

Second Sunday of Ordinary Time
January 14, 2024
Year of the Most Holy Eucharist
Reflection #3

“The intellectual perfection of man and woman in this first beginning of the race was even more stupendous than the physical fullness. Adam and Eve came into being as adults.” (My Way of Life, The Summa Simplified for Everyone, p.100)

Residing upon the gulf coast of Alabama can present someone with ample opportunities to experience both the before and after effects of tropical storms and hurricanes. Many may remember the effect of Hurricane Katrina upon Dauphin Island in 2005. Few may also remember how Hurricane Frederic devastated the Island destroying the bridge in 1979. I use these examples purposely this weekend. I believe to understand the importance of the Eucharist in our salvation history, we must begin in the Garden. And, we must begin by understanding what mankind (Adam and Eve) were before their choice unleashed the storm of sin which profoundly affected them and later all of their descendants.

The sacred author of the Book of Genesis described the creation of man through a blending of two oral traditions. We must realize both of these traditions are necessary. They each express, in their own fashion, the complexity of man (Adam and Eve) created by the hand of God. Beginning with the most obvious, Sacred Scripture proclaims Adam and Eve to be created, not born. This is extremely important. Contrary to you and I who are born, needing to grow, learn and develop, they are presented with everything they will ever need at the first moment of their creation. Adam is created from the dust of the Earth and Eve is created from a bone in his side. There are two important points being made here. Adam, being created from the soil of the Earth, shows a natural unity between Man and created things. Eve, created from his rib bone, reminds us of the equality shared with and between both, coming from the hand of God. Furthermore, being created in and with the state of Sanctifying Grace, Adam and Eve possess, in their physical bodies both (1) Immortality and (2) Impassibility.

One may inquire how the Faith arrived at this conclusion concerning the physical bodies of Adam and Eve when these words are not used specifically in Sacred Scripture referring to them. We find the answer to this puzzlement through the punishments they received after they chose to be disobedient. In the Book of Genesis (3:16-19), Eve is told she will experience pain and Adam will have to work by the sweat of his brow to provide nourishment for his family. Prior to these punishments, Adam and Eve lived in the state of Impassibility. They were free from pain, suffering, labor and injury. They are further told they would one day return to the earth from which their bodies were created. This means they had previously lived in the state of Immortality. By this punishment, they are now subject to disease, illness and death.

This is only one half of what mankind had and sin destroyed. Next week, we will reflect upon the soul (created by God) which was infused into our first parents. Again, we need to know what was, how it is affected, and how God, Himself chose to show His Mercy to mankind and save us.