

Twelfth Day of Christmas, 1/5 – Drummers drumming



Scripture: At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” At once the Spirit sent him out into the wilderness, and he was in the wilderness forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. **Mark 1:9-13**

Twelve drummers drumming refers to the Apostle’s Creed. I didn’t see this one coming either! This creed was recognized as early as 390. When you consider what information the church had at that time and the debates that raged about the significance of Jesus, I am astonished at its clarity as a declaration of faith.

Many of us have memorized this creed. But I have never broken it down into its 12 elements. I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

In the Mark passage above, we see all three persons of the trinity. It's one of the few places in the Bible where all appear at the same time. Part of our journey of faith is wanting to embrace the trinity and do the work God has for us. There is a cadence to our lives. We have a basic understanding of God as creator, Jesus as suffering servant, and the mysterious Holy Spirit. And when we are unsure, we go back to the drumbeat in our hearts. This creed is one of the ways that we pick up the rhythm of faith. It's not the only creed. And it would be worth putting this creed into our own words to fully absorb it. But when all is said and done, we keep coming back to the most important refrain: that Jesus is our savior, our true love, a Partridge in a Pear tree.