

Sermon  
31<sup>st</sup> May 2026  
Trinity Sunday  
Sermon Series #6

*We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of all our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, our strength, and our redeemer.

As you know by now we are considering the words of the Nicene Creed as part of a sermon series. We started with an introduction to the Creed, we have heard about one God, being Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This week we turn to the final part of the Nicene Creed. We are considering our belief in “one holy catholic and apostolic Church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.”

So, the Church, Baptism, Resurrection and Eternal Life. Or in theological terms:

- Ecclesiology – The study of the Church;
- Soteriology – The study of salvation and
- Eschatology – The study of death, judgement, and the final destiny of the soul and of humankind or the study of the end times.

It is fair to say that the council of Nicea and Constantinople certainly packed a lot in this last sentence, so real chunky issues for us to wrestle with.

I have therefore made the executive decision to concentrate on the first part of the sentence for this sermon. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. It is easiest to start at the end of this statement, and consider the word Church Or in Welsh – Eglwys. Church comes from the Greek word – *Kyrikon* (Kirk in Scots) which means ‘belonging to the Lord’. Whereas the Welsh word Eglwys comes from the Greek - *Ecclesia* being an assembly of people who are called out or chosen. The church is an assembly of people who are called to belong to God. We read in 1 Peter 2:9 “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”.

This same Peter is he unto whom Jesus says in Matthew 16 “and I say you are Peter (Petros) and upon this rock (petra) will I build my Church (ecclesia). So the Church not only belongs to God but is built by God. God wills his church into being.

But the Church is also a communion, a togetherness, as we read in Romans 12 “so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”. Paul in Ephesians 1 takes it further “he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”. Again in Ephesians 2 “In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the spirit”.

The church being an assembly of God’s chosen people called by God and who belong to God, called to be a communion together, in one body, one body that is Christ’s body. Christ’s body here on earth.

As the famous poem reminds us – Christ has no hands but our hands. The Church is Christ’s hands, Christ’s feet, Christ’s mouth, eyes, ears, shoulders and so on. As a body we have things to do. Things to do set by God.

- In Matthew 5 “You are the light of the world ... let your light shine before humanity. - The Church is a beacon shining out – showing the way.
- In 2 Corinthians 5 “in Christ God was ... entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.’ – The Church is a herald calling out the message of salvation for all.
- Matthew 28 ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.’ To be a witness of God’s love, to bring people to know and receive that love, to follow God.
- in Phil 2:5 ‘Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who... emptied himself, taking the form of a slave’ – The church exists to serve, to serve both God and others.

So in doing these things the Church is itself sacramental not a sacrament itself but like a sacrament – a visible sign of invisible grace – a sure witness and sign of God’s effectual grace in which he works within the Church, itself ordained or instituted by Christ.

But the creed does not just say ‘ We believe in the Church’ It describes the four marks of the Church as; One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. The four marks are not desirables or aspirational, but what describe the essential features of the church, of what the church is. Her divine origin, mission and unity in Christ.

One church, God’s church, those who profess the creed are members of the one church irrespective of our denomination. One Church, One Faith, One Lord as there is one Christ there is one body the church; as St Paul writes ‘There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called;

one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.’. One united Church.

We believe that not only is the church one but it is Holy. Holy because as we heard earlier the Church is God’s church instituted or ordained by Christ, set apart for service and worship of God.

We believe that the church is catholic (catholic with a small c) the church is universal, global; as we heard the words of our Lord before ‘Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,...

The church is Apostolic. The church traces its origin back to the Apostles. Remember the words that Jesus said to Peter: “on this rock will I build my church”. You will also remember that last week we celebrated the feast of Pentecost, when the Apostles inspired and filled with the Holy Spirit proclaimed the Gospel at the temple and began to speak in other languages, and everyone present ‘heard them speaking in the native language of each’. An nNot only does the church trace its origins to the Apostles but so do the leaders of the Church – the Bishops - each Bishop being consecrated by Bishops before them tracing their consecration from the Apostles. Showing the unity and continuity of the church’s teaching, its traditions, its preaching, and its receipt and demonstrating of God’s love and Grace to all his people.

So, in conclusion we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church called into being by God to be reconciled to God to undertake his mission and to ministry throughout the world to his people. One holy catholic and apostolic Church called to preach and live the Gospel, to receive and minister the sacraments and to be sacramental in doing so.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.