

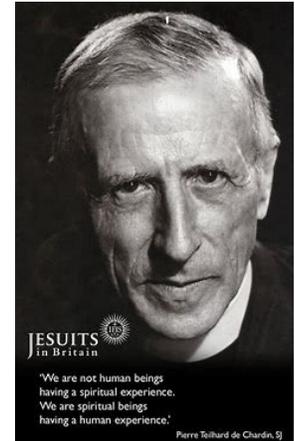
Week 5: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin/Credo

"He who carries God in his heart bears heaven with him wherever he goes"

-St. Ignatius of Loyola

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

- (1881-1955) A Jesuit priest, a mystic, and a scientist, Teilhard lived a Christian life infused with science and a scientist life infused with Christ. While many of his contemporaries tried to separate the experience of God from the knowledge of science, he viewed the two as something inseparable and inextricably linked to each other.
- *"There is a communion with God, and a communion with the earth, and a communion with God through the earth."* -Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
- Pierre was the fourth of eleven children born to wealthy parents of distinguished lineage. Pierre's mother was the great-grandniece of Voltaire. The family estate rested amid forested volcanic peaks and were formative in his perspective of the earth and creation.
- From a young age Teilhard was deeply sensitive to the temporary existence of life and of all earthly things. He longed for the discovery of something everlasting and clung to both his father's love of natural science and his mother's piety.
- *"The earth's crust has not yet stopped heaving and plunging under our feet. Mountain ranges are still being thrust up on the horizon. Granites are still growing under the continental masses. Nor has the organic world ceased to produce new buds at the tips of its countless branches."*-Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
- Teilhard was a scholastic Jesuit and spent his early years as a Jesuit teaching natural science in Cairo. He spent much time studying plant life and collecting fossils, some of which were presented to the Geological Society of France. During his time in Cairo, Teilhard grieved the death of his sister Françoise, who worked as a nun among the poor in China.
- While living in Cairo, Teilhard was introduced to both Bergman's idea of Evolution and to a paleontologist, Charles Dawson. Both meetings started a spark in him that expanded his thinking beyond permanence and impermanence to an unfolding of a divine universe, or a God-centered evolution.
- *"Today, something is happening to the whole structure of human consciousness. A fresh kind of life is starting. Driven by the forces of love, the fragments of the world are seeking each other, so that the world may come into being."* -Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
- Both Teilhard's scientific studies and his tertianship were postponed due to the outbreak of World War I. For four years, Teilhard served as a stretcher bearer through some of the bloodiest battles in the war. During this time he wrote letters to his cousin, Marguerite, which were later compiled into the book *The Making of a Mind*.
- *"I don't know what sort of monument the country will later put up on Froideterre Hill to commemorate the great battle. There's only one that would be appropriate: a great figure of Christ. Only the image of the crucified can sum up, express, and relieve all the horror, and beauty, all the hope and deep mystery in such an avalanche of conflict and sorrows. As I looked at this scene of bitter toil, I felt completely overcome by the thought that I had the honor of standing at one of the two or three spots on which, at this very moment, the whole life of the universe surges and ebbs places of pain but it is there that a great future (this I believe more and more) is taking shape."* - Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (*The Making of a Mind*)



- By the time Teilhard professed his final vows, the church was adamantly against any talk of Evolution. Teilhard’s teaching soon became too controversial, and although his writings were well received by some in the spiritual world, they were banned by the Pope. His writing and teaching both became very controversial.
- By 1928 the church suggested that Teilhard continue only his scientific studies and leave his theological studies. They believed that there was no space for common ground between the two worlds. Teilhard returned to a self-imposed exile in China where he continued his work as a scientist and remained a Jesuit priest. He was part of the team that discovered and developed understanding of the “Peking Man”.
- After World War II, Teilhard returned to France, but the Pope still refused to allow publication of any of his writings. It was too controversial for Teilhard to remain in France, and after World War II living in China was no longer an option, so Teilhard accepted a post teaching in New York where he lived with the Jesuit fathers at St. Ignatius church.
- Teilhard died on Easter Sunday in 1955, and was buried sixty miles upstate New York at what was then the Jesuit novitiate.
- After Teilhard’s death, his work has been both acknowledged and respected by the Catholic Church. Pope John Paul II, Pope Benedict, and Pope Francis all praised Teilhard’s philosophy that the God of creation is indeed wholly present in our world today, and that the “natural” and “supernatural” are indeed One.
- *“Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.”*
—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
- Prayer of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin:

*Above all, trust in the slow work of God.
We are quite naturally impatient in everything
to reach the end without delay.
We should like to skip the intermediate stages.
We are impatient of being on the way to something
unknown, something new.
And yet it is the law of all progress
that it is made by passing through
some stages of instability—
and that it may take a very long time.*

*And so I think it is with you;
your ideas mature gradually—let them grow,
let them shape themselves, without undue haste.
Don’t try to force them on,
as though you could be today what time
(that is to say, grace and circumstances
acting on your own good will)
will make of you tomorrow.*

*Only God could say what this new spirit
gradually forming within you will be.
Give Our Lord the benefit of believing
that his hand is leading you,
and accept the anxiety of feeling yourself
in suspense and incomplete.*

Reflective Questions:

Consider the creed: our expression of faith in God the Creator, God the Savior, and God the Present. Consider also how deeply that God permeates the world in which we live. What names for God arise in you? How does this contemplation shape your experience of your relationship with God? How would you describe your relationship with God?

On this Christ the King Sunday, how do you feel called to follow Christ, to accompany Christ, to be the body of Christ? Do one of these callings resonate more deeply with you? Do any of these callings repel or scare you?

“Now these three things remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.” – I Corinthians 13:13
The creed in the mass is often referred to as our profession of faith. How does our expression of faith in the creed relate to your experience of faith? How does your experience of faith relate to your experience of hope and love?

Credo in unum Deum, Patrem omnipotentem,

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty,
factorem cæli et terræ, visibilium omnium et invisibilium.

maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

Et in unum Dominum, Jesum Christum,

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
Filium Dei unigenitum, et ex Patre natum ante omnia sæcula.

the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages.

Deum de Deo, Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero,

God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
genitum non factum, consubstantialem Patri;

begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
per quem omnia facta sunt.

through him all things were made.

Qui propter nos homines et propter nostram salutem descendit de cælis.

For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,
Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est.

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.

Crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato passus, et sepultus est,

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried,
et resurrexit tertia die, secundum Scripturas,

and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.
et ascendit in cælum, sedet ad dexteram Patris.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Et iterum venturus est cum gloria, iudicare vivos et mortuos,

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
cuius regni non erit finis;

and his kingdom will have no end.

Et in Spiritum Sanctum, Dominum et vivificantem,

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit.

who proceeds from the Father and the Son,

Qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur:

who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
qui locutus est per prophetas.

who has spoken through the prophets.

Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.

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

Confiteor unum baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.

I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins

Et exspecto resurrectionem mortuorum,

and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead

et vitam venturi sæculi. Amen.

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The longest text in the Mass, the Credo was the last to be added, by Pope Benedict VIII in 1014.

The present form of the Creed is based on that which was approved by the Council of Nicea in 325, later appearing in the Eucharistic liturgy in Constantinople in the early 6th century, in Spain by the Council of Toledo in 589, and under Charlemagne in France circa 796, where it was sung between the Gospel and the Offertory. At the insistence of the German Emperor, Henry II, it was introduced into the Roman rite in 1014.

Its larger, three-part format of A (*Patrem*), B (*Filium*) and C (*Spiritum Sanctum*) mirror its Trinitarian construction, as well as harkening back to the three sections of the Kyrie. Its initial use, as part of the baptismal rite, featured a separate confession to each Person of the Holy Trinity; thus, it can seem unsuitable for congregational recitation.