

Forty-Days Of Lent

The Nicene Creed Of the Christian Church

By Father Zaven Arzoumanian, PhD.

Note: It is essential during Lent to be mindful of the content of the Nicene Creed of the Christian Church as the foundation of our true knowledge of True God. This is a reminder to our faithful to learn more about the Creed as they offer their weekly prayers through the forty-day period of Lent.

What is the Creed?

The Creed is the written statement of the beliefs of Christ's Church as her rules. Without the Creed confusion will cloud the teachings of the One Church of Christ. There we proclaim our faith regarding the doctrine of the Holy Trinity through the Three Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Creed proclaims also the nature of the Church as to what are her attributes, since the Church is fundamentally different from all other organizations known to us. The Creed summarizes all of these and the Church invites the faithful to recite it daily in its entirety with full knowledge and conviction.

Who has compiled the Creed?

The Creed is not compiled by one person. It is edited by the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea, a city near Constantinople, in 325 AD, where they compiled and finalized the most essential doctrines of the Church in a united effort. The Council of Nicea made the content of the Creed final, proclaiming the "necessary" and the "sufficient" items of doctrine, leaving no room for further items of faith to be added or deleted. The next two Ecumenical Councils of the Church, those of Constantinople in 381 AD, and of Ephesus in 431 AD, confirmed the Creed as it was compiled in Nicea. The Creed has become the foundation of the Church ever since.

Why do we call it Havadamk?

The opening word of the Creed is a verb, havadamk, meaning "We believe", in the plural and not in the singular. It is a declaration of OUR faith as a United Church of Christ and is followed immediately by the items of the Creed one by one, which we believe as our Christian faith. The following are those items of doctrine derived from the Holy Bible.

"We believe in One God"

We believe in One God who is the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth and of all beings. The emphasis is first on ONE God in whom we believe, and not more than one; and secondly, in God Almighty whose Creation speaks for Himself.

"And in One Lord Jesus Christ"

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is also ONE, being born of God the Father as His only begotten SON. We believe that the Son is equally God with the Father who, bearing the same nature, is "God from God, and Light from Light" who, coming down from heaven for our salvation, was born of Mary as a man through the Holy Spirit. He lived a perfectly human life, was tortured and crucified, was dead on the Cross, was buried, and was raised from his grave on the third day. He then was lifted up and sat on the right side of the Father in heaven.

"And in the Holy Spirit"

We believe in the Holy Spirit who is "unmade", meaning "not created", unlike the heaven and the earth. He is the Spirit of God at the Creation who gave power and wisdom to the Prophets and the Apostles to speak on behalf of God. The Holy Spirit came down in the river Jordan when Jesus was being baptized by John the Baptist.

"One Catholic, Apostolic, and Holy Church"

We believe in One Church belonging to all. There can be no church other than the one founded by Christ through the activation of the Holy Spirit. That One Church is also Catholic, meaning "universal", the Church that belongs to all, and not only to selected races or nations. The Church is Holy, meaning spotless and distinguished from any and all organizations known to us. The Church is also Apostolic, meaning that Christ and his Word was preached directly by the Apostles of Christ themselves, and not by the preaching of their successors. Those four qualifications are called the attributes of Christ's Church.

"Baptism, Repentance, Second Coming"

We believe in Baptism by water and by the Holy Spirit as a second birth like Jesus Christ who voluntarily went to river Jordan to be baptized by John. While being baptized, the Holy Spirit came down upon Jesus, and the Father spoke from behind the clouds confirming Jesus to be His Beloved Son. The Church administers Baptism as the foremost act of God, considering it the "door" to enter into full communion with Christ and Christianity. Repentance is the only way to clean oneself from his/her sinful actions, and return to Church as a worthy follower of Christ. We believe also in the Second Coming of Christ the Lord as promised by him and as instructed by him "to be ready always", not knowing its time nor the manner of his appearance.

"Resurrection of the Dead and the Last Judgment"

Believing in Christ's Resurrection, we believe also in the resurrection of all who have fallen asleep in the name of Jesus Christ as promised by him. We believe because of the words of Christ saying, "I came to give you life, and life in abundance". We believe in the Last Judgment on the last day, based on the quality of the lives lived by Christians. Those who lived after Christ and his Gospel, they will be judged accordingly. We also believe in the Kingdom of Heaven and in Life Everlasting.

The Nicene Creed is Final

The Nicene Creed has been the final Confession of Faith since its compilation in 325 AD. It was confirmed by the next two Ecumenical Councils as the final statement of faith of the Universal Church for all times and for all churches. The Creed resisted against all controversies, divisions, and misinterpretations, staying firm on its original foundations as the Creed of Faith of all Eastern and Western Churches since the first Three Ecumenical Councils.

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New Publication

Giants of the Earth by Mitch Kehetian

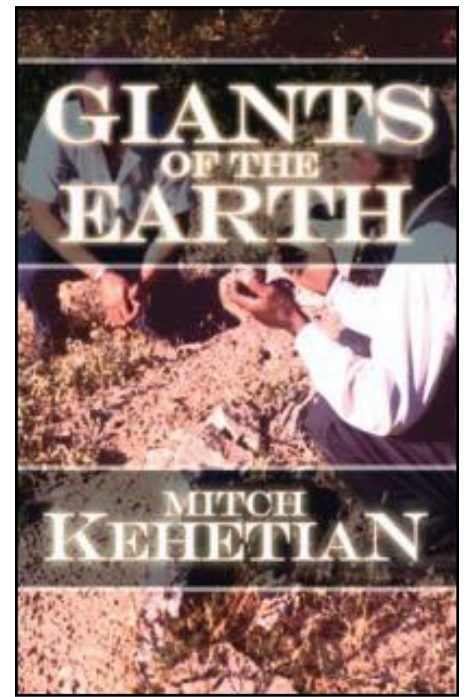
Mitch Kehetian's *Giants of the Earth* is a memoir about the search for his father's sister and heritage in historical Turkish-held Armenia. The veteran journalist also shares snapshots on Armenia's history, from its very existence 2,000 years ago to the devastation it suffered during the genocide of 1915-23.

The author's dramatic memoir comes to life in Moscow when an Armenian woman from his father's village in Turkish-held Armenia tells him that her brothers saw "Parancim" in 1947 before they repatriated to then Soviet Armenia. With the help of Congressman Lucien Nedzi and Secretary of State William Rogers, Kehetian was able to fulfill his mission to the barren, depopulated homeland of his ancestors in Turkish-held Armenia, a mission which ended with a prayer at his aunt's mountaintop gravesite overlooking the Euphrates River.

Kehetian wrote the book "newspaper style," not in scholarly prose. "Giants of the Earth" is not targeted at first generation Armenian-Americans who know the homeland's history well, or the second generation who earned their heritage through word of mouth. The author's audience, he hopes, will be the third generation.

"I want that third generation to know what really happened," he said, "and I want them to understand why the Armenians still seek justice."

"Actually, the 13 chapters were written in the 1970s and early '80s. And then I just let it sit. I figured I'd present it some day to my grandchild-



dren as a memoir," Kehetian said.

Mitch Kehetian is a native of Detroit, where he lunched his newspaper career in 1953 at the Detroit Times. In 1961 he was a reporter for the Columbus Citizen Journal and until his retirement in 2005 was an editor of The Macomb Daily. Kehetian was president of the Detroit Press Club and Society of Professional Journalists. He served for 13 years as a governing board trustee at Central Michigan University. In 2006 Wayne State University's Journalism Department honored him with its coveted "Lifetime Achievement Award" for "championing the public's right to know" for more than 50 years.

Giants of the Earth is published by www.PublishAmerica.com

Lincy Foundation Grants \$110,000 to Keyan School

FRESNO/CLOVIS -- The Board of Directors of the Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School proudly announces the award of an \$110,000 grant from the Lincy Foundation.

"I shouted with joy when I opened the envelope from the foundation. We thank God for the Lincy Foundation, its benefactors, executives, and all who placed such confidence in us. Bless each," said CKACS Principal Sophie Mekhitarian.

Funds from the grant will be applied to the school's various expenses and provide scholarships to needy students. A portion of the donation also will be used to purchase computer-based or interactive whiteboards for the elementary school classes. These teaching devices essentially represent the 21st century ver-

sion of the chalkboard or overhead projector. They bring to life words and images and have been found to stimulate thought and teacher-student interaction at the primary school level.

"Studies show overall improvements in participation by students and considerable grade improvements as they grow in understanding of the material because it's so interactive. This generation is so savvy with electronics that it's easy for them to follow material presented with direct involvement," commented Mekhitarian.

Last year, the school received a special grant for the development of a playground. Thanks to Lincy Foundation funds, CKACS student now enjoy a large grassy area for field sports, two full basketball courts, and numerous other recreational opportunities.

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