

**St. Therese Catholic Church**  
**Beauty of Creation**

Fr. Andrie  
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**Pure Spirit**

- **God:** Uncaused Cause; Ground of all Being; existence itself
- **Angels:** Created spiritual beings with intellect and will

**Physical and Spiritual**

- **Man:** Body and Soul – unites materials and spiritual worlds

**Physical**

- **Animals:** Bodies with non-subsistent souls

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**Genesis 1 - 3**

- Among all the scriptural texts about creation, the first three chapters of Genesis occupy a unique place (CCC 289).
- Learn fundamental truths of creation
  - Creation's origin and end in God
  - Its order and goodness
  - **The vocation of man**
  - The drama of sin and the hope of salvation

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**Image and Likeness**

- **Image (*tselem*):** In the ancient world, "image" was used to refer to a statue of the king that was sent to the distant corners of the kingdom where the king could not be present in person (Karris, 40). The statue "stands in place" of the king.
- Additionally, in ancient cultures the king was the embodiment of God or the point of access to God. The king was the "image" of God.
- Genesis 1:26 tears down this notion. *Everybody* is the image of God. Everybody is a "point of access" to God.
- **Icon:** Click on it, gives access to program. Human beings are point of access to God. They reflect God and make Him present.

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**The Creation of Adam**

Michelangelo – Sistine Chapel

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**Image and Likeness**

- From the Scripture:
  - **Sonship:** [Adam] became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth (Gn. 5:3)
  - **Dominion:** Let them have dominion over...(Gn. 1:26).
- From Tradition:
  - **Intellect:** Capable of self-reflection and self-awareness
  - **Free Will:** Capable of self-determination (act or not to act)
  - **Relationship:** Capacity for a personal relationship with God

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- **Dignity:** The Church's teaching that every human being (unborn, born, children, adults, seniors) whether healthy, sick, or disabled – has inherent dignity (or worth).
- A person is not something, but someone uniquely created by God – with a history, family, gifts, weaknesses, hopes, dreams, and ultimately, destined for communion with God.



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- **CCC 356:** Of all visible creatures 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. It was for this end that he was created, and this is the fundamental reason for his dignity.
- **Key:** Plants and animals are made for us – to enjoy and help us – while we are the only creature on earth made for our own sake.

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**Ecce Homo!**

- **CCC 359:** In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear.
- **Key:** Christ is the model of what it means to be a human person.
- **John 19:5:** "Behold, the man!"



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**Sixth Day: Pinnacle of Creation**

- Man is made with the beasts on the sixth day. In the Scripture, six is symbolic for imperfection.
- While man is made on the sixth day, he is made for the seventh (sabbath). He is made for worship. In all of creation, only man is capable of entering into covenant with God, to enter into God's Sabbath rest.
- **Key:** When we sin, we act like the beasts on the sixth day. We act like an animal. However, when we worship God, we act as we truly are, children of God. Do you live as if you were created on the sixth day or meant for the seventh day?

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**Dominion**


- **Subdue:** The Hebrew means "bring into subjection." Man is not given license to abuse creation but is called to harness the potential for good. He is a steward (Hahn, 19).
- Dominion must be read in light of the command to "till" and "keep" the garden of the world.
  - **Tilling:** cultivating, ploughing, or working
  - **Keeping:** caring, protecting, overseeing, and preserving
- **Mutual Responsibility:** Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for future generations (*Laudato Si*, 67).

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**Zooming In**

- **Story of heavens and earth:** Genesis 2 provides a second creation account. The story is historical in content but symbolic in description (Hahn, 20).
- **Synoptic Resumptive Technique:** The author presents the big picture (Genesis 1), then goes back and resumes by zooming in on a small part of the big picture.
- **Key:** In Genesis 1, we heard that man/woman are made in the image and likeness of God. Now, we will begin to see what it means to be made in God's image (e.g., dominion and relationship).




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### Powerful and Intimate

- **Lord God:** Instead of *Elohim* (God) as used in Genesis 1-2:4, the Hebrew is *YHWH-Elohim* (Lord God), which is a personal name of God revered by Israel.
- **Key:** The powerful and majestic Creator of Genesis 1 (*Elohim*) is the personal God (*YHWH*) who wills to be in covenant relationship with His people. Used together, Genesis teaches that the God of Israel (*YHWH*) is none other than the Creator of the universe (God) (Hahn, 20).
- In Genesis 2, we learn how the Lord God is personally invested in the creation that He brought into being.


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### God Formed Man

- **Literal translation:** "And YHWH God formed the man, soil, from the ground."
- **Wordplay:** Man (*'adam*) is formed from the ground (*'adamah*) (Hahn, 20). Thus, we have a kind of "soil man" formed from the dust or clay of the ground.
- **Note:** Given that the ground is watered by the mist from the earth, the man is formed from the red gooey clay or mud.
- **Dust:** Symbolic of human mortality. In short, the man has a special relationship to the ground. He is created from it, his job is to cultivate it (2:5, 15), and on death he returns to it (3:19) (Wehham, 59).


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### Created from the Dust of the Ground


- **Created:** We did not create ourselves and we do not rule the universe by ourselves.
- **Limited:** We are destined to return to the earth.
- **Good:** Earth is good; we are not created from negative forces (i.e., blood of demonic god).
- **One:** We are all formed from God's *one* earth. Because of its common origin, the human race forms a unity, for "from one ancestor" [God] made all nations to inhabit the whole earth" (CCC 360).

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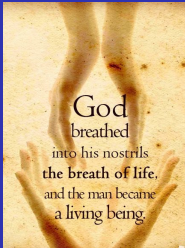
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- **Breath of Life:** The animating principle that makes man a living creature like the animals (Hahn, 20).
- This "divine inbreathing" or "spark" makes man a "living being." In verse 19, God also forms the animals from the ground. However, they do not receive the "divine inbreathing." Therefore, there is a qualitative difference between the man and the animals.
- For the Hebrews, there is LIFE (breath of life) and life (without breath of life - what animals have). After Adam eats from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he will have life, but not LIFE (breath of life).

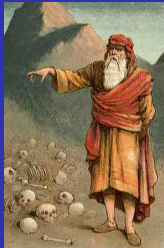
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### Breath of Life



Genesis 2:7




Ezekiel 37:10



John 20:22

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- **CCC 362:** The human person, created in the image of God, is a being at once corporeal and spiritual.
- The biblical account expresses this reality in symbolic language when it affirms that "then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. Man, whole and entire, is therefore *willed* by God.
- **CCC 365:** It is because of its spiritual soul that the body made of matter becomes a living, human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single nature.

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### Evolution

- **Humani Generis** (1950): The Church does not forbid that, in conformity with the sciences and sacred theology, 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 – for the Catholic faith obliges us to hold that souls are immediately created by God (36).
- **Key:** Research and discussions can inquire how God created the body mediately (i.e., indirectly, over time via an evolutionary process). However, the evolutionary process is excluded with regard to the soul (given that God created it immediately).

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- **St. Pope John Paul II:** With man, we find ourselves facing a different ontological order – an ontological leap, we could say.
- **Key:** Certain aspects of a human being such as self-consciousness, self-awareness, moral conscience, liberty, ascetic and religious experience, and capacity for communion are not the product of an evolutionary process.
- **Pope Benedict XVI:** The theory of evolution seeks to understand and describe biological developments. But in doing so, it cannot explain where the 'project' of human persons come from, nor their inner origin, nor their particular nature. To that extent we are faced with two complementary – rather than mutually exclusive – realities.

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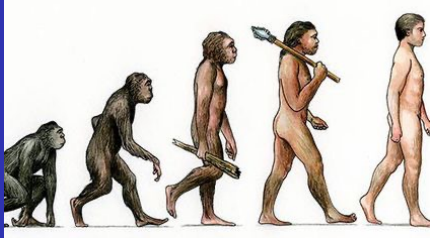
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### Catholic Position

- **Human Evolution:** Man's body could have developed from previous biological forms, under God's guidance, however, the soul was immediately created by God (CCC 366).
- **Key:** Our souls did not evolve, nor were they inherited from our parents, as our bodies are.
- **Cardinal Ratzinger:** Human beings are not the product of haphazard mistakes, but rather something willed; they are the fruit of love – "Yes Father, you willed me."

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40 million years	14 million years	2.5 million years	70,000 Years	35,000 Years
Common ancestor	Rama-pithecus	"man"	Neanderthal man	Modern man

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### Mossy Leaf-Tailed Gecko



Mossy leaf-tailed gecko in Montagne d'Ambre, Madagascar. (Photo: Giuseppe and Mary Beth Schioppa/2008/2009)


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### Two Errors

Errors	Explanation
Only God (Fundamentalism)	God is constantly and directly bringing about every effect in the world without secondary causes. In other words, creatures have no part to play in perfecting creation. This view ignores scientifically observable facts (creatures evolve over time) and worse, God would be responsible for moral evil.
Erasing God	God does not have any causal role in the universe; everything we observe has a material explanation (deism).
Catholic belief	God is the primary cause in the world through His wisdom and goodness, guides the evolutionary process (perfecting of creatures and creation) to its perfect state.


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### Complementary Disciplines

- **Biology:** Seeks to understand the how and when
- **Theology:** Seeks to understand what (nature) and why.
- Problems quickly begin when science and theology leave their areas of expertise and try to make claims about questions their disciplines cannot answer.
  - Science cannot answer the questions such as "What is man's nature" (body/soul) or "why does man exist?"
  - Theology leaves the questions of how animals and man have evolved over time to the sciences (how and when).


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### Science and Religion

- **Catholic Catechism:** "Methodical research in all branches of knowledge, provided it is carried out in a truly scientific manner and does not override moral laws, can never conflict with the faith, because the things of the world and the things the of the faith derive from the same God.
- The humble and persevering investigator of the secrets of nature is being led, as it were, by the hand of God in spite of himself, for it is God, the conservator of all things, who made them what they are" (CCC 159).
- **Key:** The Catholic Church has no fear of science or scientific discovery because all truth is from God and leads to Him.


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### Contra Polygenism

- **Polygenism:** Theory that the human race descended from a pool of early human couples, indeterminate in number.
- **Monogenism:** Posits a single origin of humanity in Adam and Eve. St. Paul says, "He made from one the whole human race to dwell on the entire surface of the earth" (Acts 17:26).
- **Humani Generis (1950):** It is in no way apparent how [polygenism] can be reconciled with that which the sources of revealed truth and the documents of the Teaching Authority of the Church propose with regard to original sin, which precedes from a sin actually committed by an individual Adam and which, through generation, is passed on to all and is in everyone as his own.


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### A Fit Helper


- **You shall die:** "Dying you will die" – the spiritual death is immediate, while the physical death (i.e., physical alienation from the land of the living) will be more gradual.
- **A Helper Suited to Him:** Hebrew *'ezer kǝnegdo* does not suggest a subordinate role which the English "helper" can have. Other translations include: counterpart to him, suitable partner, indispensable companion, necessary help, etc.
  - **Key:** The man's nature will be matched by the forthcoming woman who will correspond and complement him.
- **Name:** To give a name to something is to assert authority over it (cf. 1:26, 28) (Wenham, 68).

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- **CCC 372:** Man and woman were made "for each other" - not that God left them half-made and incomplete: he created them to be a communion of persons, in which each can be "helpmate" to the other, for they are equal as persons ("bone of my bones. . .") and complementary as masculine and feminine.
- In marriage God unites them in such a way that, by forming "one flesh", they can transmit human life: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth." By transmitting human life to their descendants, man and woman as spouses and parents cooperate in a unique way in the Creator's work.

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- **Gen. 1:26:** "In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." Man and woman, each in their own way, image God.
- **CCC 371:** God created man and woman together and willed each for the other.
- **Key:** Male/female image God not only in their individual persons, but also as male and female together, i.e., their sexual differences as male and female (complementarity) forms a communion of persons (total unity).

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### Complementarity in Creation

Part	Counterpart
Heavens	Earth
Darkness	Light
Day	Night
Dry land (earth)	Basin of water (sea)
Greater light (sun)	Lesser light (moon)
Plants	Animals
Male	Female

Key: Complementary or balance is inscribed in the creative order.

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### Trans: Across or Beyond

- In every age, the Church has to wrestle with the pressing issues of its time. The sexual revolution in the 1960s and 1970s has led to identity confusion. Currently, we are seeing a rebellion against complementarity that is inscribed in the order of creation. We are becoming "strangers to the universe" as we attempt to define our own concept of existence and the meaning of the universe. "You will become like gods, who know good and evil" (Gn 3:5).
- Transgender:** Those who believe their gender does not correspond with their birth sex.
- Trans-species:** Those who identify as an animal (e.g., dog or cat), mythical creatures, angels, demons, fairies, aliens, or cartoon characters.

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### Underlying Philosophy: Cartesian Dualism

- Cartesian Dualism:** The human person is divided into two separate substances: a mental substance (the soul) and a corporeal substance (the body).
- The "real you" that constitutes you as a person is "the thinking self." The body is not essential to the person, but rather separate. A person is merely a "ghost in a machine."
- Catholic:** Your body with its biological design is you. You are not your body alone and you are not your soul alone, but rather you are *both* body and soul. Your body is essential to who you are. In short, your body and soul, together, make up the person that you are (Broussard, Karlo: *Thinking it Through*, 8/7/2017).  
Source: <https://www.catholic.com/magazine/online-edition/one-way-to-debunk-transgender-philosophy>

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### Loneliness

- Brought them:** The man images God in that he exercises the dominion over the animals as stated in Gn 1:26.
  - Scientist:** The man is akin to a scientist (i.e., biologist). He classifies organisms based on their characteristics.
- No Partner:** One gets the sense that as the animals pass by in pairs, the man thinks, "Everything has a partner but I have no partner" (Wenham, 68).
  - Loneliness:** The unsuitability of any animal allows us to feel the man's loneliness. The narrative builds in suspense in the hope that a suitable helper is found.

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### Marriage Covenant

- Gen. 2:21-24:** Poetically describes the institution of marriage.
- Deep sleep:** Heavy sleep is often divinely induced sleep (Is. 29:10; 1 Sam. 26:12) and the occasion for divine revelation (Gn. 15:12; Job 4:13 (Wenham, 69).
- Ribs:** The first woman is created from the substance of the first man (1 Cor. 11:8). Her sexual distinction from the man shows that the two are literally made for each other (Hahn, 21).
  - "Not made out of his head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved" (Matthew Henry quoted in Wenham, 69).

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### Least to Most

- Least Beautiful to Most Beautiful**

Animals → Man → Woman

- Least Complex to Most Complex**

Animals → Man → Woman

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### Marriage Vow

- **Marriage Vow:** This one, at last, is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh
  - **Bone:** Strength (give strength to your bones – Is. 58:11)
  - **Flesh:** Weakness (all flesh is grass – Is. 40:6)
  - **Vow:** N...I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and health. I will love you and honor you all the days of your life (bound in strength and weakness).
- **Woman:** The poem makes a wordplay on “man” (*ish*) and “woman” (*ishshah*), which are also the terms for “husband” and “wife” in biblical Hebrew (Hahn, 21).

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- **Leaves:** On marriage, the man's priorities change. Before his obligations were to his parents: afterwards they are to his wife (Wenham, 71).
- **Clings:** The term indicates fidelity to one's partner in a covenant relationship (Dt. 10:20, 30:20) (Hahn, 21).
  - In marriage, the man and woman “cleave” or “stick with” each other as God intends.
- **One Flesh:** Refers to more than just sexual union. The man and woman an “indissoluble unit” (Brueggemann, 354).
- **Naked:** Signifies innocence and integrity of the man and woman (i.e., open, honest, and vulnerable with each other).

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### God's Plan for Marriage

- According to Genesis 2:21-24, marriage is a covenant whereby a man and woman leave their parents so as establish between themselves a permanent union that is intimate (one flesh, 2:24), mutually supportive (helper, 2:23), and procreative (multiply, 1:28) (cf. Hahn, 21).
- **Key:** When marriage is lived according to God's design, it both proclaims/builds the kingdom of heaven here on earth.
- It's no accident that the serpent is introduced immediately after the institution of the marriage covenant. In other words, the serpent attacks where God's kingdom grows.

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### God's Plan for Marriage

Matt. 7:24-25

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Scripture is about marriage: God's plans to “marry” us in Christ



Adam & Eve  
“One Flesh”  
Gen. 2:24



Holy Matrimony  
Christ & Church  
Eph. 5:31-32



Marriage Supper  
of the Lamb  
Rev. 19:7-9

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### Original Sin: Introduces Brokenness


- **Genesis 3:** The break from God (original sin) introduces brokenness in the world:
  - Between **man** and **woman**
  - Between **body** and **soul**
    - Intellect is darkened
    - Will is weakened
    - Struggle for self-mastery
  - Between **humans** and **nature**

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Scripture	Meaning
Knew they were naked	Intimacy, openness, vulnerability between man and woman collapses
Sewed fig leaves	Protect dignity (preventing lust); industry of pornography
Hid themselves	Distorted vision of God
Woman you put with me Serpent tricked me	Fail to take responsibility and blame others for sins
Urge for husband; shall rule over Toil you shall eat; return to ground	Brokenness in relationship Work is burdensome; death

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- **CCC 407:** The doctrine of original sin, closely connected with that of redemption by Christ, provides lucid discernment of man's situation and activity in the world.
- By our first parents' sin, the devil has acquired a certain domination over man, even though man remains free. Original sin entails "captivity under the power of him who thenceforth had the power of death, that is, the devil". Ignorance of the fact that man has a wounded nature inclined to evil gives rise to serious errors in the areas of education, politics, social action and morals.
- **Key:** Outside Eden, man's life is a battle.


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- **CCC 410:** After his fall, man was not abandoned by God. On the contrary, God calls him and in a mysterious way heralds the coming victory over evil and his restoration from his fall.
- This passage in Genesis is called the *Protoevangelium* ("first gospel"): the first announcement of the Messiah and Redeemer, of a battle between the serpent and the Woman, and of the final victory of a descendant of hers.




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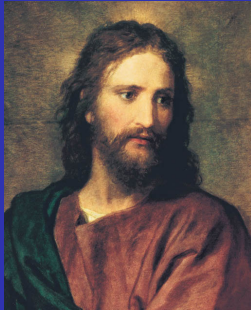
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- **CCC 412:** But *why did God not prevent the first man from sinning?* St. Leo the Great responds, "Christ's inexpressible grace gave us blessings better than those the demon's envy had taken away."
- And St. Thomas Aquinas wrote, "There is nothing to prevent human nature's being raised up to something greater, even after sin; God permits evil in order to draw forth some greater good."
- Thus St. Paul says, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more"; and the Exsultet sings, 'O happy fault, . . . which gained for us so great a Redeemer!'

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- **John 3:16:** For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.
- **2 Cor. 5:17:** So whoever is in Christ is a new creation.
- **Gal. 5:1:** For freedom Christ has set us free.



<https://momchurch.com/2/what-do-momms-think-of-muhammad>

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