

Creation and Humanity



Catholicism 101 (RCIA)

2011-12

God the Creator

“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen” (Nicene Creed)

- Visible
 - All corporal and material beings
 - The visible universe
 - Humanity
- Invisible
 - The angelic world



The Angels

- Incorporeal personal beings
 - Purely spiritual and invisible
 - Immortal
 - Intellect and will
- Angels are also referred to as “Intelligences” as their intellectual capacity far surpasses the human mind
- Do to their intelligence and power angels had only one irrevocable choice for or against God
 - The good angels now serve God and are his messengers in the work of salvation, e.g. Gabriel at the Annunciation and guardian angels
 - The fallen angels were created good but freely and permanently rejected God and were cast into hell



Annunciation

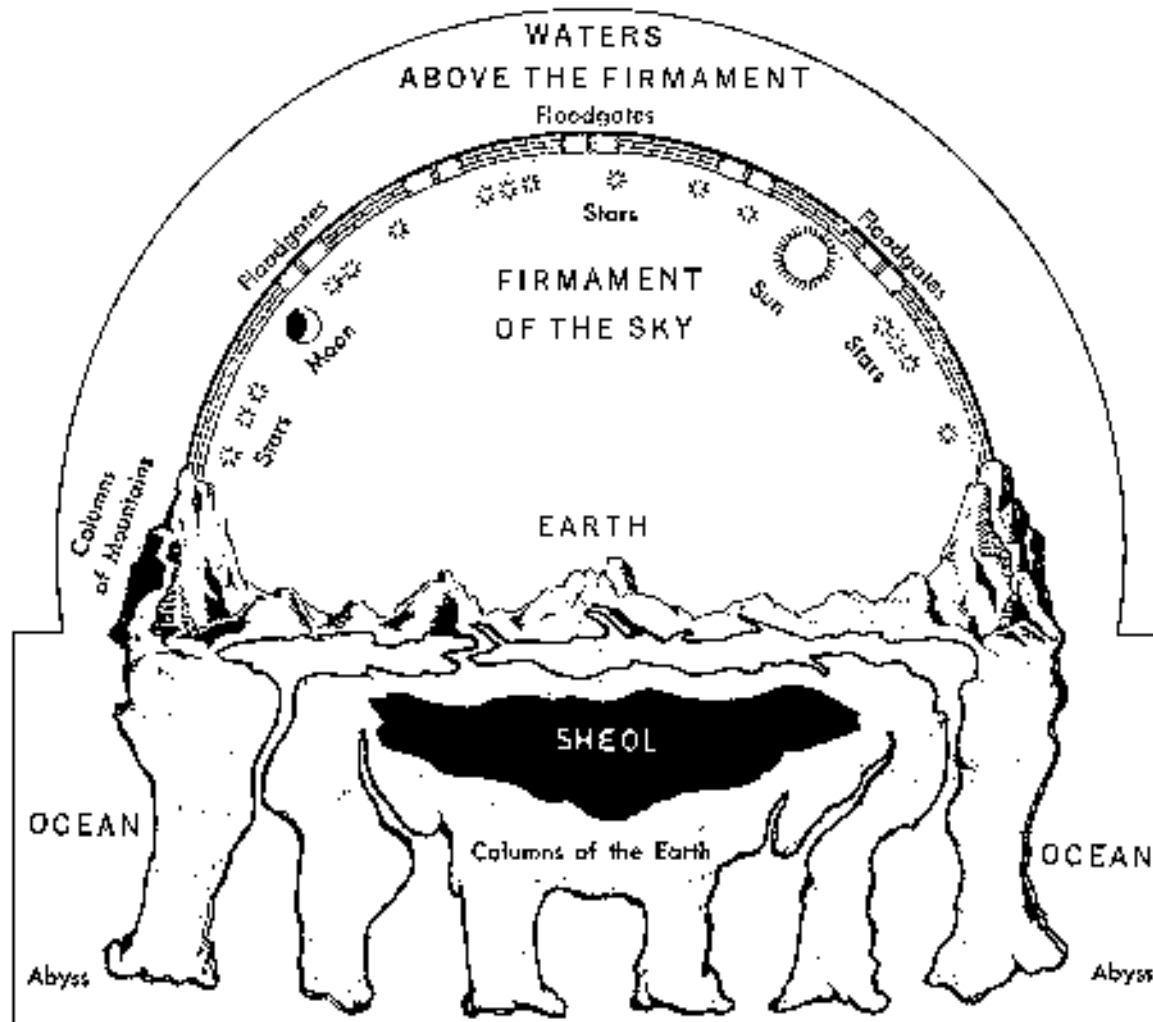
Guardian Angels

- From conception to death every human has the watchful care and intercession of his or her guardian angel
 - Pray for us
 - Enlighten our minds
 - Strengthen our wills
 - Inspire us to away from evil toward good
- Scripture and the Saints
 - "See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." (Mt 18:10)
 - "Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life" – St. Basil the Great (d. 379)
 - "When tempted, invoke you angel. He is more eager to help you then you are to be helped!" St. John Bosco (d. 1888)



1st Account of Creation

Heavenly Seat of the Divinity



The World of the Hebrews

Orderly Creation

- **Day 1:** created day and night (*time*)
- **Day 2:** created Sky and sea (*space*)
- **Day 3:** created land and vegetation (*life*)
 - On the first three days God creates the **context** in which his creatures will live
- **Day 4:** created the sun, moon, and stars
- **Day 5:** created birds of the air sea creatures
- **Day 6:** created animals and man
 - On the last three days God creates the **inhabitants and rulers** for each realm he created
- **Day 7:** God created the Sabbath (*rest*)
 - Is a **covenant with creation**

The link within the six days is a literary device for remembering and understanding

Teachings of the 1st Creation Account

- There is only one God
 - No other creature or heavenly body is divine as many in the ancient world believed
- God is the creator of all
 - There is no sub-creator as many Greeks believed
- God created all with his word and without effort or necessity
 - “And God said...and it was so”
 - God created freely out of his own generosity
 - God created things “out of nothing”

Teachings of the 1st Creation Account

- All things created by God are good
 - Each day (except the 2nd day) God pronounces his creation good
- Humanity is the summit of God's creation
 - "...it was good...it was **very** good"
 - Creation is meant to serve humanity
 - Man is a steward of Creation
- There is a profound order and wisdom in creation
 - First three days & last three days
- Answers the fundamental question of our origin
 - Not disordered chaos, not meaningless chance, but divine and good

Image of God—Gen 1:27


- God ^A created ^B man ^C in his ^D image
- In the ^D divine image ^A he ^B created ^C him
-  Male ^A and female ^B he ^C created ^D them
 - This kind of repetition is a Semitic literary device which gives emphasis and understanding
 - Male and female together are in God's image

Image of God

- **God**

1. *God knows all truth and is truth*
2. *God is all loving and love itself*
3. *God is a communion of persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*
4. *God is the creator of all things visible and invisible*
5. *God's providence guides the universe in every particle*

- **Man**

1. ***Intellect*** – *can know the truth*
2. ***Will*** – *can love*
3. ***Entering into Communion*** – *can have relationships*
4. ***Co-creator with God*** – *can become parents*
5. ***Steward of creation*** – *can cultivate the worlds resources*



Purpose of Creation

- The world was created for the glory of God who wished to show and communicate himself through creation
- **Glorify of God** – manifestation of divine attributes
 - Goodness
 - Truth
 - Beauty
 - Eternal
- “The glory of God is man fully alive; moreover man’s life is the vision of God.” – St. Irenaeus
 - The human person fully alive reflects God’s glory more than all creation
 - We were created to know, love, and serve God

Creation and Evolution

- There is no innate contradiction between creation and evolution
 - If one acknowledges God as the source and the guiding principle of all things
 - This even applies to the human species so long as one holds that the soul is immediately created by God
- St. Gregory of Nyssa (d. 395) and St. Augustine (d. 430) both introduced the idea of a dynamic universe
 - ‘*Seminal energy*’ – there was an initial seed/germ of all things that developed toward the natural order planned by God
- In fact the Big Bang theory was proposed by Monsignor Lemaître who was a Catholic priest, physicist and astronomer

2nd Account of Creation



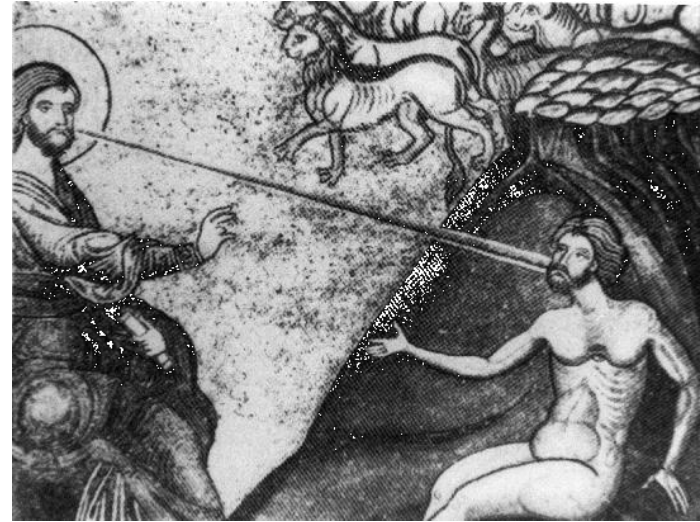
Unity of the Human Race

- “...the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground” (Gen 2:7)
 - Humble origin
 - Despite individual, racial, or national pride we are all one people
- All peoples are part of the unity of the human family
 - All people have a common origin in God
 - All nations descent from our first parents (cf. acts 17:26)



The Body and Soul

- “God...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being” (Gen 2:8)
- The human person is at once bodily and spiritual
 - Soul and body form one human nature
 - We are not souls trapped in bodies
 - Nor are we simply material and biological beings
- **Soul** – first principle of natural life
 - The soul is the source of animation and life for the body
 - The spiritual soul includes our intellect and will
 - The soul is immortal and continues to exist after one’s death



Man and Woman

- Equal in dignity
 - “bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh” (Gen 2:23)
 - Men and women are equally human persons
- Reciprocal complementarity
 - “A man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife” (Gen 2:24)
 - Man and woman form a communion of persons
 - Each different and unique
 - God has willed them one “for” the other
- Marital unity
 - “one flesh” (Gen 2:24)
 - They are called to transmit life by forming in intimate “one flesh” union



Original Holiness

- Original holiness & justice
 - Shared God's divine life
 - Integrity of body and soul
 - Immortality (no death)
 - Impassibility (no suffering)
- Four harmonies
 - God with man
 - man within himself
 - man with woman
 - man and creation
- **Eden** – the garden of paradise where Adam and Eve first lived



The Fall

- **Tree of the knowledge of good and evil** – symbolic boundary of God's moral law
 - To eat of it would be to say "I" determine good and evil not God
- **The First Sin**
 - Deception of the Devil
 - Distrust of God
 - Disobedience
- **Dynamic of Shame**
 - Hid from God - "Where are you?"
 - Adam blamed God and Eve
 - Eve blamed the serpent
- **Punishment**
 - Adam and Eve lost for themselves and their descendents the original grace of holiness
 - Toilsome work and labor pains



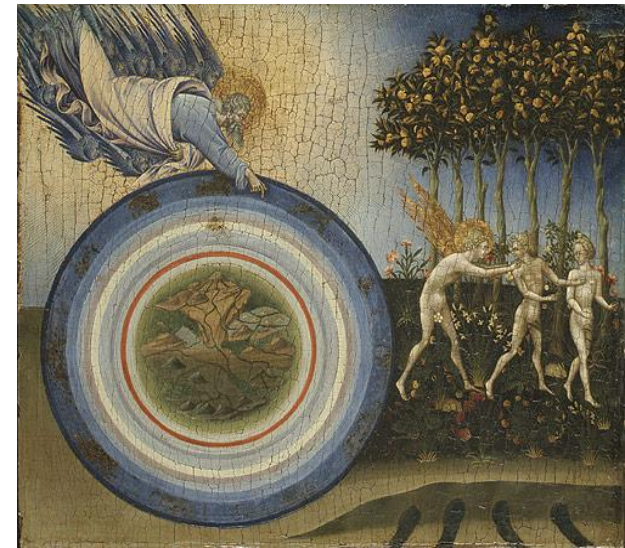
Original Sin

- Original Sin
 - State of being deprived of original innocence, holiness, and justice
- Effects of Original Sin
 - Ignorance
 - Suffering
 - Death
 - **Concupiscence** – inclination toward sin
- We are wounded in our natural powers but not totally corrupt



Original Sin

- All human beings are born with Original Sin
 - It is “contracted” by us not “committed” by us
 - Transmitted to the descendants of Adam not by imitation but by propagation
 - It is a state of birth and not a personal sin
- Lost Inheritance
 - If one’s parents are very wealthy their children would inherit that wealth
 - wealth = *Original Holiness*
 - But if at any time one’s parents squandered their wealth their children likewise would have no inheritance
 - lack of inheritance = *Original Sin*



Protoevangelium

- “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall crush your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15)
- **Protoevangelium** = First Gospel
- Mysteriously foretells God’s plan of salvation
 - The woman: Mary
 - Her seed: Jesus
 - Crush/bruise: victory over evil
 - Through Redemption God brings a greater good than even before the fall

