

# Humility Before the Creator

Homily by Matthew Ferch, Archdiocese of Milwaukee

*"In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth...the earth was without form or shape, with darkness over the abyss and a mighty wind sweeping over the waters" (Gen 1:1-2).*

The biblical account of creation is one of the most famous stories of the Bible. We read—and we read to our children—how God created the world in seven days. He created light and darkness, sun and moon, seas and land, plants and creatures. It all culminates in the creation of humanity. All creation was so good that God rested on the seventh day to take in the wonders of his work. Throughout the history of humanity, the questions of how the world was created, how humanity got here, and what the meaning of life is has plagued humanity and truly has made us pause and think about our own existence.

Why did God create the world? Why did he put humanity here and have us wade through this uncharted terrain that is life? The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that God “creates freely out of nothing” (296). By the sheer power of God, he has created the heavens and the earth (everything that is outside of himself), and God keeps it in order and sustains all of creation by being present to it while transcending it (CCC 299-301). The *Letter to the Hebrews* identifies God as the “builder of all things” (Heb 3:4). All of creation is good because it is all in accord with the mind of God who is all love and all good. It is because of this goodness that God cannot keep it contained in one place. God is so good that he is bursting at the seams with it. He wants to share it with His creation, “for God has no other reason for creating than his love and goodness” (CCC 293). No matter how much we find out about the scientific answers about the universe and humanity, there is one thought that we keep returning to: we continue to be in wonder and amazement of the wisdom of God in all of creation (CCC 283).

But there are times when we can forget that our lives and our very existence is a gift from God. We tend to forget that God not only wants a relationship with us but that

God is the creator of the world who sustains all things in himself. We can do this by sinning and turning our backs on the loving kindness of our God and His laws which truly make us free. We can take it for granted that God is there, and our very lives are dependent upon him. We focus on ourselves and our own needs and not remember that God is the giver of all things and ultimately satisfies our every need. We do not turn to God for help and strength in both the good times and bad, but we instead can turn to ourselves or to the fleeting things of the world instead of God who is eternal and definitively fulfills all.

Instead, we must live everyday as a gift from God. We must live our lives in thanksgiving for the gift he has given us and be worthy recipients and stewards of that gift. This is done by continually giving praise to God and be in thanksgiving to him in both our prayer and participation in the Holy Mass which is the ultimate thanksgiving. For Psalm 118 says, "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice in it and be glad" (Ps. 118:24).

But this can only come through humility. When I was on a trip to Tucson, Arizona learning about recent developments in the field of astronomy and how to reconcile it with our faith, each astronomer I talked to said that we must always have an attitude of humility and the willingness to admit that we do not have all of the answers or that our understanding must change and be willing to accept it. Upon reflection, that means we must always remain humble in the sight of God and leave things up to the mystery of God. It means that we must continually humble ourselves before God and try to listen carefully to what He has to tell us and be thankful for His gift. But this can only start with how we treat others. This is where we can see results of our humility and living like a beloved child in the sight of God. We must extend that same love to others that God gives us. Others are given that same gift of life that we have been given. Therefore, we must recognize that dignity of others and work together to continually offer praise and thanksgiving to God. We must also recognize that this life can be easily taken away. Nothing in this life lasts forever, so we must live life everyday as a gift while fully trusting in God. This is the secret to eternal life, and we can hopefully

come to the presence of God where we may hear, “Well done my good and faithful servant...Come, share your master’s joy” (Mt. 25:21).