

*The Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time*  
*February 3, 2019*

*“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you. . .” (Jeremiah 1:5)*

Over the past few weeks we have witnessed both the March for Life and the celebration of lawmakers, from the state of New York, after the passage of one of our nation’s most controversial abortion laws. We have read about Catholic leaders who admonished teens for a now debunked act of racism. We have listened in sadness to other voices decrying those same Catholic leaders for their silence in equaling admonishing Catholic politicians who both promoted and supported New York’s “late term” abortion law. We experience the ever growing divide between some Catholic leaders who say we should welcome immigrants and other Catholic leaders who express concern for the safety of their flocks. I can rightly understand the confusion of so many people of faith. Over these next few weeks, minus the weekends when our Deacons preach, I will try and offer some general guidance concerning the Church’s moral teachings on these and similar issues. I will be unable to address each particular aspect or questions for they can be quite complicated and multifaceted. I do believe that remaining silent would not be beneficial and an abdication of my responsibility as your pastor. I only ask that we approach these teachings with prayer and an open mind. I will present this series through a process of questions and answers. I also beg that you pray for me as I attempt this endeavor. May I present the teachings of our Catholic Church to the best of my ability and not present my own agenda as a substitute for our Catholic faith.

**Why am I here?** *“Is man just a biological accident? Is the human race just another stage in the process of blind and purposeless evolution? Is this human life just a brief flash of light between the long darkness that preceded the womb, and an everlasting darkness that will follow the grave? Am I just a meaningless speck in the universe, tossed off by the creative power of an uncaring God much as a baseball fan might toss a peanut shell over his shoulder? Is there any design or plan to life, any significance? Where did I come from, anyway? And why am I here?” (Leo J. Trese, The Faith Explained, 3rd Edition, p. 3)*

As we age, we often find ourselves pondering questions similar to the ones I used above. The Catholic Church, in her wisdom, has attempted to provide mankind with guidance. She does this by first asking us to consider the purpose of creation through God’s eyes and through our own. We believe, as the Baltimore Catechism taught, that God made us (and all of creation) to show forth His goodness and to share with us His everlasting happiness in heaven. God is an infinitely perfect being. He creates to show His infinite goodness and power. When God made the heavens and the earth, as the book of Genesis recalls, He did so not because they would add to His power or goodness. Rather, God creates to give glory to Himself. *“The heavens declare the glory of God; the sky proclaims its builder’s craft.” (Psalm 19:2)* When we create something, we experience to a lesser degree, the joy of God as He created. Our hearts, overflowing with this joy, desire to share to our creations with others. Have you ever had someone proudly show you pictures of their new born children or grandchildren? We just cannot contain the joy and the love we have as we look upon our creations (an object or person). When God made mankind He gave to each of us immortal souls capable of sharing in His own infinite goodness. Consider how you feel when you generously share with another in need. Do we not feel a sense of deep joy and peace when we see people coming to the aid of others who have lost everything due to some unforeseen disaster? These scenes, some have pointed out, can be used as examples to restore our faith in the kindness of humanity. God is so perfectly good that He must share His own divine happiness with us, and our experiences of His divine happiness remind us of His perfect goodness. To help us understand happiness, recall please the moment you either said (or heard said) the word “Yes” when answering the question “Will you marry me?” This human joy only mirrors the divine perfect joy that God possesses. He is so full of happiness, joy, and love that He **HAD** to create. Why am I here? Because God could not contain the joy He felt when He first thought of us. He had to create everything to remind us of the perfect love He has for us.