

Fifth Sunday in Lent
March 21, 2021
Year of the Eucharist and Parish (Sermon #11)

“Question 3 - Why did God make us? Answer - God made us to show forth His goodness and to share with us His everlasting happiness in heaven.”
(Revised Baltimore Catechism and Mass, No. 3, 1949.)

In our past reflections upon creation, we have discussed God creating the angels out of His desire to share His love, His joy. We could assume after creating the angels, to mixed results, one might wonder why did God continue? Moving away from spiritual beings, He would proceed to create material things. Again, not stopping with material things, He would crown creation by bringing forth one being in which He would endow that being with both a spiritual substance and a material substance. This new being would be man. This now leads us, in our reflections, to ask the question: “Why create man?”

Too often I have said it, but I humbly admit it, much greater minds than mine have sought an answer to the question: “Why am I here?” The Baltimore Catechism, based upon the Catechism of the Council of Trent, attempted to provide Catholic children with an answer. *“God created man to manifest His glory in a special way. He gave man an intellect and a will that he might know, praise, and love his Creator.”*

Allow us to ponder this answer provided to generations of children. You and I were created by God to use our intellect and our will to know, praise, and love God. We were created to perform this action in a special way which was not given to anything else God created. He did not bestow this honor upon spiritual beings (angels) nor upon material things (mineral, plant, or animal). The pinnacle of God’s creation is - YOU. When man breathed his first breath, we had, at that moment, the jewel in the crown of God’s creating action.

As the old saying goes: “Oh, how the mighty have fallen! Every Jewish and Christian child hears the story of creation taken from the Book of Genesis. Given so much from the hand of God, man still falls, mankind chooses to disobey. We are not here to condemn Adam and Eve for their failings for we, ourselves, are not the gold standard of faithful obedience to God’s commands. Our purpose was to use our intellect and will to take care of God’s creation and in doing so find our joy and love. A joy and love that we would be willing to share with others as God shared with us.

Dear family, I am not here to advocate for some political “Green New Deal.” I only ask each of us to open our eyes to the world around us. See the trash alongside the roads we drive. See the burned-out buildings, forgotten neighborhoods. Places once bustling with life and laughter, now ruined rotting remains overflowing with filth and riddled with disease. If our purpose is to live within and govern creation in such a way as to show thankfulness to God and communion with our fellow man, then I conclude today posing only one question: “What the HECK are we doing?”