

ARTICLE 68

Legio Sanctae Familiae – The Legion of the Holy Family

Marriage a gift from God

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Marriage! The Lessons from Genesis

Warning to Parents! - Vatican Launches Faulty 'Sex-Ed' Programme

In this article I want to look at the lessons that we should learn from our recent journey back through the first four chapters of the Book of Genesis. Before I delve into those lessons however, I want to issue a warning to parents of school age children, about a new danger that is to be presented to their children. In these strange times that we live in, the danger does not come from outside of the Catholic Church, but from within. The Pontifical Council for the Family has launched a new 'on-line' sex education programme for use in Catholic schools. The programme is deficient, in that it presents material of an erotic nature for classroom discussion. The programme was developed in conjunction with some Spanish parents and is called 'The Meeting Place'. I will devote some time in my next article to a closer analysis of this programme but meanwhile, parents beware!

Genesis Teaches the 'Hard' Lessons of Life

It could be said that the first four chapters of the book of Genesis teach us all we need to know about how to live a holy life. So what are the lessons to be learned there?

We learn firstly about God, that He existed from the beginning, that all creation comes from God, and that all that God created was good.

Man is a Contingent Being

We learn that God, in his goodness, created the earth and all the earthly creatures and that He also created Man as the pinnacle of this earthly creation. God created us therefore, we are creatures and as creatures we are contingent beings. There was no 'need' for God to create us, there is no 'need' for us to exist. We exist purely on account of God's goodness.

Because of God's essence, we can also come to know why we were created. As Frank Joseph Sheed says in his book 'Theology and Sanity', "created beings achieve their own perfection in glorifying God.

Or as the old catechism puts it.

Q. Why did God make you?

A. God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be happy with Him for ever in heaven.

Man has a Godly Purpose

We learn that God gave instructions to Adam and Eve and from this we can conclude that our lives have a very specific purpose, and we learn from Adam and Eve's response to the serpent, that Adam and Eve had free will. They were free to obey or to disobey God. We too have this freedom.

We learn that God's commands are life giving and that to disobey God results in the death of the body.

We learn that we have an enemy whom God permits to test and to tempt us, so that we will prove our love for God or conversely, our lack of love for God, in the choices that we make.

Adam and Eve Disobeyed God

We learn that Adam and Eve disobeyed God and that as a result of this disobedience every human being since, with the exception of Our Lady, has inherited original sin, which results in an inclination to evil within our souls. Adam and Eve had perfect integrity, which means that their bodily desires were completely subject to the higher power of their souls namely their intellect and their wills. Original sin has destroyed man's integrity and now there is a struggle, a battle if you will, between our bodies and our souls. The body craves bodily satisfactions in opposition to the soul which strives heavenward towards God.

The Flesh is at War with the Spirit

St Paul clearly highlights this for us in his letter to the Galatians where he says.

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would. But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:16-25)

God Punishes Sin

We learn that because of their sin, God delivered punishments to Adam and Eve which have been passed down to the human race. As a result of these punishments our lives here on earth will be beset by difficulties, pain and suffering. These punishments are a part of God's mercy towards us and they allow us, through loving acceptance, to grow in holiness and love of God.

Men will Kill one another, all will Die

We learn through the actions of Cain that men are capable of killing one another.

We learn too that as men and women we all share one thing in common, one day we all must die.

God is Merciful

We also learn that God in His mercy chose to send His Son Jesus, born of the virgin Mary, to redeem us from our sins and to crush the head of the serpent.

So how do these lessons affect our lives and how we should live them?

We Depend on God

Let's take for example the fact that we are creatures. As creatures we are not, and can never be, self sufficient. We are totally dependent on God for our very existence. Modern man tends to forget this important fact, ignoring God's existence, and ignoring God's observation that you cannot serve two masters. We cannot serve both God and Mammon and yet our modern western society is founded on the principle of serving Mammon. Listen to any radio programme in Ireland which invites a politician to discuss any current issue such as patient care in our hospitals. You won't have to wait very long before the politician will tell you how many millions or billions of Euro their department is spending on providing the service for us. They are never asked why, given the money they spend and keep on spending in greater and greater amounts, the problems are not resolved. The

proposition is put forth that money, not love of God, will solve these problems. But if God created us, then such a proposition is patently absurd!

Original Sin is Real

Or take the fact of our fallen nature on account of Original Sin. The sex-education programme noted above, ignores the fact that our natures are fallen and programmes such as this one, will lead children into living sinful lives. Women dressing immodestly also ignore our fallen nature and lead souls to corruption because of this. Man is fallen and we must engage in the internal battle that rages within each one of us before we can help each other. As Christ tells us in Matthew 7, “You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

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