

## Creed Part Two: God's Plan for Creation, Mystery of Evil and Sin

**Genesis 1:1-2** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. God created the heavens and the earth means that God created everything.

CCC 279-281 God created everything, seen and unseen. Everything was created except God Himself. From all eternity, God foresaw the new creation that would come about through His Son. The first creation is integrally tied to the new creation through Christ.

CCC 282-What is this life all about? When we don't know what this life is all about, why we are here, this is an identity crisis. The catechesis on creation is the answer to that.

CCC 290-The first three chapters of Genesis provide the background on the catechesis on creation. The Hebrew word that's used in Genesis, Bara [Hebrew Bara] (creating something out of nothing), never has a subject other than God. God allows us as mothers and fathers to enter into His

creation. We act in cooperation with God in begetting children, not as the Bara, but as cooperators in God's plan of creation. The love that's shared between the two spouses is so great, that in nine months, it might be given its own name.

CCC 293-294 Everything is created for the glory of God. Everything is sustained by the glory of God. If you think you can go on without God, hold your breath. You will eventually need to take a breath. Without God, you couldn't have taken that next breath. He provides us with everything we need for life.



God created everything out of nothing. Believing that, I have no problem believing that God can be truly and substantially present in the Blessed Eucharist, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity. I have no problem believing that Mary can be created sinless and be bodily present in heaven with her Son. If I believe that God can create everything out of nothing, I surely can believe that God can create something out of something.

### The Mystery of Creation CCC 295 - 301

1. God creates out of Wisdom and Love – St. Augustine, “Our hearts are restless, O Lord, until they rest in thee.” The human mind and heart cannot truly rest until it rests in the one who is Goodness Itself. God has placed that goodness in us and we must act on that goodness for us to truly have peace. The answer to world peace is in the one Word, the eternal Word, Jesus the Christ. God created us out of love – not because He needed us.
2. God creates out of nothing – See the discussion on Bara above.
3. God creates an ordered and good world – All is created good and is created so for us to use in an ordered purpose. Cocaine is a powerful drug and is used in delicate eye operations, but it can be abused. If you look at every plant and drug, it can be used for an ordered purpose. Once we use them in a disordered way, we step out of God's providence and will get ourselves into trouble.
4. God transcends creation and is present to it.
5. God upholds and sustains creation.

## **God carries out His plan: Divine Providence CCC 302-314**

Divine Providence – CCC 303 – is both concrete (real or present to us) and immediate (not some future thing, but it is now). God has absolute sovereignty over us. Jesus: **Revelation 3:7** – “Who opens and no one will shut, who shuts and no one will open.” **Proverbs 19:21** – “Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established.”

CCC 305 – Childlike Abandonment to our Heavenly Father’s Providence will allow us to be truly free. We must abandon ourselves to God’s Providence, but we must be prudent. We must do

our part and leave God’s part to God. [story of man trapped in a flood and a raft, canoe, boat and helicopter all come to save him]

**Matthew 6:31-33** – “Do not be anxious . . . seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.”

God has it handled. There are a million things that can drive you nuts, don’t let them. Leave the past to God’s mercy. Leave the future to God’s providence. Live in the present. It’s God’s present to us, that’s why it’s called the present.

## **Providence and Secondary Causes CCC 306-308**

CCC 308 – Gaudium et Spes #36 “Drawn from nothingness by God’s power, wisdom and goodness, the created being can do nothing if it is cut off from its origin, for without a creator a creature vanishes. Still less can a creature attain, its ultimate end without the help of Gods’ grace.”

## **Providence and the Scandal of Evil CCC 309-314**

St. Augustine, “Enchiridion” *“For Almighty God . . ., because he is supremely good, would never allow any evil whatsoever to exist in his works if he were not so all-powerful and good as to cause good to emerge from evil itself.”*

If God is so good and so loving, how can he allow evil to exist? If God is goodness itself, if he is a Father who cares about his children, why is there so much suffering? Why do bad things happen to good people. The answer is in the catechesis of creation and the mystery of redemption.

Sooner or later, in one way or another, we all will be touched by pain, suffering and ultimately death. The question isn’t why do I have to suffer, the question should be how can I glorify God in these present circumstances. If you need guidance as to how to glorify God in suffering, look at a crucifix. There suspended between heaven and earth is True God and True Man.

There you will find the answer to every pained suffering, to every tragedy. Why does God allow evil, so that a greater good may come from it. The cross is the absolute and ultimate answer to the question of why suffering. The greatest evil to ever happen, **Deicide**, the putting to death of God, brought about the greatest gift to mankind, redemption.

Why do you and I suffer, so that you and I can abandon ourselves to divine providence and become saints? God was lifted up to make possible the redemption of all men. God said where I am, there my servant will be. That’s why we must be lifted up through, with and in Him to draw all men to the Father’s house. Everything you suffer, can if you will it, have redemptive value.

St. Augustine, “With physical good there exists also physical evil as long as creation has not reached perfection.”

## **Angels - CCC 328-330**

Some say that Angels are just a literary device used to communicate truth. That’s false teaching. The existence of angels are a doctrine of the Church that must be held with divine faith by the faithful.

Angels are real, spiritual essences (not physical beings) that are a truth of the faith. They are real individuals. They have free will and intellect.

CCC 329 – Saint Augustine tells us that Angel (means messenger) is the name of their office,

not of their nature. Like all creation, they are created good.

CCC 331 – Christ is the center of the angelic world, they are His angels. **Mt 25:31; Colossians 1:16** – They belong to him because they were created through and for him.

CCC 332-333 – Tells what angels have done throughout history from beginning to end.

Angels have been present since creation and throughout the history of salvation, announcing this salvation from afar or near and serving the accomplishment of the divine plan: they closed the earthly paradise; protected Lot; saved Hagar and her child; stayed Abraham's hand; communicated the law by their ministry; led the People of God; announced births and callings;

and assisted the prophets, just to cite a few examples. Finally, the angel Gabriel announced the birth of the Precursor and that of Jesus himself. From the Incarnation to the Ascension, the life of the Word incarnate is surrounded by the adoration and service of angels. When God "brings the firstborn into the world, he says: 'Let all God's angels worship him.'" Their song of praise at the birth of Christ has not ceased resounding in the Church's praise: "Glory to God in the highest!" They protect Jesus in his infancy, serve him in the desert, strengthen him in his agony in the garden, when he could have been saved by them from the hands of his enemies as Israel had been. Again, it is the angels who "evangelize" by proclaiming the Good News of Christ's Incarnation and Resurrection. They will be present at Christ's return, which they will announce, to serve at his judgment.

### **Guardian Angels**

Guardian Angels protect us and get us to the Father's house. For a more through teaching on the Angels, look up Thomas Aquinas teaching on Separated Substances. (Aquinas, Thomas – Truth – Question 18 Article 5

[http://books.google.com/books?id=6KpjHMdZD7YC&pg=PA365&lpg=PA365&dq=aquinas+separated+substances&source=web&ots=6wJ\\_zW--r8&sig=rxU3mtirxXFjFL0nIoaJHZkAIY](http://books.google.com/books?id=6KpjHMdZD7YC&pg=PA365&lpg=PA365&dq=aquinas+separated+substances&source=web&ots=6wJ_zW--r8&sig=rxU3mtirxXFjFL0nIoaJHZkAIY) )

CCC 336 – From its beginning until death, human life is surrounded by their watchful care and intercession. "Beside each believer stands an angel as protector and shepherd leading him to life." Already here on earth the Christian life shares by faith in the blessed company of angels and men united in God. Cross references in Scripture: **Matthew 18:10; Luke 16:22; Psalm 34:7; Psalm 91:10-13; Job 33:23-24; Zechariah 1:12; Tobit 12:12**

### **The Visible World CCC 337-349.**

Humans are God's only visible creation that has the ability to know Him, love Him and serve Him. Remember that angels are pure spirit and aren't included in this distinction.

### **In the Image of God CCC 356-361**

CCC 356 – Of all visible creators only man is "able to know and love his creator." He is "the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake," and he alone is called to share, by knowledge and love, in God's own life.

CCC 358 – God created everything for man, but man in turn was created to serve and love God and to offer all creation back to him.

### **Body and Soul but truly one CCC 362-368**

The person is an integrity (ontic unit), not the sum of distinct parts. The soul is everywhere in the body. The body and soul constitute a oneness.

All living creatures have souls, but not equal souls. For more information, read St Thomas Aquinas teaching on the three types of souls. The *vegetative* soul (which plants have) consists

of the functions of nutrition and reproduction. The *sensitive* soul (which animals have) consists of nutrition, reproduction, perception and reaction. The *rational* soul (which only humans have) consists of nutrition, reproduction, perception, reaction and reason. Each living creature only has one soul and that one soul is one of these three.

## Male and Female he created them CCC 369-379

Equal in dignity, however equality is not sameness: physically, emotionally, and spiritually. These differences run soul deep and thanks be to God. We are created differently to compliment each other.

## The Reality of Sin

CCC 386 Sin is present in human history; any attempt to ignore it or to give this dark reality other names would be futile. To try to understand what sin is, one must first recognize the profound relation of man to God. Only in this relationship, is the evil of sin unmasked in its true identity as humanity's rejection of God and opposition to him, even as it continues to weigh heavy on human life and history

## The Fall: Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more.

CCC 390 The account of the fall in Genesis 3 uses figurative language, but affirms a primeval event, a deed that took place at the beginning of the history of man. Revelation gives us the certainty of faith that the whole of human history is marked by the original fault freely committed by our first parents.

CCC 387 With the progress of Revelation, the reality of sin is also illuminated. Although to some extent the People of God in the Old

Testament had tried to understand the pathos of the human condition in the light of the history of the fall narrated in Genesis, they could not grasp this story's ultimate meaning, which is revealed only in the light of the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. We must know Christ as the source of grace in order to know Adam as the source of sin. The Spirit - Paraclete, sent by the risen Christ, came to "convict the world concerning sin," by revealing him who is its Redeemer

## Original Sin CCC 388-390

1<sup>st</sup> set of parents disobeyed God – the original sin – pride and disobedience and this results in death and transcends from generation to generation. We do not commit Original Sin, but inherit it.

## Fall of the Angels CCC 391-395

Satan and all other demons are angels that were created good by God. The fall of the angels began when they abused their intellect and free will and rebelled against God. This choice happened once and is irreversible. New angels aren't still falling away from God nor are they able to repent and be restored to God.

This fall has given rise to the existence of hell. The demons try and recruit humans in their revolt and rejection of God, however, God has wrought a sure victory in Christ over the Evil One.

## Christian angelic hierarchy

### **First Sphere (Old Testament sources)**

Seraphim

Cherubim

Ophanim (Thrones/Wheels)

### **Second Sphere (New Testament sources)**

Thrones (Gr. *thronos*)

Dominions (Gr. *kuriotes*)

Principalities (Gr. *arche*)

### **Third Sphere**

Powers (Gr. *exousia*)

Archangels

Angels

The Assumption of the Virgin by Francesco Botticini at the National Gallery London, shows three hierarchies and nine orders of angels, each with different characteristics.

