

### CREATION & EVOLUTION

The Primeval story of creation (Genesis 1 & 2) has been the subject of great controversy within the fields of science and theology. In this 400th anniversary of Galileo's telescopic review of the moon, the Church continues to weigh in on the subject of evolution.

Since Galileo, the Church has come to recognize that the earth is not the center of the universe. However, the Church insists that the central figure of all creation is God.

When Darwin published his *Origin of the Species* in 1859, the Church - along with most of the world - was skeptical regarding the process of evolution but firm in the belief that God was the source of our human existence.

The 1st Vatican Council in 1870 declared: *"The same Holy mother Church holds and teaches that God, the source and end of all things, can be known with certainty from the consideration of created things, by the natural power of human reason: ever since the creation of the world, his invisible nature has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made."*

In 1950, Pope Pius XII gave a middle of the road position on the theory of evolution:

*"The Church does not forbid that...research and discussions, on the part of men experienced in both fields, take place with regard to the doctrine of evolution, in as far as it inquires into the origin of the human body as coming from pre-existent and living matter."* (Pius XII, encyclical *Humani Generis*)

In 1996, Pope John Paul II addressed the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences with these words: *Today, more than a half-century after the appearance of that encyclical (Humani Generis), some new findings lead us toward the recognition of evolution as more than an hypothesis."*

Pope Benedict, as Cardinal Ratzinger, acknowledges a theistic evolution in his article, **In the Beginning: A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall:**

*The story of the dust of the earth and the breath of God ... does not in fact explain how human persons come to be but rather what they are. And, vice versa, the theory of evolution seeks to understand and describe biological developments. But in so doing it cannot explain where the 'project' of human persons comes from, nor their inner origin, nor their particular nature. To that extent we are faced here with two complementary -- rather than mutually exclusive -- realities.*

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, authored by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, gives us the following:

*The great interest accorded to these studies is strongly stimulated by a question of another order, which goes beyond the proper domain of the natural sciences. It is not only a question of knowing when and how the universe arose physically, or when man appeared, but rather of discovering the meaning of such an origin....*

This, ultimately, is the essence of the creation account in Genesis. It must be made clear that the Bible is not a science book. Nor is it a history book. Rather, the Bible is more of a faith book made up of many writings from many authors; all of whom were inspired by God. The primeval account of creation in Genesis does not prove how or when God created the world but points the reader to a divinely inspired truth that God is the Creator of all that is seen and unseen.

The Church continues to make sure that faith and science can remain compatible. But, God must always be made known in all of our human endeavors. This requires continued catechesis.

Bishop DiLorenzo of Richmond, chair of the Committee on Science and Human Values in a December 2004 letter sent to all U.S. bishops, wrote: *"...Catholic schools should continue teaching evolution as a scientific theory backed by convincing evidence. At the same time, Catholic parents whose children are in public schools should ensure that their children are also receiving appropriate catechesis at home and in the parish on God as Creator. Students should be able to leave their biology classes, and their courses in religious instruction, with an integrated understanding of the means God chose to make us who we are."*



*Pope Benedict XVI blessing world renowned Professor Stephen Hawking, in October, 2008 at a conference on faith and science.*

## Social Review

The entire Book of Genesis is a “wake up call” for those who read it. In the beginning, God created the world ... we didn't. From Eden to Egypt, from Adam to Jacob and his sons, God was in charge ... we aren't.

The Primeval story of Creation reveals the power of God to *create* and the power given to us to *manage* God's creation. We call this *stewardship*.

*In the Beginning*, God called us to have dominion over the world ... not to dominate it. With the fall of Adam and Eve, we begin to see that we want control over creation, society, and even our own destiny.

Clearly, despite the efforts of God to call us back through covenants, prophets, kings, and even His own Son, humanity still wants to control the world.

Stewardship must be the mission of humanity to care for the world around us. Sin dominates the world. Stewardship has dominion over the world.

Corporate greed, environmental waste, weapons of mass destruction, and political corruption, are just a few examples of domination. But, on a personal level, every sin is about domination and control.

The biggest lie in the world today is *not* that there is no sin. The biggest lie is that there is no God. No God ... no sin. Remove God from the picture and there is no direction, management, stewardship, or proper dominion over the world around us.

God kicked Adam and Eve out of the Garden. But, that was after they kicked him out of their lives. God, however, immediately sought them out and, with head bowed, they said, “We were ashamed and we hid ourselves.”

God continues to seek us out and invites all who want to be re-created through His Son to return to their proper place. The offer is still on the table to be managers of God's creation. What an awesome gift that has been restored to us in Christ! To have a hand in God's creation - to be co-creators or pro-creators - is holy.

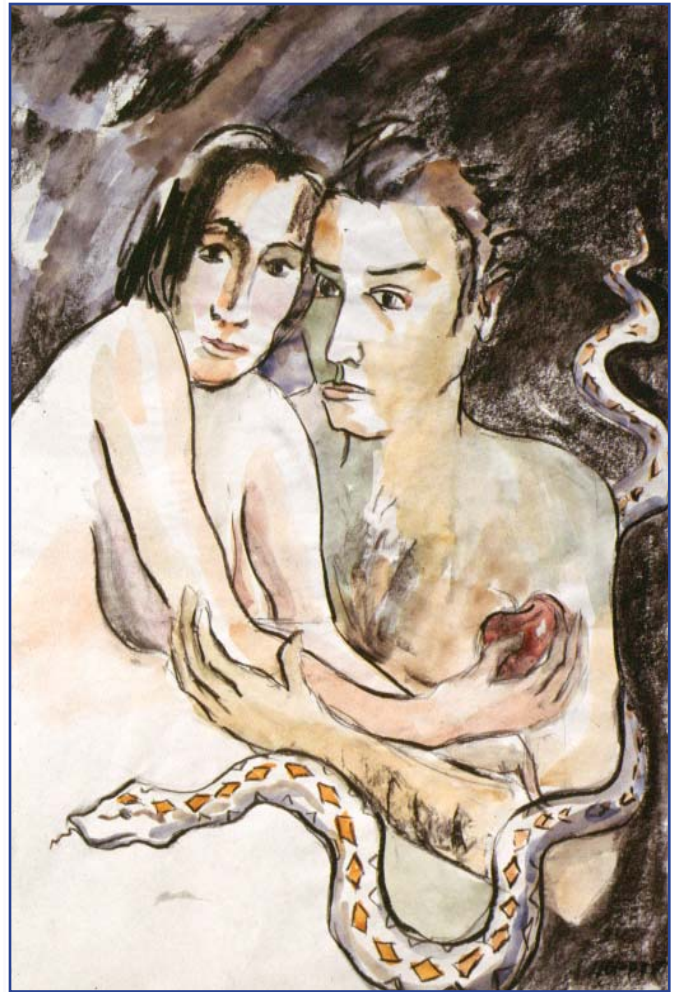
Stewardship is our call today.

It will be our calling tomorrow.

It is ...

as it was ...

***in the beginning!***



## My Review

It is easy for us to blame corporations, politicians, the media, for the way in which our world has turned out. But, as we know, “no man is an island,” and every action has an effect on our environment. Let's not forget that sin entered the world through a simple act of disobedience. “It's not a big thing ... just a piece a fruit.” How often do we hear that? How often do we say that?

From Eden to Egypt, God called humanity to a communion that requires obedience. I am not the owner of my life, my destiny, or my things. I am an obedient servant and manager of God's creation.

**How am I a good steward of all that God has given me?**

**How often have I attempted to follow my own designs rather than God's will?**

Say slowly this familiar STEWARDSHIP prayer:

**Our Father ...**