

Lesson 1: Knowing God through Creation and Lesson 3: Creation

Key Words:

revelation: What God has told us about Himself and about His purpose for us (the word of God).
gift of faith: The free gift that God gives to us so that we might believe in Jesus and his Gospel. Without this gift we would never be able to know what is necessary for salvation.

mystery: A truth that our limited human minds will never be able to understand fully (e.g. the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Resurrection of Jesus, the Holy Eucharist).

Catholic Faith: The religion which began with Christ and the Twelve Apostles almost two thousand years ago. It is the one true faith for it comes to us from God himself, who became man and taught us the true way of worshiping and believing. The special sign of the Catholic faith is the members' obedience to the Pope.

human reason: The power human beings have by which we are able to think and grow in our understanding of the truth. Human reason can help us to learn many things about God, but it cannot tell us everything there is to know about Him.

Trinity: The name that expresses our belief in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christians profess their faith in one God, who is three different Persons (three Persons in the one God). This is a mystery that can never be fully understood by the limited human mind.

create: To make something from nothing. When God created the universe, he made it from nothing. God is all powerful and the source of all that is.

body: The physical part of man that is given life by the soul. The body is created by God, and it is thus a good and holy thing. At the end of the world, the body will rise from the dead and be reunited with the soul.

soul: The invisible or spiritual part of man. The soul gives life to the human body. It is immortal and will live on after death in heaven, purgatory, or hell. At the end of the world, the soul will be reunited with the body at the resurrection of the dead.

immortal: To be free from death. The soul of every human being is immortal, that is, it will never die. When death comes to the body, the soul lives on in heaven, purgatory, or hell.

angels: Intelligent persons who are pure spirits that do not have physical bodies. Angels possess greater intelligence and power than human beings, but they too were created to worship and serve God.

We can come to know that there is a God, who created the wonderful world in which we live, by using the reasoning powers of our minds. This is true even for those who do not have the gift of faith. Everywhere in the universe we find order and design. Order and design are sure signs of God's hand in creation – a proof that God does exist.

God shares with us his beauty, his power, and his glory in the wonderful world which he created. The entire universe came into existence simply because God wanted it to exist! God did not use any materials to create the world, rather God had only to say, "Let there be light", and there was light (Gen 1:3).

The story of creation teaches us that:

1. There is only one God and he is the Creator of all that exists
2. God created the world in an orderly way and as a way of sharing his love with man\
3. Everything created by God is good

When we look at the differences between us and the animals, however, we soon see that we are greater. We have control over our actions and are able to decide or choose what we will do.

This freedom shows us that we are very different from the rest of the animal world; we have a spiritual part of us that can think, choose, and decide. We call this spiritual part the soul. Thus human beings have a physical body and spiritual (invisible but real) soul.

The soul has two spiritual powers that make us very much like our Creator: the intellect and the will.

By the power of **the intellect** we are able to think, reason, and know right from wrong. **The will** allows us to choose freely what we shall do or say or think; it gives us the ability to love or to hate, to do good or to sin.

Both the body and the soul are important to man, otherwise God would not have created them. God commands that we respect and take care of both of these gifts which he has given us.

To know more about the mysteries of human life and God, we need the help of God, who gives us the gift of faith. This gift is the firm belief that something is true because God has revealed it to be so - and the sure knowledge that God cannot deceive us. Faith can also mean the set of truths we believe as Catholics.

Before the creation of mankind, God first created pure spirits whom we call angels. They are intelligent persons like us but they do not have physical bodies as we do. Angels possess greater intelligence and power than human beings, but they too were created to worship and serve God. Some of them, led by Lucifer (known as Satan or Devil), refused to serve the Lord; they rebelled against him. So God created Hell, where those who do not want to be with him are sent. We call

these disobedient spirits fallen angels or demons. They try to turn all creation away from God, for they do not want God's creatures to serve him.

The faithful or good angels were led by Michael the Archangel and assist us in living holy Christian lives so that we will serve God on earth and come to live with him in Heaven when we die. God has assigned a good angel to each one of us; this angel is called our **guardian angel** and his mission is to help us on our way to Heaven.

When God created Adam and Eve he gave them special gifts. These gifts were complete harmony and peace in their lives/ freedom from suffering, sickness, and death. But most of all GOD gave man a share in his own divine life with the gift of **sanctifying grace**. This grace made them more than his creatures: it made them his children and heirs to Heaven, where they would live with him forever! These gifts would be theirs and would be passed on to all of their descendants. All that was required of them was that they love and serve him all their lives.

God put our first parents to a test to see if they would truly love and serve him. However temptation led our first parents to sin and thus be banished from Paradise and be subject to suffering, sickness, and death. Now they no longer lived in the state of sanctifying grace. And they passed on to their descendants a human nature that was weakened because of their sin. We call this sin of Adam original sin because it was the first sin ever to be committed by man and because it is passed on from Adam, the origin of the human race. The effects of original sin were suffering sickness and death.

Even though they had sinned against him, God continue to love Adam and Eve. He wanted them and the human race that would descend them, to live in his friendship. So he promised to send us a **Redeemer**, someone who would be able to reconcile us to God and restore to our souls the life of grace.