

Year of Faith
Liturgical Minute No. 27
Consubstantial – Just the Right Word

When we voice our Profession of Faith – our Creed – we profess our faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. When we proclaim our faith that God the Father, and God the Son...are One God, we use the word “consubstantial,” pronounced **kon-suh’b-stan-shuh’l**.

While careful thought must be given to its pronunciation, this is a good thing, because careful thought must also be given to its meaning. This word was chosen by prayerful theologians and bishops who studied the ancient languages of the Church, and they determined that the word consubstantial was the most accurate word to describe the relationship between Jesus and the Father, a relationship that is immensely important.

Therefore, when the early Church councils forged a vocabulary that carefully expressed orthodox faith, they chose this word to express the dogma of Jesus’ divinity of “having one and the same identical substance” – “God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father.”

Footnote: In Latin, the prefix “con” means “together,” or “commingle.” The root word “substanti” means “substance” or “essence.” And the suffix “ālis” means “all” in the sense of having the [same] form or character of that named by the stem or root word.

Deacon Gary Nelson

See also: <http://home.catholicweb.com/covingtonmessenger/index.cfm/NewsItem?ID=317816>