

For the next 4 weeks we're going to keep thinking about the Church, but from a different angle. In our services we say the Nicene Creed when we are preparing to take Communion. In that we say that we believe in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. What does that mean? We're taking each of those key words that describe the Church, and exploring them in our Services and Sunday Groups.

The word Creed is taken from the Latin word 'Credo', which means 'I believe'. The Creed marks out the boundaries of what the Church believes. This is the core of what it means to be a Christian, and to be a Christian Church, so it's worth understanding what it means. We spend a whole term at DTP exploring this as a foundation of life and faith.

Maybe you could print it out and decorate it... and put it on the fridge. These are all things that all Christians have agreed that the Bible teaches. Maybe you could memorise it? (The Apostles' Creed is shorter than the Nicene Creed)

Read Ephesians 4:1-16.

To speak of the Church as 'One' is to say we believe that all Christians who have ever lived are joined together in Christ and are united with one another. In the Bible we can see that God wants Christians to be able to express and experience that unity ...that togetherness.

There are all kinds of ways we can illustrate this. An airfix model? lego? ...anything where a 'whole' is comprised of many bits. Or a great image from the Bible is a loaf of bread. Why not bake one, and then look at I Cor.10:17. Think about our communion service where we all eat bits of bread taken from one loaf! what a great picture of our belonging together.

And here is this week's Catechism Q&A (To Be a Christian Q&A 96):

In what sense is the Church 'one'?

The Church is one because all its members form the Body of Christ, having 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all' (Eph.4:5-6). The Church is called to embody this unity in all relationships between believers

Pause for thought:

Have think about what kind of things causes Christians to fall out? Why do Christians start so many different Churches? do you think this is something God is pleased with?

In our passage Paul gives us some tools to help us keep the unity of the Spirit. He tells us to be humble, patient, gentle, loving. How do these help us to stay united?



And if you want to take this a step further:

Communion isn't the only thing that keeps us together. Everything about our faith works for our unity. We have ONE baptism, ONE Lord, ONE faith. We share in ONE Holy Spirit. And we worship the ONE God who is Father of us all! We are all growing to be like Jesus. A fun way to illustrate this is to draw a circle and put some dots around the edge of the circle. As the dots move towards the centre, they also get closer to each other! (OK – maybe fun was a strong word!!). As we all grow towards Jesus, we grow towards each other!

