

Why can't I memorize the Nicene Creed?

The Roman Catholic Church updated the translation of the Nicene Creed in 2011 and still I have failed to memorize it.

During Sunday morning Masses at my parish of St. Leo the Great in Baltimore's Little Italy, when it's time to declare our Catholic beliefs, I reach for the 'cheat sheet.' Just when I am convinced on a Sunday I can say the prayer without reading it, I muddle it and the former words spill from my mouth.

Why??? Why can't I memorize the Nicene Creed after all this time? The changes aren't long or significant - a word or phrase here and there. C'mon, Suzanne, get it right already! It is not "He was born of the Virgin Mary" ... it is "He became incarnate of the Virgin Mary."

I suppose the former version has been truly embedded into my brain after my eight years of Catholic school attendance and then saying the prayer hundreds of times in adulthood. Those Catholic nuns were good - because for some reason, my brain cells have yet to allow me to forget!

On the Sundays when our pastor, Pallottine Father Bernie Carman, asks us in question form what we believe as Catholics, I'm off the hook. We don't have to recite anything - we simply respond heartily with "I do!" I like when he does this - it's different - and Father Bernie seems to truly and soulfully feel the words.

I don't know if some day I won't need the Creed cheat sheet, yet I am grateful it's available in St. Leo's pews. By the condition of its tattered corners, clearly I'm not the only Catholic around who has failed to memorize the newer version.

So ... what do we believe as Catholics?

Recite after me please: ... *We believe in one God ... one Lord Jesus Christ ... the Holy Spirit ... one holy, Catholic and apostolic Church ... and one Baptism.*

And *I believe* one day I will memorize the Nicene Creed correctly – hopefully before the Catholic Church should ever change it again.