' Creed.

- (1) I believe in God the Father Almighty, *Creator of heaven and earth;*
- (2) And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
- (3) *Who was conceived* of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
- (4) *Suffered* under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, *died, and was buried. He descended into hell;*
- (5) the third day He rose again from the dead;
- (6) Ascended into heaven,
- (7) Sitteth at the right hand of *God* the Father *Almighty,*
- (8) whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
- (9) *I believe* in the Holy Ghost,
- (10) the holy *Catholic* Church, *the communion of saints,*
- (11) the remission of sins,
- (12) the resurrection of the body, *and the life everlasting.*

“It may be remarked, in passing, that this division of the Creed into articles, being that of the Old Roman Creed, should be regarded as the true one, although it is not the one generally given by theologians. The words added to the first article are clearly implied in ‘Almighty’; ‘born’ of the third article implies ‘conceived’; ‘crucified’ of the fourth, ‘suffered’ and ‘died’; ‘buried’ the descent into ‘hell’ seeing that the soul as well as the body is to be assigned its locus. ‘God Almighty’ of the seventh article serves but to identify the Father at whose right hand Christ sitteth, with the ‘Father’ of the first article. Expounding the tenth article, which affirmed ‘the holy Church’ merely in the African Creed of his day, St. Augustine adds, ‘Catholic, of course.’<sup>8</sup> And elsewhere, in his exposition of this same article, he declares that ‘Church’ is to be understood here, ‘not only of that which holds its pilgrim way on earth,’ but also of ‘that which in heaven ever cleaves to God.’<sup>9</sup> The words ‘communion of saints’ have thus been inserted to indicate that the ‘Church’ signifies the Kingdom of God in its widest sense. Finally, the adjunct

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<sup>8</sup> *De Fide et Symbolo*, c. 10.

<sup>9</sup> *Enchiridion*, c. 56.

‘life everlasting’ defines the true meaning of ‘the resurrection,’ which is not a resurrection unto a mortal life, but a resurrection unto a life without end.”

Hence even though these additions were not contained in the original Apostles’ Creed, they were nevertheless known and believed by implication. The same applies to other basic dogmas that relate to the original and the recent Apostles’ Creed by implication. (See the last page of this book.)

### **The apostles transmitted the basic supernatural dogmas to the following Church Fathers**

The apostles, the original Church Fathers, handed down the basic supernatural dogmas, as contained in the baptismal ritual, to the following Church Fathers who in turn handed them down to Catholics in all future generations. Hence it is an ordinary magisterium dogma that the Apostles’ Creed was composed by the apostles. And the apostles decreed that every catechumen with the use of reason must know and believe all the basic supernatural dogmas as one of the necessary conditions for salvation. Hence it is an ordinary magisterium dogma that no one can be saved without knowing and believing all of the basic supernatural dogmas.

### **Discipline of the Secret**

During the early persecutions of Catholics and the Catholic Church, the Apostles’ Creed was purposely not put in writing. And it was not given to unbelievers. It was given only to catechumens and only given orally and thus committed to memory for three reasons: 1) because it was a watchword or password in which Catholics could identify one another; 2) because unbelievers are not worthy of possessing it; and 3) because Catholics would not be so apt to memorize it if it was put in writing. This way of orally handing down and preserving the Apostles’ Creed became known as the Discipline of the Secret.

SOA: “[Introduction, pp. 23-32]

#### “V: The Discipline of the Secret

“What then was this Discipline of the Secret, and when was it first set in operation, and why? The name *Disciplina Arcani* is relatively recent; the system described by the name is as old as the Catholic Church. They read the New Testament to little purpose who fail to find in it clear traces of a fixed resolve from the very first, on the part of the Founder of Christianity, to withhold the mysteries of His religion from the profane, and commit them only to members of the household of the faith. He distinctly forbids His disciples to cast their pearls before swine (Matt. 7:6), and as distinctly declares that unto them ‘it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God’ (Ib. 13:11), while ‘unto those that are without all things are done in parables’ (Mark 4:11). St. Paul lays special emphasis everywhere on this principle of secrecy. He sees in the ministers of Christ ‘the dispensers of the mysteries of God’ (1 Cor. 4:1). He would have ‘the wisdom of God, a wisdom which is hidden,’ spoken ‘in a mystery,’ and only ‘among the perfect’ (Ib. 2:6, 7)—the *competentes* of a later day. He asks the Ephesians to pray for him that he may ‘with confidence make known the mystery of the Gospel’ (Eph. 6:19), but elsewhere explains that it is ‘to the saints’ of God the mystery in question is to be unfolded (Col. 1:26). Finally, he

requires of deacons that they should hold ‘the mystery of faith in a pure conscience.’ (1 Tim. 3:9).

#### “VI: Sacraments, Sacrifice, and Symbol

“As for the things which came under the rule of secrecy, we learn that they were chiefly the words which make up what is now known as the ‘form’ of the several Sacraments, the Eucharistic service, and the Symbol, not only as enshrining the principal mysteries of religion but especially as being the Watchword given to the soldier of Christ in his warfare with the pagan world... Already at the time of St. Paul’s first missionary journey, that the candidate for baptism was accustomed to offer a confession of faith when he received baptism, was borne witness to by St. Paul himself—superfluously, for it is self-evident. He reminds Timothy of the beautiful confession he once made before the assembled community when he followed the call to eternal life’ (Cf. 1 Tim. 6:12, 13).<sup>10</sup> In his famous letter to Trajan, Pliny the Younger bears witness that the Christians in Asia Minor were in the habit of holding secret meetings before daylight, and that they bound themselves by oath not to give up a ‘deposit,’ which is identified, in a later chapter of the present work, with the Confession of Faith.<sup>11</sup> It appears also from this letter of Pliny’s that the Christians were regarded as members of an extensive secret society, whereof the brotherhoods (*hetaeriae*) were proscribed by an imperial edict.<sup>12</sup>

“In the Acts of the martyrdom of Pope Alexander First, we find decisive evidence of the existence of the discipline of secrecy in sub-apostolic times. Alexander suffered for the Faith in the last year of Trajan’s reign. The precise date is May 3, A. D. 117. The Acts of his martyrdom, which the Bollandists speak of as ‘sincerissima,’ plainly genuine and free from interpolation, were drawn up before the persecution under Decius (A. D. 249-251). ‘Count Aurelianus,’ we read, ‘ordered Pope Alexander to be brought before him, and said to him: “I require you first to reveal to me all the mysteries of your sect, that I may know why you choose to be put to death for one Christ, I know not whom, rather than yield.”’ Saint Alexander replied: “What you ask for is holy, and we are not permitted by Christ to give that which is holy unto dogs.”’ Here we have an authoritative declaration by the head of the Church, the successor of Peter, that what are known as the mysteries were to be jealously guarded. Rather than reveal them he himself gave up his life. He became a martyr, though by no means the first, to the Discipline of the Secret. And it is especially worthy of note that he, not less than the Fathers of the third and fourth centuries, as we shall presently see, finds the reason and sanction of this Discipline in the precept of the Master...

#### “VII: Reasons for Secrecy

“There were various reasons for this law of secrecy. The Christians were subject to persecution from the first, as our Lord expressly foretold they should be. Common prudence would therefore dictate that they should not parade their religion in the open view of those who were on the alert to seize and drag them before persecuting tribunals.<sup>13</sup> Again, the mysteries of faith were

<sup>10</sup> Footnote 1: “*The Articles of the Apostles’ Creed* (translated by C. S. and A. E. Burn), pp. 79, 80.”

<sup>11</sup> Footnote 2: “See Chap. VII.”

<sup>12</sup> Footnote 3: “*C. Plin. et Traj. Epist.* 96 (97).”

<sup>13</sup> RJMI comment: For the same reason the Fish was used as a symbol for Christ by which Catholics secretly identified one another while escaping detection. Under certain circumstances it is prudent and even necessary for Catholics to evade detection

precisely those pearls that the Master bade them not cast before swine. The Fathers give yet another reason. . . Basil draws attention to the fact that over much familiarity with sacred things is apt to breed contempt. He points to the mystery which surrounded the Holy of Holies in the Old Law as enhancing the reverence and awe with which the Israelites regarded it. ‘This is the reason,’ he says, ‘why certain teachings (which he has just spoken of as having been received in a secret manner from the tradition of the Apostles), have been handed on without writing.’<sup>14</sup> The same principle is strongly insisted on by . . . Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Eusebius. The first-named cites Plato as counseling his disciples not to commit the deep things of God to writing, and on the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. 2:6, 7; 3:1, 2, 3,) observes: ‘By milk is meant the catechism, the first nutriment of the soul, as it were.’<sup>15</sup> The allusion is plain to the ancient discipline which kept the Symbol from the catechumens, while yet they were ‘babes in Christ,’ and gave it only when, after careful drilling and a lengthened probation, they were ‘able to bear’ the ‘meat’ or stronger food reserved for the soul in the mysteries of the Faith. Eusebius likewise cites the words of Plato, and adds: ‘To the same purpose also is that salutary precept which we have, “Give not that which is holy to dogs” (Matt. 7:6), and again, “The animal man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God”’ (1 Cor. 2:14).<sup>16</sup> ‘But after those whom we admonish have advanced in virtue,’ are the words of Origen, ‘. . . then at length they are initiated in the mysteries. For, we speak wisdom among the perfect’ (1 Cor. 2:6).<sup>17</sup> He, too, cites Plato, and adds: ‘But I make bold to affirm, . . . that the disciples of Christ, after they were imbued with the grace of God, knew far better than Plato what things were to be written and how, and what was to be made known to the people without writing; what things were to be spoken, and what to be kept secret.’<sup>18</sup> And, once more, in his homily on Lev. 5, n. 3 (Migne, tom. 12), he observes: ‘I know that there are other things that the children of Israel, that is, laics, can come in unto; not, however, strangers, unless they are already admitted to the Church of God; “For the Egyptian in the third generation shall enter into the assembly of the Lord” (Deut. 23:8). I take it that the third generation is said in a mystic sense, because of the faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whom every one who is joined to the Church of God believes.’ Here is a distinction drawn between those that are without and those that are within, and again, in the number of the latter, between laymen and clerics. Those that are without have no part in the ‘mysteries;’ of those that are within, laics have access to some, not to all. What they have access to are the mysteries of the faith embodied in the Symbol, ‘the faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in whom all who are members of the Church believe.’ Origen seems to discern in the Egyptian children of the third generation who were admitted into the synagogue, a mystic and subtle allusion to the three classes of catechumens, *incipientes*, *proficientes*, *competentes*, of whom only the third were initiated into the mysteries and received in the Symbol of the Faith, the Watchword of the Army of Christ. . .

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by persecutors, such as when the persecutors are of extreme bad will and thus to preach the Catholic faith to them would be not only useless but even sinful for casting pearls to swine or when the survival of a Catholic is necessary in order to help other Catholics, such as a Catholic priest evading persecutors in order to continue to hear confessions and offer Mass for Catholics. This escaping detection must not be confused with denying the Catholic faith by words, actions, or dress. Catholics are forbidden to deny the Catholic faith by speaking anything against the Catholic faith or doing anything against the Catholic faith or dressing in a way that denies the Catholic faith, such as by dressing as a Moslem or a Hindu. If a Catholic denies the Catholic faith in any of these ways or any other way, he gets automatically excommunicated from the Catholic Church and is no longer Catholic.

<sup>14</sup> Footnote 1: “*De Spir. Sanct.* c. 27; nn. 65, 66, 67 (Migne, P. G., tom. 32).”

<sup>15</sup> Footnote 2: “*Strom.* 1, 5; c. 8 (Migne, P. G., tom. 9).”

<sup>16</sup> Footnote 1: “*Præpar. Evang.* 1, 12; c. 7 (Migne, P. G., tom. 21).”

<sup>17</sup> Footnote 2: “*Contra Celsum*, 1, 3; c. 59 (Migne, P. G., tom. 11).”

<sup>18</sup> Footnote 1: “*Ib.* 1, 6; c. 6.”

“[Introduction, Section 3, p. 17] Rufinus has it that the Symbol served as a tessera and watchword from the time of the Apostles, first to enable the faithful to distinguish true from false teachers of the Gospel, and again to enable them to recognize one another. ‘In fine, as happens in civil war,’ he writes, ‘where men wear the same dress, and speak the same language, and fight after the same fashion, each leader gives his soldiers a distinct watchword, in Latin called signum or indicium, so that there may be no room for deceit or treachery. And if anyone is suspected, on being asked to give the watchword, he will show whether he is an enemy or a friend.’

“[Chapter 3, Section 8, p. 124] ... The Symbol of their common Faith served the early Christians as a token whereby they could recognize and, recognizing, give the right hand of fellowship and hospitality to their pilgrim brethren. The Symbol was their test of Church membership...

“[Chapter 1, Section 2, p. 49] ... St. Jerome bears witness that ‘the Symbol of our Faith and Hope, which has been handed down to us from the Apostles, is not written with ink on paper, but graved on the fleshly tablets of the heart.’<sup>19</sup> ...

“[Introduction, pp. 38-39] To the discipline of secrecy we have, in the third and fourth centuries, a cloud of witnesses. They represent it to us, not as a custom of recent origin, but as coming down from Apostolic times, and closely bound up with the very system of Christianity. And so, indeed, it was closely bound up with Christianity until, to adopt Clement’s expressive phrase, the wild pagan dog had been tamed and thoroughly domesticated. This has been already pointed out, but will bear pointing out once more, and emphasizing. ‘Celsus frequently calls our doctrine hidden,’ says Origen, who reverts again and again to this subject, ‘though the gospel of the Christians is, almost throughout the whole world, better known than the opinions of the philosophers... But that there should be, besides the exoteric doctrines, some things which are not manifested to the crowd, is not peculiar to the doctrine of Christians only, but is common to that of the philosophers as well, amongst whom some discourses were exoteric, and some also esoteric.’<sup>20</sup> And St. Hippolytus, the disciple of Irenaeus, after citing the words of Paul to Timothy about guarding the deposit and commending it to faithful men who should be fit to teach others also (1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim. 2:2), ‘If then the blessed Apostle delivered with circumspection those things which were easy of attainment to all, seeing in spirit that all men have not faith (2 Thess. 3:2), how much greater danger shall we run if, without caution and indiscriminately we commit the oracles of God to profane and unworthy men.’<sup>21</sup> So again, a little later in the same century, St. Cyprian: ‘And we are also ordered to keep what is holy within our own knowledge, and not expose it to be trodden on by swine and dogs,’<sup>22</sup> and straightway cites the oft-cited precept of the Master (Matt. 7).

“[Chapter 1, pp. 58-64]

## “V. The Symbol and the Discipline of the Secret

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<sup>19</sup> Footnote 6: “In Symbolo fidei et spei nostrae, quod, ab Apostolis traditum, non scribitur in charta et atramento sed in tabulis cordis carnalibus, post confessionem Trinitatis et unitatem Ecclesiae, omne Christiani! dogmatis sacramentum carnis resurrectione concluditur.—Contra Joan. Hierosol. n. 28. (Migne, tom. 23, col. 380).”

<sup>20</sup> Footnote 1: “Contr. Cels. n. 7 (Migne, P. G., tom. 11).”

<sup>21</sup> Footnote 2: “Demons. de Christo et Antichr. (Galland. Tom. 2, n. 1).”

<sup>22</sup> Footnote 3: “Lib. ad Demetrianum, n. 1 (Migne, P. L., tom. 4, col. 544).”



“The reader will have gathered from what has been said in the Introduction why the Discipline of the Secret was inaugurated in the nascent Church, and how strictly it was enforced. It was only after persecution ceased and the old pagan Empire of the Romans was converted and baptized in the person of Constantine, that the *Disciplina Arcani* was gradually relaxed. That it extended to the Symbol, and held it fast even in the days of St. Augustine, is a fact that can be established on unimpeachable testimony. We have, first of all, the witness of Augustine himself. Over and over again he repeats in his homilies that the Symbol is not given in writing. ‘Nobody,’ he says, ‘writes the Symbol that it may be read.’ When delivering it to the catechumens a week or two before their baptism, he warns them: ‘In no wise are you to write down the words of the Symbol in order to commit them to memory. You are to learn them by ear (*audiendo*); and even after you have learned them, you are not to write them, but to retain them in memory and rehearse them.’ He goes on to say that everything which they are about to hear in the Symbol is contained in Scripture, but that, as gathered together and reduced to a certain formula, it is not lawful to write it (*non licet scribi*). This he conceives to have been foreshadowed in those words of the Old Testament: ‘This is the covenant that I shall make with them after those days, said the Lord; I will give my law in their bowels, and in their hearts will I write it.’ ‘In token of this,’ he adds, ‘the Symbol is learned by ear; nor is it written on tablets, or any kind of material, but in the heart.’<sup>23</sup> In another homily,<sup>24</sup> when he comes to the point where the delivery (*traditio*) of the Symbol took place, he says: ‘These are the words that you are faithfully to learn by heart and recite from memory,’ that is, on the day set for their baptism. The Saint adds, within brackets, the following words, which he set down when he first put the sermon in writing: ‘(After this preface the whole Symbol is to be given out, no word of comment being interspersed therewith: *I believe in God the Father Almighty*, and the other words that follow. It is not the custom, as you know, to put the Symbol in writing; which being said, the following discourse is to be added).’ St. Augustine thus scrupled to write the words of the Creed even in the manuscript of his own sermons. All this tallies with the testimony of St. Jerome, already quoted, that the Symbol of Faith, ‘handed down from the Apostles, is not written with ink on paper, but engraved on the fleshly tablets of the heart;’ and with the words of Rufinus, also cited above, that the truths contained in the Creed formulated by those whom Christ first sent to teach and baptize all nations were not delivered to men to be written on paper or parchment, but to be preserved in the hearts of believers, so that it might be known for certain that ‘no one had learned them from books, which at times fall into the hands of unbelievers, but from the tradition of the Apostles.’

“Other witnesses, in the West, to the law of secrecy which guarded the Symbol, are St. Peter Chrysologus and the author of the *Explanatio Symboli*. The former in almost all his sermons on the Symbol, cautions his hearers not to put the Creed in writing, lest it should fall into the hands of the unbeliever. Enough to cite from one. ‘The Faith,’ he says, ‘which we believe and teach, not with the pen, but with the living voice, let us consign to the secret closet of the heart, not to paper. Let it be committed to memory, not to writing, lest the divine gift be profaned by contact with earthly things; lest the uninitiated beholder seize upon the heavenly secret, and what is life to the believer prove to the unbeliever a source of spiritual ruin.’<sup>25</sup> The author of the *Explanatio*, reputed to be St. Ambrose, tells us that tradition forbade the writing of the Symbol, and maintains that the living memory will conserve it better than the written page. The passage runs:

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<sup>23</sup> Footnote 13: “Serm. 212 (Migne, tom. 38, col. 1060).”

<sup>24</sup> Footnote 14: “Serm. 214 (Ib., col. 1066).”

<sup>25</sup> Footnote 15: “Serm. 60 (Migne, tom. 52).”

‘I wish you to bear in mind, since you have to recite the Symbol, that you must not write it. Let no one write it. Why? Because such is the tradition. What, then, is to be done? It is to be held fast. But how can it be held fast, you will say to me, if it is not written. Rather can it be held fast if it be not written. How do you mean? Let me explain. What you write you do not set to work to bring home to yourself by thinking over it daily; you feel so sure about it because you can read it over any time. But what you don’t write, you are afraid it will slip away from you, and you therefore set to work at once to rehearse it day by day.’<sup>26</sup> To know the Symbol by heart was to the early Christians a matter of life and death. In a letter ‘to the aged Alypius’<sup>27</sup> St. Augustine relates how a pagan of the name of Dioscorus had a dearly loved daughter whose life was despaired of, and how, upon his taking a vow to become a Christian, she was restored to health. Failing to keep his vow, he was struck blind. All at once he bethought him that his blindness was a judgment of God upon him for having broken his vow. A second time he vows he will perform his first vow if he recovers his sight. This he does, and is duly baptized, but he has not got the Symbol by heart, alleging as excuse that he is not able. He is now struck with paralysis, which extends to his tongue. Admonished in a dream that this has happened to him because of his not having recited the Symbol from memory, he makes a confession to this effect in writing, learns the Symbol by heart, and is freed at length from all his infirmities...

“[Chapter 2, Section 7, pp. 94-96] Let us here pause to consider how untenable is the position of the votaries of historical criticism. Relying mainly, if not wholly, on the testimony of Tertullian and Irenaeus, they affirm that the Symbol existed in the latter half of the second century. But it did not exist in the earlier half of the same century, say the critics, because it is not to be found in any writings. Consequently, it must have been composed about the middle of that century. By whom, and where? Probably at Rome, by some one or other whose name has been withheld. We are asked to believe that the Creed of the Christian Church, the Creed which we know on the testimony of witnesses who lived at the time, to have been, already in the second half of the century, the unvarying Standard of the Christian Faith in all the Churches from the West even to the farthest East, was composed about the middle of that same century by an anonymous somebody. This Creed, which all the Bishops assembled at Nice could scarce venture to change by the addition of words that did but more explicitly declare the meaning of one or two of its articles, is assumed to have been framed and imposed upon the Christian world less than two centuries before by somebody or other whose very name is buried in oblivion. *Credat Judaeus!* But this is not all. The very men, on whose testimony the existence of the Creed in the latter half of the second century is known to the critics, declare repeatedly, in the most explicit and emphatic way, that it came down from the Apostles...

“[Chapter 9, Section 5, pp. 263-264] Here we have a fresh proof, and an irrefragable one, of the truth of the ancient tradition. In the latter half of the second century, the Baptismal Creed of all the Churches, both in the East and in the West, was, so Irenaeus and Tertullian assure us, one and the same. How came it to be one and the same? If it had been composed in Rome by SS. Peter and Paul, as the Abbe Fouard supposes it to have been, it could not have made its way into the other Churches, for each Church founded by an Apostle would cling to its own Confession. If, on the other hand, its own Confession, the Confession it got from its founder, tallied exactly with the Roman one, this, failing a pre-existing agreement between the founders, could not be without

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<sup>26</sup> Footnote 16: “Migne, tom. 17, col. 1160.”

<sup>27</sup> Footnote 17: “Migne, tom. 38, col. 1012.”

a miracle and miracles hold a first place in the great category of *entia* that are not to be multiplied without necessity...

“[Chapter 2, Section 3, pp. 79-80] Now, here is where the method of historical criticism is at fault. It takes the Symbol, by dint of piecing together the scattered elements of it, from the writings of Cyril and Rufinus and Augustine, and pays not the slightest heed to the warning which these same writings deliver at the same time. The very same writers who are the first to describe and expound the Symbol, and in the very act of describing it, tell us, in the most distinct way, and with patient iteration, that they did not themselves get the Symbol from written records, but from the lips of the living Church. What sort of criticism is it that is willing to trust these writers when they tell us what the articles of the Symbol were in their day, and in what order they were arranged, but will not trust them when they tell us how the Symbol was transmitted to them by their forefathers in the faith? It is silly of the critic to fancy that he can run with the hare and hunt with the hounds after this fashion. ‘I will accept nothing,’ he declares, ‘but what I can find documentary evidence for.’ All very well. But let the whole evidence be taken. It will not do to take this because it fits in with a preconceived theory, and reject that because it doesn’t. The method that picks and chooses in this way is neither critical nor historical...

“[Chapter 1, Section 7, pp. 69-72] There has been produced evidence enough and to spare that the Creed of the early Church was hedged about and jealously guarded by the Discipline of the Secret, that the early Christian writers religiously refrained from reproducing it in their works, and even from putting it at all in writing. But consider how fraught with significance is this, and how effectually it serves to discredit the method of historical criticism, so-called, as applied to the question of the authorship of the Creed. Your ingenious critic, with his vast apparatus of learning, with an industry and patience in research beyond all praise and worthy of all emulation, ransacks the writings of sub-apostolic and early times for the Symbol, and declares he cannot find it. No marvel that he cannot find it: he seeks the living among the dead. The Creed is in the heart and on the lips of the Church of the living God; he is looking for some fossil remains of a casket that might be thought to have enclosed it, but didn’t; for, to cite once more the words of St. Jerome: ‘The Symbol of our Faith and Hope, handed down to us from the Apostles, is not written with ink on paper, but graven on the fleshly tablets of the heart.’ To the weary and sore-perplexed critic, peering into ancient tomes, groping in the twilight of those early times, seeking in vain the source whence came the Symbol, the words of Augustine and Jerome and Rufinus, of Basil and Cyril and Clement, should have been as the legend on the sign-post to give timely warning of NO THOROUGHFARE. But he heeded not the warning; he had no eyes for it; he would plod his way, groping ever, till at length he has fetched up in a blind alley. For this is just where its failure to find other than an anonymous author for the great Creed of Christendom has left historical criticism in a cul-de-sac. To the searcher for the Symbol among the literary remains of the early ages, we might almost say as the Angel said to those who sought in the sepulchre the Lord of the Symbol—*surrexit non est hic*, ‘He is risen; He is not here.’ For those in whose minds and hearts the Symbol came from the Apostles down to later generations have mounted to that ‘house of many mansions’ where Faith is merged in Vision. ‘When we reach that place where we shall reign,’ says St. Augustine, in his fifty-eighth homily, ‘there will be no more need of our saying the Symbol; we shall see God; God Himself will be our Vision, and the vision of God will be the reward of this our Faith.’...

“[Chapter 8, Section 5, p. 243] This one and Catholic Church, then, comes down the stream of time freighted with the whole Tradition of the Truth, the Word of God in its integrity. In her hand she holds the Scripture, but in her heart the Symbol of the Faith. The Scripture she reads and expounds openly to all men; the Symbol, for a space, she hides from the profane, she recites not in the hearing of the stranger, she gives only to her children, and to these as a sacred trust, under oath, to be jealously guarded.”

## The Bible

Just before Jesus ascended into Heaven, He commanded the apostles to baptize in the name of the Most Holy Trinity and thus taught the basic dogma of the Most Holy Trinity and the basic dogma on the necessity of the sacrament of baptism. And Jesus told the apostles and disciples to teach men all things He had commanded them:

“Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” (Mt. 28:19-20)

St. John the apostle teaches the basic dogma of the Most Holy Trinity:

“And there are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. And these three are one.” (1 Jn. 5:7)

Ss. Matthew, Luke, and John teach the basic dogma of the Incarnation, that God became man in the womb of the Virgin Mary:

“Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.” (Mt. 1:23)

“And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” (Lk. 1:30-35)

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made... AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH, and dwelt among us...” (Jn. 1:1-3, 14)

And the gospels and epistles teach the basic dogmas of the redemption (that Christ died for our sins), of His burial, of His resurrection (that He rose from the dead), of His ascension (that He ascended into Heaven), and that He sits at the right hand of the Father. Below are just a few of the verses:

Jesus told his apostles, “For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins.” (Mt. 26:28)

“[Jesus] Saying: The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the ancients and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day rise again.” (Lk. 9:22)

“And the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God.” (Mk. 16:19)

“Be mindful that the Lord Jesus Christ is risen again from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel.” (2 Tim. 2:8)

“For I delivered unto you first of all, which I also received: how that Christ died for our sins, according to the scriptures: And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day, according to the scriptures...” (1 Cor. 15:3-4)

“Which he wrought in Christ, raising him up from the dead, and setting him on his right hand in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 1:20)

And the gospels and epistles teach the basic dogmas of the resurrection of the body and the General Judgment at the end of the world when Christ will publicly judge the living and the dead:

“We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body.” (Rom. 8:23)

Speaking of those who are saved, St. Paul says, “So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body. If there be a natural body, there is also a spiritual body, as it is written...” (1 Cor. 15:42-44)

“And when the Son of man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty. And all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats...” (Mt. 25:31-32)

“And I saw a great white throne, and one sitting upon it, from whose face the earth and heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged by those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” (Apoc. 20:11-12)

St. Paul calls the basic supernatural dogmas the “form of doctrine” and the “rule of faith” by which Catholics are delivered:

“You were the servants of sin but have obeyed from the heart unto that form of doctrine, into which you have been delivered.” (Rom. 6:17)

Douay-Rheims Commentary on Rom. 6: “Ver. 17. Form of doctrine. At the first conversion of every nation to the Catholic faith there is a form and rule of belief set down unto which when the people is once put by their Apostles, they must never by any persuasion of men alter the same, nor take of man or Angel, any new doctrine or analogy of faith...”

“And having different gifts, according to the grace that is given us, either prophecy, to be used according to the rule of faith...” (Rom. 12:6)

And St. Paul speaks of Catholics “persevering in the doctrine of the apostles.” (Acts 2:42) Hence the “form of doctrine” or “rule of faith” that St. Paul teaches came from the apostles. It consisted of the original Apostles’ Creed and the baptismal ritual, which contain all of the basic supernatural dogmas that Jesus Christ gave to the apostles after His resurrection and before His ascension:

Douay-Rheims Commentary on Rom. 12: “Ver. 6. According to the rule of faith. By this, and many places of holy Writ, we may gather that the Apostles by the Holy Spirit, before they were sundered into diverse Nations, set down among themselves a certain Rule and form of faith and doctrine, containing not only the Articles of the Creed, but all other principles, grounds, and the whole platform of all the Christian religion. Which Rule was before any of the books of the New Testament were written, and before the faith was preached among the

Gentiles: by which not only every other inferior teacher's doctrine was tried, but all the Apostles, and Evangelists preaching, writing, interpreting (which is here called prophesying) were of God's Church approved and admitted, or disproved and rejected. This form, by mouth and not by Scripture, every Apostle delivered to the country by them converted. For keeping of this form, the Apostles before praised the Romans, and afterward earnestly warneth them by no man's plausible speech to be drawn from the same. This he commendeth to Timothy, calling it his Depositum. For not holding this fast and sure, he blameth the Galatians, further also denouncing to himself or an Angel that should write, teach, or expound against that which they first received, Anathema, and commanding always to beware of them that taught otherwise..."

Apollo and his companions were invincibly ignorant of the basic dogmas of the Holy Spirit and of the baptism of Jesus. They were only baptized by John the Baptist's baptism. Hence St. Paul taught them these basic dogmas and baptized them with the baptism of Jesus (the sacrament of baptism):

"And it came to pass, while Apollo was at Corinth, that Paul having passed through the upper coasts, came to Ephesus, and found certain disciples. And he said to them: Have you received the Holy Spirit since ye believed? But they said to him: We have not so much as heard whether there be a Holy Spirit. And he said: In what then were you baptized? Who said: In John's baptism. Then Paul said: John baptized the people with the baptism of penance, saying: That they should believe in him who was to come after him, that is to say, in Jesus. Having heard these things, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had imposed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied." (Acts 19:1-6)

St. Paul tells Catholics that they must not be content to just know and believe the basic dogmas but should go on to learn about deeper dogmas:

"Wherefore leaving the word of the beginning of Christ, let us go on to things more perfect, not laying again the foundation of penance from dead works, and of faith towards God..." (Heb. 6:1)

Douay-Rheims Commentary on Heb. 6: "Ver. 1. We see hereby, what the first grounds of Christian institution or Catechism were in the primitive Church, and that there was ever a necessary instruction and belief of certain points had by word of mouth and tradition, before men came to the Scriptures: which he could not treat of things so particularly, as was requisite for the teaching of all necessary grounds. Among these points were the 12 Articles contained in the Apostles' Creed: the doctrine of penance before Baptism: the manner and necessity of Baptism: the Sacrament of Imposition of hands after Baptism, called Confirmation: the articles of the Resurrection, Judgment, and such like. Without which things first laid, if now would be sent to pick his faith out of the Scripture, there would be mad rule quickly. See St. Augustine (in exposit. inchoat. ep. ad Ro. versus finem.)."

Catholic Commentary on Heb. 6: "Ver. 1-2. ...We see here the order in which the apostles taught the Christian doctrine to the catechumens: 1. They excited them to sorrow for their sins. 2. They required of them acts of faith in God and his Son Jesus Christ. 3. They explained the nature of Christ's baptism, its virtue, and difference from the baptism of the Baptist and others. 4. After baptism, they laid their hands on them, that they might receive the strengthening grace of the Holy Ghost in confirmation; and finally, they excited them to perseverance, by the hope of a glorious resurrection, and of eternal life, and by setting before their eyes eternal damnation as the consequence of apostasy."

And St. Paul tells Catholics to hand on to others these basic dogmas that they learned from him:

"And the things which thou hast heard of me by many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also." (2 Tim. 2:2)

Indeed all of the Church Fathers received these basic supernatural dogmas from their Church Father predecessors who got them from the original Church Fathers, the twelve apostles, who got them from Jesus Christ.

## The Church Fathers and others

### *Church Father St. Ignatius of Antioch (1st century)*

St. Ignatius of Antioch personally knew the Apostle St. John. In his letters he professes some basic supernatural dogmas stated in the Apostles' Creed:

St. Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Trallians, Chapter 9: "And so, be deaf when anyone speaks to you apart from Jesus Christ, who was of the race of David, the son of Mary, who was truly born and ate and drank, who was truly persecuted under Pontius Pilate and was really crucified and died in the sight of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth. Moreover He was truly raised from the dead by the power of His Father; in like manner His Father, through Jesus Christ, will raise up those of us who believe in Him. Apart from Him we have no true life."

St. Ignatius of Antioch, Letter to the Smyrnaeans, Chapter 1: "I give glory to Jesus Christ, the God [the Lord] who has imbued you with such wisdom. I am well aware that you have been made perfect in unwavering faith, like men nailed, in body and spirit, to the Cross of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and confirmed in love by the blood of Christ. In regard to our Lord, you are thoroughly convinced that He was of the race of David according to the flesh, and the Son of God by His Will and power; that He was truly born of the Virgin and baptized by John in order that all due observance might be fulfilled by Him; that in His body He was truly nailed to the Cross for our sake, under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch, of His most blessed passion we are the fruit so that, through His resurrection, He might raise, for all ages, in the one body of His Church, a standard for the saints and the faithful, whether among Jews or Gentiles."

### *Church Father St. Irenaeus (2nd century)*

St. Irenaeus (c. 130-202), who personally knew St. Polycarp who personally knew the Apostle St. John, speaks of how these basic supernatural dogmas were handed down from the apostles, as he himself hands them on to others. And he professes some of the basic dogmas contained in the Apostles' Creed:

St. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* (inter 180/199 AD), Book 1, Chapter 9: "4. ...In like manner he also who retains unchangeable in his heart the rule of the truth which he received by means of baptism..."

St. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* (inter 180/199 AD), Book 1, Chapter 10, Unity of the faith of the Church throughout the whole world: "1. The Church, though dispersed through the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith: [She believes] in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them; and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God, who became incarnate for our salvation; and in the Holy Spirit, who proclaimed through the prophets the dispensations of God, and the advents, and the birth from a virgin, and the passion, and the resurrection from the dead, and the ascension into heaven in the flesh of the beloved Christ Jesus, our Lord, and His [future] manifestation from heaven in the glory of the Father 'to gather all things in one,' and to raise up anew all flesh of the whole

human race, in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father, 'every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess' to Him, and that He should execute just judgment towards all; that He may send 'spiritual wickednesses,' and the angels who transgressed and became apostates, together with the ungodly, and unrighteous, and wicked, and profane among men, into everlasting fire; but may, in the exercise of His grace, confer immortality on the righteous, and holy, and those who have kept His commandments, and have persevered in His love, some from the beginning [of their Christian course], and others from [the date of] their repentance, and may surround them with everlasting glory.

"2. As I have already observed, the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet, as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points [of doctrine] just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart, and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down, with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For, although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same. For the Churches which have been planted in Germany do not believe or hand down anything different, nor do those in Spain, nor those in Gaul, nor those in the East, nor those in Egypt, nor those in Libya, nor those which have been established in the central regions of the world. But as the sun, that creature of God, is one and the same throughout the whole world, so also the preaching of the truth shineth everywhere, and enlightens all men that are willing to come to a knowledge of the truth. Nor will any one of the rulers in the Churches, however highly gifted he may be in point of eloquence, teach doctrines different from these (for no one is greater than the Master); nor, on the other hand, will he who is deficient in power of expression inflict injury on the tradition. For the faith being ever one and the same, neither does one who is able at great length to discourse regarding it make any addition to it, nor does one who can say but little diminish it."

St. Irenaeus of Lyons, *Against Heresies* (inter 180/199 AD), Book 3, Chapter 4: "The truth is to be found nowhere else but in the Catholic Church, the sole depository of apostolical doctrine. Heresies are of recent formation, and cannot trace their origin up to the apostles. 1. Since therefore we have such proofs, it is not necessary to seek the truth among others which it is easy to obtain from the Church; since the apostles, like a rich man [depositing his money] in a bank, lodged in her hands most copiously all things pertaining to the truth: so that every man, whosoever will, can draw from her the water of life. For she is the entrance to life; all others are thieves and robbers. On this account are we bound to avoid them, but to make choice of the thing pertaining to the Church with the utmost diligence, and to lay hold of the tradition of the truth. For how stands the case? Suppose there arise a dispute relative to some important question among us, should we not have recourse to the most ancient Churches with which the apostles held constant intercourse, and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the present question? For how should it be if the apostles themselves had not left us writings? Would it not be necessary, [in that case,] to follow the course of the tradition which they handed down to those to whom they did commit the Churches?

"2. To which course many nations of those barbarians who believe in Christ do assent, having salvation written in their hearts by the Spirit, without paper or ink, and, carefully preserving the ancient tradition, believing in one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things therein, by means of Christ Jesus, the Son of God; who, because of His surpassing love towards His creation, condescended to be born of the virgin, He Himself uniting man through Himself to God, and having suffered under Pontius Pilate, and rising again, and having been received up in splendour, shall come in glory, the Saviour of those who are saved, and the Judge of those who are judged, and sending into eternal fire those who transform the truth, and despise His Father and His advent. Those who, in the absence of written documents, have believed this faith, are barbarians, so far as regards our language; but as regards doctrine, manner, and tenor of life, they are, because of faith, very wise indeed; and they do please God, ordering their conversation in all righteousness, chastity, and



wisdom. If any one were to preach to these men the inventions of the heretics, speaking to them in their own language, they would at once stop their ears, and flee as far off as possible, not enduring even to listen to the blasphemous address. Thus, by means of that ancient tradition of the apostles, they do not suffer their mind to conceive anything of the [doctrines suggested by the] portentous language of these teachers, among whom neither Church nor doctrine has ever been established.”

ACC, p. 190: As in Tertullian, so in Irenaeus, we find three different forms of the Creed. They are arranged, article by article, in the following syllabus:

**SYLLABUS OF CREED FORMS FOUND IN IRENAEUS.**

<b>Book First, c. 10, I.</b>	<b>Book Third, c. 4, 2.</b>	<b>Book Fourth, c. 33, 7.</b>
(1) Faith in one God the Father Almighty;	(1) Who believe in one God the Framers of Heaven and Earth,	(1) His faith is entire in one God Almighty, of whom are all things;
(2) and in one Christ Jesus, the Son of God	(2) by Christ Jesus, the Son of God	(2) and in the Son of God, Jesus Christ.
(3) made flesh for our salvation, of a Virgin,	(3) who submitted to the birth which was to be of the Virgin;	(3) the Son of God become man
(4) and the Passion,	(4) who suffered also under Pontius Pilate,	(4)
(5) and the Rising from the dead	(5) and risen again,	(5)
(6) and the bodily Ascension into Heaven,	(6) and being received in brightness	(6)
(7)	(7)	(7)
(8) and His Coming from the Heavens in the glory of the Father...that He may administer just judgment to them all,	(8) will come in glory as the Judge of them that are judged	(8)
(9) and in the Holy Ghost,	(9)	(9) and in the Spirit of God
(10) who declared the Economies,	(10)	(10) the original system of the Church in the whole world <sup>28</sup>
(11) such as...persevered in His love, whether from the first or after penitency,	(11)	(11)
(12) and to raise up all flesh of all human nature.	(12)	(12)

*The heretic Tertullian (2nd and 3rd centuries)*

ACC, pp. 186-188: “Tertullian is a witness to the faith and traditions of the second century, his most notable works having been written in its closing years, or in the opening years of the century that follows. There are in his writings references almost without number to the Creed of the Church in his day. He does not call it by the name of Symbol, though he does use in describing it the word ‘tessera,’ which is also from the Greek and has the same meaning.<sup>29</sup>”

<sup>28</sup> Footnote: “To Irenaeus the Church is not so much an article of the faith as its teacher and guardian.”

<sup>29</sup> Footnote: “I cite Father Semeria (*op. cit.*, p. 321) as authority here, not having been able to verify a statement for which he gives no reference.”

To Tertullian the Creed is ‘the doctrine,’ the ‘tradition,’ and more especially the ‘Law’ or ‘Rule of Faith.’ In these several works<sup>30</sup> he gives us a more or less explicit statement of its articles, with a certain slight variation in each case. These are exhibited below in a tabular form for purposes of comparison with one another and with the Old Roman Creed.

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<sup>30</sup> Footnote: “*De Praescript., Contra Praxeam, De Virginibus Velandis*; Migne, tom. 2, cols. 26, 156, 889.”

<b>Old Roman Creed.</b>	<b>De Praescript.</b>	<b>Adv. Prax.</b>	<b>De Virg. Vel.</b>
(1) I believe in God the Father Almighty,	(1) I believe in one God, maker of the world,	(1) We believe one only God,	(1) Believing in one only God Almighty, maker of the world,
(2) and in Christ Jesus, His only Son, our Lord,	(2) the Word, called His Son, Jesus Christ,	(2) and the Son and Word of one only God, called Jesus Christ,	(2) and His Son, Jesus Christ,
(3) Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary,	(3) by the Spirit and power of God the Father made flesh in Mary's womb, and born of her,	(3) born Man and God of the Virgin,	(3) born of the Virgin Mary,
(4) Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried,	(4) fastened to a cross,	(4) Him suffered, dead, and buried,	(4) crucified under Pontius Pilate,
(5) Rose again the third day from the dead.	(5) He rose the third day;	(5) brought back to life by the Father,	(5) on the third day brought to life from the dead,
(6) Ascended into heaven,	(6) was caught up into heaven,	(6) taken again into heaven,	(6) received in heaven,
(7) Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,	(7) sat at the right hand of the Father,	(7) sits at right hand of the Father,	(7) sits now at right hand of Father,
(8) whence He shall come to judge quick and dead.	(8) will come with glory to take the good into life eternal, and condemn the wicked to perpetual fire,	(8) will come to judge living and dead,	(8) will come to judge living and dead.
(9) And in the Holy Ghost,	(9) Sent the vicarious power of His Holy Spirit,	(9) From the Father the Holy Ghost Paraclete,	
(10) the holy Church,	(10) to govern believers,		
(11) remission of sins,			
(12) resurrection of the flesh.	(12) restoration of the flesh.		(12) through resurrection of the flesh.

“We have here, in the writings of Tertullian, all the articles of the Old Roman Creed except the tenth (which is implied in one instance) and the eleventh. Are we to infer, because these two articles are wanting, that they were not to be found in the Creed that was in use in his day? By no means. Tertullian does not pretend to cite that formulary word for word. The words given above in parallel columns are picked from their context, where they are found, in some instances, mingled with extraneous matter. Besides, the phrases in the several columns do not tally exactly with one another, nor with the words of the Old Roman Creed.

Nor is the same number of articles given in each case, nor are the same ones. Thus, the twelfth article is wanting in *Adversus Praxeam*, and the ninth in *De Virginibus Velandis*, wherein the form approaches most closely to that of the Old Roman Creed. But who can doubt that the Rule of Faith which Tertullian so often refers to, and which he declares to be ‘absolutely one, alone unchangeable, and irreformable,’<sup>31</sup> had its setting of words fixed uniform, the same for all?

“We may surmise that Tertullian’s object in varying, as he does, the words in which he conveys the doctrines of the Creed was to veil from the uninitiated the sacred Symbol of the Faith, in accordance with the prevailing discipline of the secret. The economy of his language recalls that passage in the *Stromata* of...Clement of Alexandria where he says that there are some things which his writing ‘will only name, and will attempt, while concealing yet to declare, and though hiding to manifest, and though silent to point out.’ One is at a loss otherwise to account for the curious circumstance that, in the three several places where Tertullian professes to be setting forth the content of the Rule of Faith, once and once only does he use exactly the same form of words, as a glance at the table given above will show.

“But be this as it may, certain it is that we cannot rightly infer a given article to have been wanting in the Creed of Tertullian from the mere circumstance of his not making explicit mention of it. In the very passage in which he professes to be giving the ‘one, unchangeable, irreformable’ Rule of Faith, he omits the ninth article, which he nevertheless gives in the other two places. What is more, we gather from a passage in his *Liber de Baptismo* that the tenth article, embodying belief in ‘the holy Church,’ was part of the Creed in his day. ‘Since, however,’ he there says, ‘the profession of faith is made and the pledge of salvation given under three (names), mention of the Church is necessarily added. For where the three are, that is, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, there is the Church, which is their body.’<sup>32</sup>”

SOA, Chapter 3, Section 7, pp. 118-119: “Let us leave Gaul and cross in Africa. Harnack tells us that he has ‘traced the old Roman symbol to the time of Tertullian.’<sup>33</sup> We shall help him to trace it a good bit farther. And Tertullian is the very man who will enable us to do so. Where did Tertullian get his Rule of Faith? [He]...does not leave us one instant in doubt as to where he got it. He got it from the Church, the Church got it from the Apostles, the Apostles from Christ, Christ from God.<sup>34</sup> At any rate this is what he tells us; and we seem to catch a hint of what is passing in his mind from those words in Matthew where our Lord tells His Apostles that ‘all power is given’ Him ‘in heaven and on earth,’ and where, in virtue of that power, He bids them go forth to teach and baptize all nations. We understand Tertullian to mean that the Apostles got the Rule of Faith from Christ, in the sense that they got from Christ the Faith itself and the authority to formulate such points of it as they deemed needful to grave ‘on the fleshly tablets’ of the hearts of those who were first to ‘believe’ before they could be ‘baptized.’ If one thing more than another is clear from the writings of Tertullian, it is that there did not dwell in his mind the shadow of a shade of doubt that the Apostles themselves drew up the Rule of Faith. He regards it as ‘incredible’ that they should not ‘have set forth to all every clause of the Rule in order (omnem ordinem regulae).’<sup>35</sup> He points out how impossible it would be for ‘so many and so great Churches to stray into the one Faith,’ and that what is ‘one among many comes not by hap, but by tradition.’<sup>36</sup> He declares that ‘this Rule was in use from the beginning of the Gospel, even before the earliest heresies.’<sup>37</sup>”

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<sup>31</sup> Footnote: “*De Virg. Vel.*, loc. cit.”

<sup>32</sup> Footnote: “Migne, tom. I, col. 1206.”

<sup>33</sup> Footnote 22: “Op. cit., p. 70. [The Apostles’ Creed, by Adolf Harnack. London: Adam and Charles Black. 1901.]”

<sup>34</sup> Footnote 23: “*De Praescript.*, c. 37 (Migne, tom. 2, col. 50).”

<sup>35</sup> Footnote 24: “Ib., c. 27.”

<sup>36</sup> Footnote 25: “Ib., c. 28.”

<sup>37</sup> Footnote 26: “*Adv. Prax.*, c. 2.”

### *The heretic Origen (2nd and 3rd centuries)*

SOA, Chapter 5, Section 9, pp. 176-177: “Here are the elements of what Origen [185-232 AD] calls ‘the sure outline and plain rule of Apostolic teaching,’ as given in *Of Beginnings*, bk. 1, n. 4.

(1) ‘There is one God who created and ordered all things’; (2) ‘this God...sent our Lord Jesus Christ,’ (3) ‘who...took a body, ...born of the Virgin and the Holy Ghost’; (4) ‘suffered truly, ...truly died’; (5) ‘truly rose from the dead’; (6) ‘and after His resurrection...was taken up.’ (9) ‘Then...they have handed down (the belief in) the Holy Ghost.’ (12) ‘After this, that the soul, ...when it quits this world, will be dealt with according to its deserts; will possess the heritage of eternal life, or be banished into everlasting fire; ...but also that a time will come when the dead shall rise again.’<sup>38</sup>

“The numerals point to the corresponding articles of the Old Roman Creed. It will be noticed that mention is made of the Holy Ghost in the article on the Virgin Birth—an uncommon thing in the written creeds of the century that followed. Who can doubt that we have here the Apostolic Symbol, so far as the Discipline of the Secret admitted of its being given in writing? Origen tells us that it was ‘handed down from the Apostles through successive generations,’ and that ‘that alone is to be received as true which in no wise disagrees with the ecclesiastical and Apostolic Tradition.’ *Ib.*, n. 2.”

### *Church Father St. Cyprian of Carthage (3rd century)*

St. Cyprian, Epistle 75, to Magnus: “7. But if any one objects, by way of saying that Novatian holds the same law which the Catholic Church holds, baptizes with the same symbol [Creed] with which we baptize, knows the same God and Father, the same Christ the Son, the same Holy Spirit, and that for this reason he may claim the power of baptizing, namely, that he seems not to differ from us in the baptismal interrogatory; let any one that thinks that this may be objected, know first of all, that there is not one law of the Creed, nor the same interrogatory common to us and to schismatics. For when they say, Dost thou believe the remission of sins and life eternal through the holy Church?’ they lie in their interrogatory, since they have not the Church.” (Migne, Tom. 3, col. 1143.)

### *Church Father St. Alexander of Alexandria (3rd and 4th centuries)*

St. Alexander of Alexandria became the bishop of Alexandria about the year 312 AD. He was the first to resist the heresy of Arius, whom he condemned, and against whose heresies he wrote numerous letters to the bishops of the various churches. In 326 AD St. Athanasius succeeded him as bishop of Alexandria:

St. Alexander of Alexandria (d. 326), *Epistle against the Arian Heretics*, 4<sup>th</sup> century: “[Having explained the Apostles’ Creed, he adds] These things we teach, these we proclaim, these are the apostolic doctrines of the Church, for which too we would die.”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Footnote 16: “Migne, P. G., tom. 11.”

<sup>39</sup> *Ep. De Arian, Hares. Labbe*, t. ii, pp. 19-21, and *Galland*. t. iv, pp. 447, 448.

### *Church Father St. Antony of the Desert (3rd and 4th centuries)*

St. Antony of the Desert (d. 356 or 357), *Life of Saint Antony*, by St. Athanasius, inter. 356-362 AD: “82. ...Defile not yourselves with the Arians, for their teaching is not that of the Apostles, but that of demons and their father the devil...”

### *Church Father St. Hilary of Poitiers (4th century)*

SOA: “[Chapter 5, Section 7, pp. 170-173] Let me cite, in further proof of this, one or two passages from the writings of so competent a witness as St. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers. Hilary knew the East thoroughly in the first half of the fourth century, having striven earnestly there with the Arians, on their own ground, for ‘the Faith once delivered to the Saints.’ An exile in the East, he writes to the Emperor Constantius. Here is the context of the passage just given in the footnote:

[St. Hilary of Poitiers, *Ad Constantium*] ‘Recognize, excellent and most pious Emperor, the Creed which you formerly desired to hear from the (Arian) Bishops, and did not. For when it was sought from them, they wrote out their own creeds, and taught not the things of God. They have carried their error round the everlasting globe and with it a strife that ever returns upon itself. Man in his feebleness ought to have been modest and to have kept the sacrament (mystery, symbol) of the knowledge of God in his conscience within those terms wherein he (first) made an act of faith. It behooved him not, after confessing under oath in baptism the Faith in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, to doubt aught, or innovate aught. But through presumption, or complaisance, or error, some have deceitfully confessed the unchangeable ordinance<sup>40</sup> of the Apostolic doctrine; others have boldly gone beyond it; while the true, natural meaning of the Confession in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is evaded, lest that meaning should remain which ought to be confessed in the sacrament of regeneration...’ *Ib.*, n. 4.

‘A Creed, then, is sought, as if there were no Creed. The Creed must be written, as if it were not in the heart. Born again by faith, now we are taught unto Faith, as if that second birth were without Faith. We learn Christ after baptism, as if there could be any baptism without the Faith of Christ... As it is the safest course for those who sail the stormy sea in winter, when shipwreck threatens, to return to the port whence they set sail; and as it behooves inexperienced young men, who have gone beyond the bounds observed by their father, and, in keeping up the home, have spent their patrimony with too prodigal a hand, now, for fear of losing their all, to go back to the way of their father, as the needful and only safe way; so, amid such shipwreck of the Faith as we see around us, when the heritage of our heavenly patrimony is all but squandered, the safest course for us is to hold fast the first and only Evangelical Creed, learned and confessed in baptism... This I have so believed in the Holy Spirit that I cannot now be taught any Faith beyond it concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: not thereby dissenting from the Faith of the Fathers (Nicene Creed), but following the Symbol of my second birth, and the knowledge of evangelical doctrine, which are in no wise at variance with that (Creed).’ *Ib.*, n. 6-11.

“Thus does Hilary, writing to Constantius, take for granted, as something known to all, the existence, in the East, too, of a Baptismal Creed based upon the Trinitarian Formula; of a Creed which antedated all written Creeds, including the Nicene. He calls it ‘the first and only Evangelical Creed, learned and confessed in baptism,’ [the ‘Symbol of my second birth,] the ‘Apostolic Faith’ (n. 6), *i. e.*, Symbol, and sets forth as its content (n. 11), approved also by Scripture, as many as seven articles of the Old Roman Creed. In short, he makes it plain that he is referring to what has been ever known in the Church as the Symbol of the Apostles. He

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<sup>40</sup> Footnote 14: “ ‘Constitutionem’ may properly be rendered ‘rule’ or ‘symbol.’ ”

counsels to Christians in the East, under the Emperor Constantius, a return to this the Creed of their baptism. Perhaps those who say that ‘there was no established baptismal confession of faith in the East in the third century,’ will tell us how there can be a return to that which never existed.”

“[Chapter 5, Section 8, pp. 173-175] Upheld by St. Hilary, and borne, as it were, upon his shoulders, we can see far into the third century, and descry in the East the object of our quest a counterpart and *alter ego* of the Old Roman Symbol. But there is yet another passage in the writings of St. Hilary which must be cited. It is found in the *Liber de Synodis seu de Fide Orientalium*. We learn from it that while the Creed was never written in the West in Hilary’s time, polemical formularies, written Creeds based upon the Symbol, began to be published in the East owing to the spread of heresy. He is addressing his brother Bishops in Germany and other parts of the West:

‘But blessed are ye in the Lord and full of glory, who hold fast, in the confession of the conscience, the perfect and Apostolic Creed, and as yet know nothing of written creeds. For you stand not in need of the letter, abounding as you do in the spirit. Nor do you want the help of a hand to write what you believe with the heart, and confess with the lips unto salvation. Neither was it needful for you to read out to a bishop what you held (in memory) when you stood at the baptismal font. But necessity has introduced the custom of setting forth creeds in writing and subscribing to them. For where the inmost sentiment of the mind is in question, there the letter is required. And certainly there is no bar to the writing of that which it is salutary to confess.’  
*Ib.*, n. 63.

“Later on, however (n. 84), he deems it needful to offer this justification of his having reproduced in writing the Nicene Creed: ‘And the Symbol itself which was at that time piously put in writing, it will not be impious in us to have inserted in this our work.’

“From these passages we gather that the Baptismal Creed, which Hilary plainly implies to have been the same in the East as in the West, and which he speaks of as an ‘unchangeable ordinance,’ or ‘rule’ of Apostolic doctrine, was not at all a written Creed, and is not to be confounded with any of the numerous polemical confessions called forth by the Arian controversy. These, indeed, were built on the foundation of the unwritten Creed, but so fashioned as the exigencies of each case required.”

### *Church Father St. Athanasius (4th century)*

St. Athanasius (296-373), *Ad Episcopos Aegypti et Libyae*, to the Bishops of Egypt, 356 AD: “Yea, brethren, there is need now of such boldness of speech; for we have not received ‘the spirit of bondage again to fear,’ but God hath called us ‘to liberty.’ And it were indeed disgraceful to us, most disgraceful, were we on account of Arius or of those who embrace and advocate his sentiments, to destroy the faith which we have received from our Saviour through His Apostles.” (Chapter 1, 20)

St. Athanasius, Letter 60, to Adelphius against the Arians: “6. ...But our faith is right, and starts from the teaching of the Apostles and tradition of the fathers, being confirmed both by the New Testament and the Old.”

St. Athanasius, Epistle 1, to Serapion: “See the tradition which is from the beginning, and the doctrine and faith of the Catholic Church, which the Lord indeed communicated, but the apostles proclaimed and the fathers guarded; for on this has the Church been founded, and he who falls away from this, would not be, nor would even be called, a Christian.” (n. 28, t. 1, p. 540, ed. Ben. Patav. 1777.)

St. Athanasius, Epistle to Serapion: “I have delivered to you the Apostolic Faith as it has been handed down to us by the Fathers.” (*Ep. Ad Serap.* n. 33; Migne, P. G., tom. 26.)

St. Athanasius: “Confession in the Faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, among the teachings transmitted in a secret manner from the tradition of the Apostles...” (*Lib. De Sp. Sanct. C*, 27; Migne, P. G., tom. 32.)

### *Church Father St. Cyril of Jerusalem (4th century)*

St. Cyril of Jerusalem (315-386), *Catechetical Lectures*, Number 5: “12. But in learning the Faith and in professing it, acquire and keep that only, which is now delivered to thee by the Church, and which has been built up strongly out of all the Scriptures. For since all cannot read the Scriptures, some being hindered as to the knowledge of them by want of learning, and others by a want of leisure, in order that the soul may not perish from ignorance, we comprise the whole doctrine of the Faith in a few lines. This summary I wish you both to commit to memory when I recite it, and to rehearse it with all diligence among yourselves, not writing it out on paper, but engraving it by the memory upon your heart, taking care while you rehearse it that no Catechumen chance to overhear the things which have been delivered to you. I wish you also to keep this as a provision through the whole course of your life, and beside this to receive no other, neither if we ourselves should change and contradict our present teaching, nor if an adverse angel, transformed into an angel of light should wish to lead you astray. For though we or an angel from heaven preach to you any other gospel than that ye have received, let him be to you anathema. So for the present listen while I simply say the Creed, and commit it to memory; but at the proper season expect the confirmation out of Holy Scripture of each part of the contents. For the articles of the Faith were not composed as seemed good to men; but the most important points collected out of all the Scripture make up one complete teaching of the Faith.<sup>41</sup> And just as the mustard seed in one small grain contains many branches, so also this Faith has embraced in few words all the knowledge of godliness in the Old and New Testaments. Take heed then, brethren, and hold fast the traditions which ye now receive, and write them on the table of your heart.”

SOA, Chapter 5: “[Section 4, pp. 162-164] This same Confession of Faith, which he calls ‘the Faith’ simply, St. Cyril of Jerusalem...presents to us in his discourses to catechumens. ‘The Faith’ was not written by Cyril; it is not to be found, as Migne notes, in any of the MSS. of his works; he forbore putting it in writing, as did St. Augustine, conformably to the Discipline of the Secret. Still, it may be reconstructed from his writings, as it has been from those of St. Augustine. Migne (i. e., a writer cited by that editor) has picked out of his sermons and pieced together the Symbol of the Mother Church of Jerusalem, which is set forth in the following table, side by side with the Old Roman Symbol:

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<sup>41</sup> In context, St. Cyril is saying that he has collected out of the Scriptures all the points covered in the Apostles’ Creed. But he is not teaching that the Apostles’ Creed was composed and taken from the Scriptures. (See in this book “In context, Apostles’ Creed gathered from the Scriptures,” p. 37.)



### Old Roman Symbol.

- (1) I believe in God the Father Almighty;
- (2) And in Christ Jesus, His Only Son, our Lord;
- (3) Born of the Holy Ghost and the Virgin Mary;
- (4) Crucified under Pontius Pilate and buried,
- (5) Rose again the third day from the dead,
- (6) Ascended into heaven.
- (7) Sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
- (8) Whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
- (9) And in the Holy Ghost;
- (10) The Holy Church,
- (11) The remission of sins;
- (12) The resurrection of the flesh.

### Symbol of Jerusalem.

- (1) We believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;
- (2) And in one Lord Jesus Christ, only-begotten Son of God, born true God of the Father, before all ages; by whom all things were made;
- (3) Who came in the flesh, and was made man of the Holy Virgin and the Holy Ghost [*Catech.* 4a; n. 9];
- (4) Crucified and buried,
- (5) Rose again the third day;
- (6) And ascended into heaven.
- (7) And sitteth at the right hand of the Father,
- (8) And is to come in glory to judge the quick and dead; of whose kingdom there shall be no end.
- (9) And in one Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, who spoke by the prophets;
- (10) And in one holy Catholic Church;
- (11) And in one baptism of penance for the remission of sins;
- (12) And in the resurrection of the flesh, and the life everlasting.

“Here, then, we have the Baptismal Creed of the Mother Church of Jerusalem. Immediately on finishing his exposition of it, St. Cyril says to his catechumens: ‘We have discoursed upon the holy and Apostolic Faith (Symbol) that has been delivered to you, and that you are to make profession of.’<sup>42</sup>...

“[Chapter 5, Section 6, p. 167] Stripped of its additions (all of them of a strongly marked Eastern character), Cyril’s Creed is the primitive Creed of the Church; the ancient Confession in which Athanasius (or is it Vigilus?) finds the ‘so great glory of the Most Holy Trinity set forth in twelve distinct phrases;’ the ‘gnomon and rule and safe criterion,’ based upon the Baptismal Formula...”

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<sup>42</sup> Footnote 8: “*Cat.* 17: 32.”

### *Church Father St. Gregory Nazianzen (4th century)*

St. Gregory Nazianzen (c. 325-389), Oration 11 (alias 6): “May we to the last breath of life confess with great confidence that excellent Deposit of the holy fathers who were nearest to Christ; that Confession of the primitive Faith which had been familiar to us from childhood, which we first uttered and with which may we depart this life bearing godliness with us hence, this, if nothing else.”

St. Gregory Nazianzen, Oration 7, n. 22: “That excellent Deposit [Symbol] which we received from our fathers; adoring the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit...in whose name we have been cleansed in the waters of baptism.” (Migne, P.G., tom. 35.)

### *The heretic Tyrannius Rufinus (4th century)*

The heretic Tyrannius Rufinus, *A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed*, 4<sup>th</sup> century: “2. Our forefathers have handed down to us the tradition, that, after the Lord’s ascension, when, through the coming of the Holy Spirit, tongues of flame had settled upon each of the Apostles, that they might speak diverse languages, so that no race however foreign, no tongue however barbarous, might be inaccessible to them and beyond their reach, they were commanded by the Lord to go severally to the several nations to preach the word of God. Being on the eve therefore of departing from one another, they first mutually agreed upon a standard of their future preaching, lest haply, when separated, they might in any instance vary in the statements which they should make to those whom they should invite to believe in Christ. Being all therefore met together, and being filled with the Holy Spirit, they composed, as we have said, this brief formulary of their future preaching, each contributing his several sentence to one common summary: and they ordained that the rule thus framed should be given to those who believe. To this formulary, for many and most sufficient reasons, they gave the name of Symbol. For Symbol (*kumblon*) in Greek answers to both ‘Indicium’ (a sign or token) and ‘Collatio’ (a joint contribution made by several) in Latin. For this the Apostles did in these words, each contributing his several sentence. It is called ‘Indicium’ or ‘Signum,’ a sign or token, because, at that time, as the Apostle Paul says, and as is related in the Acts of the Apostles, many of the vagabond Jews, pretending to be apostles of Christ, went about preaching for gain’s sake or their belly’s sake, naming the name of Christ indeed, but not delivering their message according to the exact traditional lines. The Apostles therefore prescribed this formulary as a sign or token by which he who preached Christ truly, according to Apostolic rule, might be recognised. Finally, they say that in civil wars, since the armour of both sides is alike, and the language the same, and the custom and mode of warfare the same, each general, to guard against treachery, is wont to deliver to his soldiers a distinct symbol or watchword—in Latin ‘signum’ or ‘indicium’—so that if one is met with, of whom it is doubtful to which side he belongs, being asked the symbol (watchword), he discloses whether he is friend or foe. And for this reason, the tradition continues, the Creed is not written on paper or parchment, but is retained in the hearts of the faithful, that it may be certain that no one has learnt it by reading, as is sometimes the case with unbelievers, but by tradition from the Apostles. The Apostles therefore, as we have said, being about to separate in order to preach the Gospel, settled upon this sign or token of their agreement in the faith; and, unlike the sons of Noah, who, when they were about to separate from one another, builded a tower of baked bricks and pitch, whose top might reach to heaven, they raised a monument of faith, which might withstand the enemy, composed of living stones and pearls of the Lord, such that neither winds might overthrow it, nor floods undermine it, nor the force of storms and tempests shake it. Right justly, then, were the former, when, on the eve of separation, they builded a tower of pride, condemned to the confusion of tongues, so that no one might understand his neighbour’s speech; while the latter, who were building a tower of faith, were endowed with the knowledge and understanding of all languages; so that the one might prove a sign and token of sin, the other of faith.”

### *Church Father St. Ambrose (4th century)*

St. Ambrose (c. 340-d. 397), Letter 42, 388 AD: “5. ...Let them give credit to the Creed of the Apostles, which the Roman Church has always kept and preserved undefiled.”

### *Church Father St. Epiphanius of Salamis (4th and 5th centuries)*

SOA, Chapter 5, Section 13, pp. 186-187: “St. Epiphanius [310-403] testifies that the Church ‘received the Faith (Symbol) as a sacred trust from the Apostles;’ and, having cited the Nicene Symbol, with the addition of the articles omitted by the Council, adds: ‘This Formula of Faith was handed down to us from the holy Apostles, and prescribed in the holy city by all the Bishops, in number, three hundred and eighteen.’<sup>43</sup> Here Epiphanius speaks by the book, for the Fathers of Nice did not draw up the Symbol that was the work of the Apostles. They did but define the meaning of it more clearly, and reaffirm, with all the authority vested in them, the truths which it embodied.”

### *Church Father St. Jerome (4th and 5th centuries)*

St. Jerome (c. 340/342-420), *To Pammachius against John of Jerusalem*, 397 or 398 AD: “28. In the symbol of our faith and hope, which was delivered by the Apostles, and is not written with paper and ink, but on fleshy tables of the heart, after the confession of the Trinity and the unity of the Church, the whole symbol of Christian dogma concludes with the resurrection of the flesh.”

### *Church Father St. Augustine (4th and 5th centuries)*

St. Augustine (354-430), *A Sermon to Catechumens on the Creed*: “1. Receive, my children, the Rule of Faith, which is called the Symbol (or Apostles’ Creed). And when you have received it, write it in your heart, and be daily saying it to yourselves; before ye sleep, before ye go forth, arm you with your Creed. The Creed no man writes so as it may be able to be read: but for rehearsal of it, lest haply forgetfulness obliterate what care has delivered, let your memory be your record-roll: what you are about to hear, that are you to believe; and what you shall have believed, that are about to give back with your tongue. For the Apostle says, With the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For this is the Creed which you are to rehearse and to repeat in answer. These words which you have heard are in the Divine Scriptures scattered up and down: but thence gathered and reduced into one, that the memory of slow persons might not be distressed; that every person may be able to say, able to hold, what he believes. For have ye now merely heard that God is Almighty? But ye begin to have him for your father, when you have been born by the Church as your Mother.”

St. Augustine, *On Faith and the Creed*, 393 AD: “Chapter 1. Inasmuch as it is a position, written and established on the most solid foundation of apostolic teaching, that the just lives of faith; and inasmuch also as this faith demands of us the duty at once of heart and tongue—for an apostle says, With the heart man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, — it becomes us to be mindful both of righteousness and of salvation. For, destined as we are to reign hereafter in everlasting righteousness, we certainly cannot secure our salvation from the present evil world, unless at the same time, while laboring for the salvation of our neighbors, we likewise with the mouth make our own profession of the faith which we carry in our heart. And it must be our aim, by pious and

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<sup>43</sup> Footnote 28: “*Ancoratus*, 118 (Migne, P. G., tom. 43).”

careful watchfulness, to provide against the possibility of the said faith sustaining any injury in us, on any side, through the fraudulent artifices [or, cunning fraud] of the heretics. We have, however, the Catholic Faith in the Creed, known to the faithful and committed to memory, contained in a form of expression as concise as has been rendered admissible by the circumstances of the case; the purpose of which [compilation] was, that individuals who are but beginners and sucklings among those who have been born again in Christ, and who have not yet been strengthened by most diligent and spiritual handling and understanding of the divine Scriptures, should be furnished with a summary, expressed in few words, of those matters of necessary belief...”

ACC, p. 7, Footnote 15: “To know the Symbol by heart was to the early Christians a matter of life and death. In a letter ‘to the aged Alypius’ (Tom. 2, col. 1012) St. Augustine relates how a pagan of the name of Dioscorus had a dearly loved daughter whose life was despaired of, and how, upon his taking a vow to become a Christian, she was restored to health. Failing to keep his vow, he was struck blind. All at once he bethought that his blindness was a judgment of God upon him for having broken his vow. A second time he vows he will perform his first vow if he recovers his sight. This he does, and is duly baptized, but has not learned the Symbol by heart, alleging as excuse that he is not able. He is now struck with paralysis, which extends even to his tongue. Admonished in a dream that this has happened to him because of his not having recited the Symbol from memory, he makes a confession to this effect in writing, learns the Symbol by heart, and is freed at length from all his infirmities.”

SOA, Chapter 4, Section 6, pp. 146-150: “St. Augustine’s belief in the Apostolic origin of the Symbol is logically and necessarily implied in the principle he lays down with regard to Apostolic tradition. But we have in the following passage, or I am greatly mistaken, if not an explicit statement of his belief, at least the very next thing to it. He is combating the view that baptism may be given offhand to anyone who makes a profession of faith in the Divine Sonship of Christ, such as the eunuch baptized by Philip made (Acts 8: 35-38). I translate with almost literal exactness from the text in Migne:

‘That eunuch, they tell us, whom Philip baptized, said no more than, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; and, on making this profession, forthwith received baptism. Are we, then, willing that men, on giving this response only, should incontinently be baptized? that not one word should be said by the catechist, nothing professed by the believer, about the Holy Ghost, the holy Church, the remission of sins, the resurrection of the dead, in fine, about the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, except that He is the Son of God; not a word about His incarnation in the Virgin’s womb, the passion, the death on the cross, the burial, the resurrection on the third day, the ascension, and the session on the right hand of the Father? For, if the eunuch, when he had made answer, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, thought this was all that was needed, and that he could at once be baptized, and go his way, why do we not take pattern by his case, and dispense with the other things that we deem necessary to bring out by questioning and get an answer to from the candidate for baptism, even when time presses and it is not possible for him to learn them by heart? But if the Scripture is silent, and leaves these other things which Philip did when baptizing the eunuch to be taken for granted, and in saying, Philip baptized him (Acts 8: 35-38), gives us to understand that everything was done which had to be done, as we know from the tradition that has come down from one generation to another, although Scripture, for the sake of brevity, does not mention it; in like manner, when we find it written that Philip preached unto him the Lord Jesus, we cannot at all doubt that in the catechism those things were dealt with which bear upon the life and conduct of him who believes in the Lord Jesus. For, to preach Christ is not only to teach what must be believed concerning Christ, but also what he has to observe who becomes a member of Christ’s body; nay, in sooth, to teach all that is to be believed of Christ, not merely whose Son He is; to set forth whence He is as to His Divinity, of whom born according to the flesh, what things

He suffered and why, what the virtue of his resurrection is, what gift the Spirit has promised and given to the faithful...<sup>44</sup>

“Historical criticism assumes that the primitive Baptismal Creed of the Church was the simple profession of faith in Christ recorded in the eighth chapter of the Acts.<sup>45</sup> St. Augustine, so far from holding this view, maintains that even in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, which might well seem an exceptional case, Philip carried out the baptismal service in substantially the same way as it used to be carried out in the fourth and fifth centuries, and as it continues to be carried out down to this day. The Scripture, he grants, does not say so in terms, but leaves it to be inferred; and ‘we know’ that it was done. How did they know? By Apostolic tradition ‘serie traditionis,’ an unbroken chain of oral communication whose first links were forged in the workshop of the Apostles. And what was the very first thing to be done, according to the Apostolic tradition? St. Augustine does not leave us to conjecture. He is clear that the very first thing to be done was to instruct in the Faith the person to be baptized, to deliver the Creed to the catechumen. But what Creed, according to St. Augustine, was delivered to the catechumen, ‘eunuch of great authority under Queen Candace,’ whom Philip instructed in the Faith? Was it a formula that contained only the second article of the Symbol known to Augustine? Nothing of the kind. It was the whole Creed, the whole Symbol ‘imo vero cuncta dicere quae sunt credenda de Christo.’ Tradition said nothing of what passed between Philip and the eunuch. But the Apostolic origin of the Symbol was known ‘serie traditionis,’ and from this the inference was an easy one that the eunuch was taught all the truths contained in the Symbol. We claim, therefore, the great Bishop of Hippo as another witness to the tradition of the Apostolic authorship of the Creed.”

### In context, Apostles’ Creed gathered from the Scriptures

SOA, Chapter 4, Section 1, pp. 127-130: “It is urged that St. Augustine contradicts the ancient tradition of the Apostolic authorship of the Symbol.<sup>46</sup> The passage to which appeal is made occurs in a homily on the Symbol, and runs as follows: ‘The words you have heard are scattered here and there in the Sacred Scriptures, but have thence been gathered and put into one formula.’<sup>47</sup> Now, the tradition has it that the Apostles composed the Symbol on the eve of their dispersion, which took place before the books of the New Testament were written. Hence the passage in question runs counter to the tradition... First of all, let us see what St. Augustine says in his other sermons on the Symbol. Two of those given in the fifth volume of Migne’s edition of the Saint’s works, namely, 212 and 214, are unquestionably genuine. In both of these it is not the words of the Symbol but the doctrine which St. Augustine says is contained in the Scriptures. Nor does he say or in any way imply that the doctrine was taken from the Scriptures in the first instance. ‘All that you are about to hear in the Symbol,’ he tells his catechumens, ‘is contained in the Scriptures.’ And again: ‘This, then, is the Symbol, with the contents of which you have been made familiar already through the Scriptures and the preaching of the Church.’<sup>48</sup> He opens his mind even more fully in the other sermon.<sup>49</sup> ‘The truths,’ he there tells his hearers, ‘which you are about to receive in a compendious form, to be committed to memory and orally professed, are not new to you nor unheard. For in the Sacred Scriptures and in sermons you have been wont to find them set forth in many ways.’ St. Augustine plainly does not mean here that the authors of the Symbol picked the words which compose it from various parts of the Scriptures—an utterly unlikely thing, in any case. Nor does he even mean that they actually took the truths embodied in it from the Scripture, where, of course, they are to be found, with many other truths besides. He simply

<sup>44</sup> Footnote 19: “*De Fide et Operibus*, c. 9, cols. 205-6 (Migne, tom. 40).”

<sup>45</sup> Footnote 20: “Dogma, Gerarchia e Culto, p. 326. Burn, An Introduction to the Creeds, p. 32 and p. 43.”

<sup>46</sup> Footnote 1: “Dogma, Gerarchia e Culto, p. 322.”

<sup>47</sup> Footnote 2: “Verba quae audistis per divinas Scripturas sparsa sunt, sed inde collecta et ad unum redacta. *De Symb. ad Catech.* Migne, tom. 40, col. 627.”

<sup>48</sup> Footnote 3: “Serm. 212 (Migne, tom. 38, col. 1058).”

<sup>49</sup> Footnote 4: “Serm. 214 *ad init.* (Ib. col. 1066).”

means that catechumens could learn and did learn from the Scripture, as well as from the preaching of the Church, all the truths contained in the Symbol, long before the Symbol itself was given to them.”

### *The heretic John Cassian (4th and 5th centuries)*

The heretic John Cassian (c. 360-c. 435)<sup>50</sup>, *On the Incarnation of the Lord, Against Nestorius*, Book 6: “[Chapter 3] THEREFORE since we have, as I fancy, already in all the former books with the weight of sacred testimonies, given a complete answer to the heretic who denies God, now let us come to the faith of the Creed of Antioch and its value. For as he was himself baptized and regenerated in this, he ought to be confuted by his own profession, and (so to speak) to be crushed beneath the weight of his own arms, for this is the method, that as he is already convicted by the evidence of holy Scripture, so now he may be convicted by evidence out of his own mouth. Nor will there be any need to bring anything else to bear against him when he has clearly and plainly convicted himself. The text then and the faith of the Creed of Antioch is this. ‘I believe in one and the only true God, the Father Almighty, Maker of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, and the first-born of every creature, begotten of Him before all worlds, and not made: Very God of Very God, Being of one substance with the Father: By whom both the worlds were framed, and all things were made. Who for us came, and was born of the Virgin Mary, and was crucified under Pontius Pilate and was buried: and the third day He rose again according to the Scripture: and ascended into heaven, and shall come again to judge the quick and the dead,’ etc. In the Creed which gives the faith of all the Churches, I should like to know which you would rather follow, the authority of men or of God? ...For, as you know, a Creed (Symbolum) gets its name from being a ‘collection.’ For what is called in Greek σύμβολος is termed in Latin ‘Collatio.’ But it is therefore a collection (collatio) because when the faith of the whole Catholic law was collected together by the apostles of the Lord, all those matters which are spread over the whole body of the sacred writings with immense fulness of detail, were collected together in sum in the matchless brevity of the Creed, according to the Apostle’s words: ‘Completing His word, and cutting it short in righteousness: because ‘a short word shall the Lord make upon the earth.’ This then is the ‘short word’ which the Lord made, collecting together in few words the faith of both of His Testaments, and including in a few brief clauses the drift of all the Scriptures, building up His own out of His own, and giving the force of the whole law in a most compendious and brief formula. Providing in this, like a most tender father, for the carelessness and ignorance of some of his children, that no mind however simple and ignorant might have any trouble over what could so easily be retained in the memory.”

“[Chapter 4] YOU see then that the Creed has the authority of God: for ‘a short word will the Lord make upon the earth.’ But perhaps you want the authority of men: nor is that wanting, for God made it by means of men. For as He fashioned the whole body of the sacred Scriptures by means of the patriarchs and more particularly his own prophets, so He formed the Creed by means of His apostles and priests. And whatever He enlarged on in these (in Scripture) with copious and abundant material, He here embraced in a most complete and compendious form by means of His own servants. There is nothing wanting then in the Creed; because as it was formed from the Scriptures of God by the apostles of God, it has in it all the authority it can possibly have, whether of men or of God: Although too that which was made by men, must be accounted God’s work, for we should not look on it so much as their work, by whose instrumentality it was made, but rather as His, who was the actual maker. ‘I believe,’ then, says the Creed, ‘in one true and only God, the Father Almighty,

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<sup>50</sup> John Cassian (c. 360-c. 435) was a semi-pelagianist heretic. He and his works were condemned by Pope Gelasius I in 495 AD the *Decretal of Gelasius*: “V. ...the works of Cassian the Gallic priest... we acknowledge is to be not merely rejected but eliminated from the whole Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church and with their authors and the followers of its authors to be damned in the inextricable shackles of anathema forever.”

Maker of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son and the first-born of every creature; Begotten of Him before all worlds, and not made; Very God of Very God, being of one substance with the Father; by whom both the worlds were framed and all things were made; who for us came, and was born of the Virgin Mary; and was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven: and shall come again to judge the quick and the dead,' etc.”

### *Church Father St. Fulgentius of Ruspe (5th and 6th centuries)*

St. Fulgentius of Ruspe (468-533), *In Defense of the Symbol against the Arians*: “The Symbol of the Christian Faith was...drawn up by the Apostles in accordance with the rule of Truth.”<sup>51</sup>

### *St. Francis Xavier (16th century)*

*The Life of St. Francis Xavier*, by Fr. Dominic Bohours, S.J., Chapter 9, pp. 83-84: “The brahmin having disclosed these mysteries to Xavier, desired him, in his turn, to reveal to him what was most mysterious in the Christian law. To engage him to do this, without the least disguise, he bound himself to observe inviolable secrecy. ‘So far,’ replied Xavier, ‘from obliging you to silence, I will inform you of nothing, unless you promise to publish every where what I shall tell you.’ —The brahmin having made this promise, he began to instruct him, by explaining the words of Jesus Christ:— ‘he who believeth and is baptized shall be saved.’ He shewed him that baptism was necessary for salvation, and explained all the articles of faith. He placed the truth of the gospel in so clear a light, that the brahmin promised to become a Christian, provided he might be one in secret, and be dispensed with certain duties of Christianity. So imperfect a disposition rendered him unworthy of the grace of baptism, and he remained unconverted. He asked, however, for a copy of the apostles’ creed, as also of our Saviour’s words, which Xavier had expounded to him. The brahmin afterwards saw him, and told him that he had had a dream, in which he appeared to receive baptism, and to accompany Xavier in preaching the gospel, But this dream had no effect. The brahmin would never undertake to teach the people that there was only one God, creator of the world. To excuse himself he alleged his fear, that if he broke the oath which bound him to secrecy, the devil would kill him.”<sup>52</sup>

## **Popes and Apostate Antipopes**

### *Church Father Pope St. Eutychianus (3rd century)*

SOA, Chapter 2, Section 4, p. 82: “Eutychianus, who became Pope in 275 A.D., says in the course of a pastoral charge to the Roman clergy: ‘See that you teach your flocks the Symbol and the Lord’s Prayer.’”<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Migne, tom. 65, col. 822.

<sup>52</sup> *The Life of St. Francis Xavier*, by Fr. Dominic Bohours, S.J. Translated from French by a Catholic Clergyman. Imprimatur: + Francis Patrick Kenrick, Bp. Arath, and Coadjutor of the Bishop of Philadelphia, Feb. 9, 1841. Published by Eugene Cummiskey, Philadelphia, USA, 1841.

<sup>53</sup> Footnote 7: “*Exhort. Ad Presby.*; Migne, tom. 5, col. 166.”

## *Church Father Pope St. Leo the Great (5th century)*

Pope St. Leo the Great, Sermon 24, c. 6: “‘If any one preach to you any thing beside that which you have learnt, let him be anathema:’ refuse to put wicked fables before the clearest truth, and what you may happen to read or hear contrary to the rule of the Catholic and Apostolic Creed, judge it altogether deadly and diabolical.”

Pope St. Leo the Great, Sermon 62, c. 2: “II. The Creed takes up St. Peter’s confession as the fundamental doctrine of the Church. In that rule of Faith, dearly-beloved, which we have received in the very beginning of the Creed, on the authority of apostolic teaching, we acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we call the only Son of God the Father Almighty, to be also born of the Virgin Mary by the Holy Ghost. Nor do we reject His Majesty when we express our belief in His crucifixion, death, and resurrection on the third day.”

SOA, Chapter 1, Section 2: “The last-named [St. Leo the Great] calls the Creed the ‘Catholic and Apostolic Symbol,’<sup>54</sup> speaks of it as the Rule of Faith ‘which has come down to us with the authority of apostolic institution’<sup>55</sup> and puts those who ‘contradict the Symbol instituted by the holy Apostles’ in the same category with men who deny the doctrine of the Incarnation.<sup>56</sup>”

Pope St. Leo the Great, Letter 124, to Monks of Palestine, c. 8: “...What strange craftiness of the Deceiver has shown itself that...forgetting the Symbol of salvation which you recited before many witnesses when you received baptism you should give yourselves up to the Devil’s deceits.”

Pope St. Leo the Great, To Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, c. 1: “What instruction has he [the heretic Eutyches] got from the sacred pages of the New Testament and the Old, when he does not understand even the elements of the Symbol? Of the Symbol which is on the lips of all candidates for baptism throughout the whole world, the old man had not yet grasped the meaning.” (Migne, tom. 54, col. 757)

Pope St. Leo the Great, Letter 31 to Pulcheria Augusta: “For the question is not about some small portion of our Faith on which no very distinct declaration has been made: but the foolish opposition that is raised ventures to impugn that which our LORD desired no one of either sex in the Church to be ignorant of. For the short but complete confession of the Catholic Creed which contains the twelve sentences of the twelve apostles is so well furnished with the heavenly panoply, that all the opinions of heretics can receive their death-blow from that one weapon.”

## *Apostate Antipope Benedict XIV*

Apostate Antipope Benedict XIV, *Ubi Primum*, 1740: “3 ...[Clerics] should teach those things which the faithful must know for their salvation and explain the main principles of divine law and Catholic dogma. They should also teach the children the basics of that same faith...”

Apostate Antipope Benedict XIV, *Cum Religiosi*, 1754: “1. We could not rejoice, however, when it was subsequently reported to Us that in the course of religious instruction preparatory to Confession and Holy Communion, it was very often found that these people were ignorant of the mysteries of the faith, even those matters which must be known by necessity of means; consequently they were ineligible to partake of the Sacraments... 4. See to it that every minister performs carefully the measures laid down by the holy Council of

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<sup>54</sup> Footnote 2: “Serm. 24, c. 6 (Migne, tom. 54).”

<sup>55</sup> Footnote 3: “Serm. 62, c. 2.”

<sup>56</sup> Footnote 4: “Serm. 96, c. 1.”



Trent...that confessors should perform this part of their duty whenever anyone stands at their tribunal who does not know what he must by necessity of means know to be saved...”

### *Apostate Antipope Pius X*

Apostate Antipope Pius X, *Acerbo Nimis*, 1905: “We are forced to agree with those who hold that the chief cause of the present indifference and, as it were, infirmity of soul, and the serious evils that result from it, is to be found above all in ignorance of things divine. And so, Our Predecessor Benedict XIV had just cause to write: ‘We declare that a great number of those who are condemned to eternal punishment suffer that everlasting calamity because of ignorance of those mysteries of faith which must be known and believed in order to be numbered among the elect.’”

Apostate Antipope Pius X, *Acts of the Supreme Pontiff Pius X*: “We pray and conjure you to reflect on the ruin of souls which is wrought by this single cause: ignorance of those most sublime truths, so far beyond the natural understanding of the multitude, which must nonetheless be known by all men alike in order that they may attain eternal salvation. ...A man who had become blind is certain to walk into the mouth of danger. There is always some hope for the reform of evil living so long as the light of Faith is not wholly extinguished; whereas, if, as a result of ignorance, lack of Faith is added to corruption, the situation scarcely admits of remedy, and the road to eternal ruin lies open. This we solemnly affirm: the majority of those who are condemned to eternal punishment fall into this everlasting misfortune through ignorance of Mysteries of the Faith which must necessarily be known and believed by all who belong to the elect.”<sup>57</sup>

### **Canon Law**

*1917 Code of Canon Law*: “Canon 1347. In the sacred sermons should be explained above all the things which the faithful must believe and do to save their souls.”

### **Holy Office**

*A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law*, by Rev. P. Chas. Augustine, O.S.B., D.D., 1920, Commentary on Canon 752: “Adults who are physically and mentally normal cannot be baptized except with their own knowledge and free will and after having been duly instructed and exhorted to be sorry for their sins. This law is based upon the necessity of cooperation in the work of salvation.<sup>58</sup> The Popes have frequently admonished missionaries to instruct candidates before Baptism, if need be by native ministers, and not to admit anyone to this Sacrament unless he were well instructed and imbued with Christian manners.<sup>59</sup> This rule applies to all, including negroes and other infidels who are capable of embracing the Christian religion. No one is to be baptized or abandoned after Baptism has been administered before he knows the truths necessary for salvation.<sup>60</sup> Old people whose memory is failing may be baptized if they give assurance of their belief and profess it.<sup>61</sup> Savages and nomads may be baptized if their mode of life does not conflict with religion or morality.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>57</sup> cf. Acts of the Supreme Pontiff Pius X, Rome: Vatican Press, 1904, Pius X; CFN, Feb. 1998, p. 8.

<sup>58</sup> Footnote 32: “*Trid.*, sess. 6, *de justif.*, c. 6; sess. 14, *de poenit.*, c. 1.”

<sup>59</sup> Footnote 33: “Alexander VII, ‘*Sacrosancti*,’ Jan. 18, 1658; Clement IX, ‘*In excelsa*,’ Sept. 13, 1669; Clement XII, ‘*Compertum*,’ Aug. 24, 1734; ‘*Concredita Nobis*,’ May 13, 1739; Benedict XIV, ‘*Omnium sollicitudinum*,’ Sept. 12, 1744; S. C. P. F., Sept. 12, 1645 (*Coll.*, nn. 129, 187, 347, 114).”

<sup>60</sup> Footnote 34: “S. O., March 20, 1686 (*Coll.*, n. 230).”

<sup>61</sup> Footnote 35: “S. O., March 8, 1770, n. 2 (*Coll.*, n. 477).”

<sup>62</sup> Footnote 36: “S. O., Sept. 18, 1850 (*Coll.*, n. 1050).”

Deaf-mutes may be baptized if they give some signs of religious knowledge.<sup>63</sup> Now-a-days there are adequate means of instructing these unfortunates, and conclusive methods of ascertaining a person's religious training. Concerning the extent of this instruction, the Roman Ritual<sup>64</sup> demands that neophytes 'be carefully instructed in the Christian faith and holy manners.' By Christian faith are to be understood the principal mysteries, i.e., those which must be believed *necessitate medi*, viz.: the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation. Express belief in our Lord Jesus Christ is specifically mentioned in one decision of the Holy Office.<sup>65</sup> The Apostles' Creed, which is enjoined in an Instruction of the S. C. Prop. Fide,<sup>66</sup> contains the principal mysteries of the faith."<sup>67</sup>

## Catechism of Trent

One of the basic dogmas is that the Holy Spirit is God, the Third Divine Person of the Most Holy Trinity. The Catechism of Trent teaches that all Catholics must know and believe in this basic dogma with no excuse for ignorance:

*The Catechism of Trent*, Creed, Art. VIII, I Believe in the Holy Spirit, Importance of this Article: "Hitherto we have expounded, as far as the nature of the subject seemed to require, what pertains to the First and Second Persons of the Holy Trinity. It now remains to explain what the Creed contains with regard to the Third Person, the Holy Spirit. On this subject the pastor should omit nothing that study and industry can effect; for on this Article, no less than on those that preceded, ignorance or error would be unpardonable in a Christian. Hence, the Apostle did not permit some among the Ephesians to remain in ignorance with regard to the Person of the Holy Spirit. Having asked if they had received the Holy Spirit, and having received for answer that they did not so much as know that there was a Holy Spirit, he at once demanded: In whom, therefore, were you baptised? to signify that a distinct knowledge of this Article is most necessary to the faithful."

Therefore, a baptized so-called Catholic who does not know or believe the basic dogma that the Holy Spirit is God is not in the way of salvation and thus is on the road to hell.

## Must believe by necessity of means or by necessity of precept

Hence basic dogmas must be known and believed as a necessity of means for salvation, whereas deeper dogmas must be believed as a necessity of precept. Therefore when the Catholic Church infallibly teaches that deeper dogmas, such as the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, must be believed under pain of heresy, it is directed to Catholics who know or should know about the deeper dogmas and not to Catholics who are inculpably ignorant of them. However, this is not true regarding basic dogmas. One condition for all baptized men to be in the way of salvation is that they must know and believe all the basic dogmas with no excuse for inculpable ignorance, which is why basic dogmas must be believed as a necessity of means.

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<sup>63</sup> Footnote 37: "S. O., Dec. 11, 1850 (*Coll.*, n. 1054)."

<sup>64</sup> Footnote 38: "Tit. II, c. 3, n. I."

<sup>65</sup> Footnote 39: "S. O., May 10, 1703, ad 2; Jan. 25, 1703 (*Coll.*, nn. 256, 254)."

<sup>66</sup> Footnote 40: "Oct. 18, 1883 (*Coll.*, n. 1606, n. XVII)."

<sup>67</sup> *A Commentary on the New Code of Canon Law* [hereafter CCL], by Rev. P. Chas. Augustine, O.S.B., D.D. *Nihil Obstat*: Sti. Ludovici, die 18 Nov. 1920, F. G. Holweck, *Censor Librorum*. Imprimatur: Sti. Ludovici, die 22 Nov. 1920, + Joannes J. Glennon, Archiepiscopus, Sti. Ludovici. Published by B. Herder Book Co., 1921. Bk III, vol. IV, Pt. 1, Title 1, Chap. 2, Baptism of Adults, pp. 57-58.

## **What deadly sin are so-called Catholics guilty of who do not know or believe all the basic dogmas**

It is an ordinary magisterium dogma that no one can be in the way of salvation unless he knows and believes all the basic dogmas. Hence it is a dogma that so-called Catholics with the use of reason who do not know or believe all the basic dogmas are not in the way of salvation. Therefore, they must be guilty of some deadly sin. But what kind of deadly sin they are guilty of is disputed. It is my opinion that they are guilty of the mortal sin of heresy and hence are formal heretics until they know and believe all the basic dogmas. For an in-depth explanation, see RJMI book *Heresy and Heretics*: Baptized men who do not know or believe all the basic dogmas are formal heretics.



## Complete List of All the Basic Dogmas as a Profession of Faith

1. I believe that all of the basic supernatural dogmas are contained in the baptism ritual and are as follows: 1) The dogma that men must keep all of God's commandments to be saved; 2) the dogmas contained in the Apostles' Creed, which includes the dogma of the Incarnation; 3) the dogmas that relate to the Apostles' Creed, which includes the dogma of the redemption; 4) the dogmas in the Lord's Prayer; 5) the dogma that all the unbaptized are children of Satan; 6) the dogma of the Most Holy Trinity, contained in the form of baptism; and 7) the dogma that the sacrament of baptism when worthily received remits sins and makes men members of the Catholic Church.
2. I believe in the basic dogma of the Most Holy Trinity, which states that there is one God in three Divine Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Even though each of the three Divine Persons is God, there is only one God.
3. I believe in the basic dogma of the Incarnation, which states that God the Son, Jesus Christ, became man in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of God the Holy Spirit. Hence, from the instant of the Incarnation Jesus Christ is both God and man and thus has two natures, the uncreated nature of God from all eternity and the created nature of man from the Blessed Virgin Mary. And even though Jesus has two natures, He is one Divine Person.
4. I believe in the basic dogma of the redemption, which states that Jesus Christ suffered and died to redeem us from our sins and hell. Hence Jesus' death remits the sins of all those who become Catholic and gives eternal life to all those who die as good Catholics.
5. I believe in the basic dogmas of the Apostles' Creed, which state that "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only 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. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen."
6. I believe that the basic dogmas directly related to the Apostles' Creed are as follows: 1) the redemption; 2) the Most Holy Trinity is the one and only true God and hence all other gods are false; 3) the Catholic Church, faith, and religion are the one and only true Church, faith, and religion and hence all other Churches, faiths, and religions are false; 4) men must believe in the Catholic faith and enter the Catholic Church by baptism and obey all of God's commandments in order to be saved, which is known as the Salvation Dogma. Hence all men who died worshipping a false god or practicing a false religion or no religion or adhering to a non-Catholic sect or a non-Catholic church or unbaptized are not saved and thus are eternally damned to hell; 5) Catholics are forbidden to be in any kind of religious communion with pagans, infidels, heretics, and schismatics; 6) the Catholic Church alone has the authority to teach and to teach infallibly the one and only true faith, the Catholic faith; 7) the Catholic Church has a hierarchy of rulers with one man, the pope, who rules all Catholics; and 8) Catholics are obliged to profess the Catholic faith when necessary.
7. I believe that natural laws are basic dogmas because they are written in the hearts of all men. One of the natural laws enables men to detect and reject all false religions and false gods.

RJMI Comment: Point 6 is known by implication and Point 7 by the natural law. Even if a catechumen in danger of death did not take Points 6 and 7, he would still be bound to them by common sense and implication or by the natural law. Point 6 is known by implication just as the minor additions to the recent Apostles' Creed were known and believed in the original Apostles' Creed by implication. (See in this book [The original form of the Apostles' Creed \(the Old Roman Creed\) and the recent form of the Apostles' Creed](#), p. 12.) The reason Point 6 should be mandatory in these days is because of the prevalent heresies (such as syncretism, religious liberty, religious indifferentism, and the salvation heresy) that have been taught by all the modern so-called Catholic theologians. Surely, if a man is ultimately of good will, God will never let him die until he knows and believes all of the basic dogmas as listed on one page. Certainly God can let a man live long enough to read a whole book or one million books or an infinite number of books—let alone one page! Hence if a potential convert dies before you finish reading all the basic dogmas to him, that is a sure sign from God that he is ultimately of bad will and is eternally damned to hell.