

What Eastern Catholics Believe

It is a mystery and a fact that God is with us. People have contemplated this fact and have tried to explain it. From these reflections, doctrines of the Church have been developed. Below are the core teachings of the Church:



- ❖ We cannot know God. He is beyond our understanding. We can only assume that God is the most excellent perfection of everything we know to be holy, good and beautiful. He is and remains a mystery.
- ❖ God has revealed Himself to us. We catch glimpses of Him in the beauty of creation, in the faces of people which are created in His image. God has also directly communicated to us in Divine Revelation.
- ❖ Revelations and signs of God's love for us find their zenith in the coming of Jesus. The life, death and resurrection of our Lord are the highest expression of God's revelation to us. In Christ we see God as a lover of mankind; we see a triumphant Lord, trampling Death, and we see a King of glory, fully alive and in union with the Father.
- ❖ At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came down upon the Church and is here with us to the present day. The Spirit is the power of God working among us.
- ❖ God has reached out to us and revealed Himself to us as Father, Son and Spirit. God is one and yet three at the same time. He is one in essence and being, one in activity and power, but three in person. God is a communion of love. We are called to share that love.
- ❖ The Church is Christ's body, the extension of His physical presence here on earth. The Church is the Temple of God wherein the Spirit lives. As members of the Church, we are part of Christ's body, joined with Him to the Trinity. We are the living stones that make up God's temple.
- ❖ The Spirit enlivens us through the holy mysteries or sacraments. Mystery is a prayer in which we ask that a natural situation be transformed into one full of God's grace. For example,

invoking the Holy Spirit over bread and wine enables us to achieve a physical union with Christ in the Eucharist.

The 7 mysteries are as follows:

- Baptism
- Chrismation (Confirmation)
- Eucharist
- Reconciliation (Confession)
- Holy Matrimony
- Holy Orders
- Anointing of the Sick

- ❖ Through the mysteries and other prayers every aspect of our lives can be transformed, set apart as a means of praise to the One God who shares life with us.
- ❖ God has made it possible for us to share in His divine nature. This process, called theosis, starts at baptism. When we live a faithful life, this process deepens and progresses – a divinization occurs. This continues until the resurrection on the last day!
- ❖ In our Rite, we constantly remember the Theotokos, or the Mother of God. We truly believe that Jesus whom she bore was God Incarnate, living on earth as a true man. We also believe that because of her “yes” to Gabriel’s message, the process of theosis was opened to us and was realized in her person.
- ❖ We have been created to experience God’s self revelation and to share in His very nature. This we proclaim at baptism and in the Nicene – Constantinopolitan Creed. This is the heart of our faith; it is our glory and joy!



The Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father. Light from light, true God from true God, begotten, not made one in being with the Father. Through Him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation He came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate; He suffered, died and was buried. On the third day He rose again in fulfillment of the scriptures;

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life, Who proceeds from the Father (and the Son). With the Father and the Son He is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

For a comprehensive explanation of the Beliefs and Faith of the Ukrainian Catholic Church see: Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church: Christ Our Pascha – Part One: THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH pages 13-114 at <http://catechism.royaldoors.net/catechism/>