

How God Creates- Session 1

- The world
 - We as Catholics often think of the Genesis creation story
 - And in the world we live in we have the Big Bang Theory, which a lot of times it can seem like it's the Big Bang vs Creation Story
 - The Big Bang was first proposed by George Lemaitre, a Belgian Catholic Priest who worked at Harvard and MIT.
 - Popes have affirmed that the Big Bang Theory does not contradict Catholic views, because it still leaves room for the Divine Creator
 - Biblical books have different styles (poetry, Historical, Figurative). Genesis is usually understood as a figurative creation story of our spiritual selves (then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being). The symbolism of the Holy Spirit is wind/air/breath, so we get this imagery of God breathing spiritual life in us, I.E. our spiritual birth.
 - Nature
 - We hear in the bible how the heavens and the earth declare the glory of God, but how can plants give glory to God?
 - Creation gives glory by fulfilling what they were created to do. And as part of creation, we humans also do this.
 - We as humans can learn about God through creation, and our relationship with him.
 - God created creation to direct us to God. So when we interact with creation that reflects God, we see God's "fingerprints" and are naturally drawn to him.
 - God commanded Adam to Shamar (guard, protect, keep, nurture). By default we are stewards of the earth. Pope Francis explains and explores this all in his encyclical Laudate Si.
 - Reflecting of the Trinity
 - I read a book that's first line said that God is love, so for the rest of the book the word God will be replaced with the word love.
 - The Trinity- CS Lewis once wrote that, "God is love, then god can't be one person, one individual". Because Love is an exchange, there needs a lover, beloved and love shared between them.
 - The love of the Trinity is most beautifully reflected in a family.
 - God the Father- creator
 - God the Son- Redeemer, carried out salvation
 - Holy Spirit- aid us on our journey, gifts, guidance
 - Love shares, it creates, (example of video games, sports, favorite sports teams, how in all of these we always want to share things we love)
 - When God saw the love between the trinity, and wanted to share it.
 - Thus God created us to participate and reflect in the love of the trinity. By being a part of that relationship we not only know God, but ourselves as well.

God Saves- Session 2

- The Human Condition (sin entering the world)
 - We see around us the violence, war, greed very selfish not selfless things,
 - These are all signs of sin
 - Sin is an offense against God CCC1850
 - *Another definition of sin is: any thought, word, or deed contrary to the will of God.*
 - When God made us, He made us sinless, and He gave us the light of the Holy Spirit; so that we knew God, His holiness and perfections; and he knew himself, and the nature in which God had created him.
 - Through Original sin, we were torn from this knowledge. (mirror example, how we reflect God's image like a mirror and original sin would be like dropping the mirror and having it shatter. Tag example, how some articles of clothing have special requirements for cleaning, and if you rip out the tag, you might ruin the clothes.)
 - As a result of not having instruction, we can no longer fulfil what we were created for.
 - We abuse one another, by being stewards of the land we also abuse land.
 - We also can recognize this in the emptiness inside us, our unhappiness
- God Sends Us Jesus
 - So as a result we have the Creator and the created separated from one another.
 - God still loves his creation, and still takes care of us despite our failings
 - Knowing creation can't dig themselves out he sends his son with the plan of salvation, so that we can be reunited. (also named Emmanuel, God is with us)
 - We lost our way, and understanding and Christ reintroduces us to not only God but his way of life.

God Our Father- Session 3

- God cares for us
 - Building off of the first lesson, God wants a relationship with him and by default cares and listens to us. Petition Isaiah God tells the king to ask me for something.
 - God may be doing 10,000 things in your life and you may be aware of 3. Taking time to thank God for the blessings he bestowed on us.
 - Matthew 6:26 passage about how God takes care of his creation.
 - Like creation, God can work through us and made us to aid and help one another. This can be a big struggle as human beings.
- Jesus teaches us about God

- Much of the Gospels is teaching the apostles (and Us) who God actually is. (Good Good Father, song that talks about how I've heard all these people say who God is, but God isn't one dimensional. God is this box God is that box.
- Jesus is here to dispel lies and set the record straight.
- The Lord's Prayer
 - When I was in CCD we had to memorize it, which is great but also terrible, it really devalues the meaning of the prayer. Sit and pray the Lord's Prayer for a half hour to really understand what you are saying and what the prayer means.
 - It not only shows us humility or being humble, recognizing who God is and why we were created, reminds us we need outside help from God, and reminds us to pursue to be like Christ.

Gods Life for Us- Session 4

- The Kingdom of God
 - God's Kingdom, essentially is the Divine (God) reunited with creation is fractured.
 - He has this plan, "program for salvation" to "fix" everything.
 - Through prayer, we can hear how God is calling us to help build his kingdom on Earth.
 - The Bible is that story of how he calls us to bring us back to God. Phases, Examples from the Bible like Abraham, Mary, Joseph show us how as humans we can hear God in prayer and follow His will.
- The Beatitudes
 - So God created everything, and wants to have a relationship with us, Jesus teaches us how to pray to him, now he shares with us how to live out that love.
 - The "P" words: *power, prestige, prosperity, and pleasure*. We do everything we can to avoid being meek, poor in spirit, pure in heart, persecuted, and merciful.
 - Despite our natural desire to look inwards towards ourselves, the beatitudes are a great tool to look outside ourselves.
 - Beatitudes build on the 10 commandments. How we were so far from God he had to over time slowly bring us back into his fold.
 - The Beatitudes are markings of the church.
- The Holy Spirit
 - Sent as a guide and inspire us to build God's Kingdom
 - Was sent to give us peace to believe in God's plan when we feel overwhelmed or don't understand His plan.
 - Also give us love to build the kingdom of God.