

Ten After Ten: Session 13: The Creator

279. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Holy Scripture begins with these solemn words... We shall speak first of the Creator, then of creation, and finally of the fall into sin from which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to raise us up again.

280. Creation is the foundation of all God’s saving plans, the beginning of the history of salvation that culminates in Christ... from the beginning, God envisaged the glory of the new creation in Christ.

282. “Where do we come from?” “Where are we going?” “What is our origin?” “What is our end?” “Where does everything that exists come from and where is it going?” The two questions, the first about the origin and the second about the end, are inseparable. They are decisive for the meaning and orientation of our life and actions.

283. The question about the origins of the world and of man has been the object of many scientific studies... These discoveries invite us to even greater admiration for the greatness of the Creator, prompting us to give him thanks for all his works and for the understanding and wisdom he gives to scholars and researchers.

284. The great interest accorded to these studies is strongly stimulated by a question of another order... is the universe governed by chance, blind fate, anonymous necessity, or by a transcendent, intelligent and good Being called “God”? And if the world does come from God’s wisdom and goodness, why is there evil? Where does it come from? Who is responsible for it? Is there any liberation from it?

285. Since the beginning the Christian faith has been challenged by responses to the question of origins that differ from its own. All these attempts bear witness to the permanence and universality of the question of origins. This inquiry is distinctively human.

286. The existence of God the Creator can be known with certainty through his works, by the light of human reason, even if this knowledge is often obscured and disfigured by error. This is why faith comes to confirm and enlighten reason in the correct understanding of this truth.

287. The truth about creation is so important for all of human life that God in his tenderness wanted to reveal to his People everything that is salutary to know on the subject. Beyond the natural knowledge that every man can have of the Creator, God progressively revealed to Israel the mystery of creation.

288. Thus the revelation of creation is inseparable from the revelation and forging of the covenant of the one God with his People. Creation is revealed as the first step toward this covenant, the first and universal witness to God’s all-powerful love.

289. Among all the Scriptural texts about creation, the first three chapters of Genesis occupy a unique place. From a literary standpoint these texts may have had diverse sources. The inspired authors have placed them at the beginning of Scripture to express in their solemn language the

truths of creation—its origin and its end in God, its order and goodness, the vocation of man, and finally the drama of sin and the hope of salvation. Read in the light of Christ, within the unity of Sacred Scripture and in the living Tradition of the Church, these texts remain the principal source for catechesis on the mysteries of the “beginning”: creation, fall, and promise of salvation.

290. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth”: three things are affirmed in these first words of Scripture: the eternal God gave a beginning to all that exists outside of himself; he alone is Creator. The totality of what exists depends on the One who gives it being.

291. The New Testament reveals that God created everything by the eternal Word, his beloved Son... The Church’s faith likewise confesses the creative action of the Holy Spirit, the “giver of life,” “the Creator Spirit”, the “source of every good.”

292. The Old Testament suggests and the New Covenant reveals the creative action of the Son and the Spirit, inseparably one with that of the Father... Creation is the common work of the Holy Trinity.

293. Scripture and Tradition never cease to teach and celebrate this fundamental truth: “The world was made for the glory of God.” St. Bonaventure explains that God created all things “not to increase his glory, but to show it forth and to communicate it,” for God has no other reason for creating than his love and goodness

294. God made us to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, for the glory of God is man fully alive; moreover man’s life is the vision of God... The ultimate purpose of creation is that God who is the creator of all things may at last become ‘all in all,’ thus simultaneously assuring his own glory and our beatitude.