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CHAPTER PLANNING GUIDE

LESSON	OBJECTIVES	OPENING & CLOSING ACTIVITIES	GUIDED EXERCISES	HOMEWORK
Creation (pp. 80–86)	Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God the Father God the Creator Faith and science 	Anticipatory Set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Opening Prayer:</i> Incorporate Genesis 1–2 (p. 80) Closure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraph on human beings as the crown of Creation (p. 85) Alternative Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Free write:</i> “The world for man and man for God” (p. 85) 	Graphic Organizer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God in the Old and New Testaments (p. 104a) Think/Pair/Share <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation as progression (p. 82) 	Textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Study Questions 1–4 (p. 101) Practical Exercise 1 (p. 101) Workbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions 1–10 Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Fatherhood of God</i> (pp. 86–87) <i>The Fall</i> (pp. 87–88) <i>The Curse of Original Sin</i> (p. 89) Sidebar: <i>Why Does Evil Exist?</i> (p. 90) <i>Natural Law</i> (p. 91)
The Fall (pp. 86–91)	Learning Experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God as the ideal Father The consequences of Original Sin Natural law Angels 	Anticipatory Set <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Opening Prayer:</i> The Fall and the difficulties of Genesis 3 (p. 86) Closure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paragraph summarizing the lesson (p. 90) Alternative Assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Partner Activity:</i> Practical Exercise 2 (p. 90) 	Free Write <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Message of Genesis (p. 104a) Partner Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Characteristics of an ideal father (p. 87) Focused Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom and moral obligations (p. 104a) 	Textbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions 5–10 (p. 101) Practical Exercise 2 (p. 101) Workbook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questions 11–21 Reading <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The First Gospel</i> (pp. 91, 93) Sidebar: <i>Angels</i> (p. 92) <i>Preparing for the Messiah</i> (pp. 93–97) <i>Conclusion</i> (p. 97)

CHAPTER PLANNING GUIDE

LESSON	OBJECTIVES	OPENING & CLOSING ACTIVITIES	GUIDED EXERCISES	HOMEWORK
Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David (pp. 91–97)	Learning Experience <input type="checkbox"/> The <i>Protoevangelium</i> <input type="checkbox"/> The covenants of the Old Testament	Anticipatory Set <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Opening Prayer:</i> The perplexity of the sacrifice of Isaac (p. 91) Closure <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Paragraph</i> summarizing salvation history (p. 97) Alternative Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Paragraph</i> summarizing the chapter (p. 97)	<input type="checkbox"/> Administer <i>Quiz</i> at the end of this lesson Think/Pair/Share <input type="checkbox"/> The sacrifice of Isaac as a type of the Sacrifice of Christ (p. 94) Partner Activity <input type="checkbox"/> The Passover meal and the Mass (p. 95)	Textbook <input type="checkbox"/> Study Questions 11–15 (p. 101) <input type="checkbox"/> Practical Exercise 3–4 (p. 101) Workbook <input type="checkbox"/> Questions 22–29
CHAPTER CLOSURE				
Review Lesson	<input type="checkbox"/> Use the <i>Basic Questions</i> derived from the section <i>Objectives</i> to review the materials and clarify the focus of the chapter. Structure your review based on the kind of exam you decide to administer.			<input type="checkbox"/> Study for Exam
Test	<input type="checkbox"/> Administer exam — either the one provided or teacher created.			<input type="checkbox"/> Begin <i>Long-Term Assignment</i> Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 5: <i>Honoring the Mother of God</i> (p. 106) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Redemption Foretold</i> (pp. 107–108) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>The Blessed Virgin</i> (pp. 108–110)

LONG-TERM ASSIGNMENT

Write a 500–750 word essay developing an idea introduced in Chapters 1–4.
 —see page 98 for details—

CHAPTER PLANNING GUIDE

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

The student will understand:

- ☐ God the Father
- ☐ God the Creator
- ☐ Faith and science
- ☐ God as the ideal Father
- ☐ The consequences of Original Sin
- ☐ Natural law
- ☐ Angels
- ☐ The *Protoevangelium*
- ☐ The covenants of the Old Testament

KEYS TO THIS CHAPTER

- ☐ God, his Creation, and human beings made in his image are all very good.
- ☐ Original Sin distorted human beings' view of God, their provident Father.
- ☐ Contradictions between science and the Catholic Faith are only apparent rather than real.
- ☐ Just as it is possible to know God exists from reason, so can the natural moral law be known.
- ☐ God permits evil out of a profound respect for human freedom.
- ☐ God prepared his people for Christ throughout the Old Testament, especially in the covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.

KEY IDEAS

CREATION, MAN, AND ORIGINAL SIN

God, his Creation, and human beings made in his image are all very good. Original Sin distorted human beings' view of God, their provident Father. Contradictions between science and the Catholic Faith are only apparent rather than real. Just as it is possible to know God exists from reason, so can the natural moral law be known. God permits evil out of a profound respect for human freedom. God prepared his people for Christ throughout the Old Testament, especially in the covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David.

CREATION

The Gospel restored to human beings the conception of God as a loving Father, which was present in Genesis but largely lost to the Israelites. God is the loving Creator of everything that exists. Human beings are the pinnacle of Creation because they are made in the image of God. There is no real conflict between faith and science. Faith is concerned with truths about God and man that go beyond the reach of science, whereas science studies how the natural world works.

NOAH, ABRAHAM, MOSES, AND DAVID

In the *Protoevangelium*, or "First Gospel," which was announced as soon as God spoke with the fallen Adam and Eve, God promised a Savior who would crush the serpent, foreshadowing the New Adam and New Eve: Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary. God established covenants with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David to call all people back to himself by creating a kingdom of priests and a holy people. The fulfillment of this vocation was Jesus Christ and the Church he founded.

THE FALL

God is a good Father who provides everything that is necessary. Deceived by Satan, Adam and Eve committed Original Sin, which brought disorder, evil, and sin into the world for them and their descendants. Some of the consequences of Original Sin were the loss of paradise, suffering, moral evils of every kind, and death. While evil has no intrinsic existence but is an absence of good, God permits evil out of respect for human freedom. Natural law is the internal and knowable law of good and evil that every person possesses. Angels are pure spiritual beings who serve God, their Creator. Every human being has a guardian angel who can "light, guard, rule, and guide."

Creation (pp. 80–86)

OBJECTIVES

- ☐ God the Father
- ☐ God the Creator
- ☐ Faith and science

BASIC QUESTIONS

- ☐ How did the Gospel change people's understanding of God as Father?
- ☐ What is the origin of the universe and human beings?
- ☐ What does the relationship between what faith and science teach us about creation?

KEY IDEAS

- ☐ Christ restored the conception of God as a loving Father that was present in Genesis but largely lost due to sin.
- ☐ God is the loving Creator of everything that exists.
- ☐ Human beings are the pinnacle of Creation because they are made in the image of God.
- ☐ There is no real conflict between faith and science.
- ☐ Faith is concerned with truths about God and man that go beyond the reach of science, whereas science studies how the natural world works.

CHAPTER 4

Creation, Man, and Original Sin

Old and New Testament Images of God

The popular image of God underwent a remarkable change between the days of the Israelites and the time of the Apostles.

Both the ancient Israelites and the early Christians believed in the words of the *Shema*: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." What it meant to love God in practice, however, was quite different.

After the Fall of Adam and Eve, sin kept widening the chasm separating the human race from God, and the God of Israel must have seemed a remote, aloof, and purely transcendent figure. He was rarely referred to as "Father" and was regarded primarily as a powerful, mysterious figure, who considered Israel to be his Chosen People and yet would not hesitate to discipline them as needed, whenever they strayed from his commands. God's manifestations, or *theophanies*, took ominous forms such as dark clouds, thunder, lightning, and fire. Eventually, God would be understood to dwell among his people in the Ark of the Covenant, but the Ark itself would be kept in the Temple behind a curtain in an area called the *Holy of Holies* where, just once each year, the high priest alone could venture to make atonement for the People of God. Ordinary believers had no such access to the Almighty.

Jesus Christ revealed God to be a Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He became human, like us in all things but sin, humbling himself to live among us, experiencing our lives, our pains, and our joys. He called God his "Father"—specifically, *Abba*, an endearing, childlike term closer to our word "Daddy"—and invited us to do the same. He taught that God dwells within us if we will receive him, and he invited us to consume his Body and Blood in the Eucharist.

For the Israelites, love of God meant awe, respect, hope, and even fear. For Christians, it means the desire and opportunity to reestablish the kind of intimacy with God that Adam and Eve had enjoyed in Eden.

What had changed? Not the immutable God. Rather, the new image of God that was revealed by Christ was part of God's unfolding plan to liberate us from the slavery of sin.

But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So through God you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son then an heir. (Gal 4: 4-7)

In this chapter, we will examine God as Creator, the Fall of our first parents, and the effects of *Original Sin*.

ANTICIPATORY SET

Incorporate a reading of the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis into the class's **opening prayer**.



God the Father (detail) by Bartolomeo.

For the Israelites, love of God meant awe, respect, hope, and even fear. For Christians, it means the desire and opportunity to reestablish the kind of intimacy with God that Adam and Eve had enjoyed in Eden.

In this Chapter, we will address the following questions:

- ✦ *Being created in the image and likeness of God reveals what truths about our existence?*
- ✦ *What does it mean to say God is a Father?*
- ✦ *What is Original Sin? What are its consequences?*
- ✦ *What is the Protoevangelium (the first Gospel)?*
- ✦ *How did God prepare his people for the Messiah?*

GUIDED EXERCISE

See page 104a for a *Graphic Organizer* about the Old and New Testaments.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- ❑ How is God's act of creation different from a human being's act of creation?

A human being reforms, refashions, or assembles using matter that previously exists, but God can create out of nothing.

- ❑ How many creation narratives are found in the Book of Genesis?

There are two.

- ❑ What does Scripture affirm about God's creative power and activity in the world?

(1) Creation is an act of God's love; (2) God created all that exists; and (3) all of Creation reflects God's goodness and wisdom.

GUIDED EXERCISE

Conduct a **think/pair/share** using the following question:

- ❑ How can the first creation narrative (Gn 1:1—2:4) be seen as a progression?

It begins with God creating non-corporeal realities (e.g., light), then non-living creatures, and then living creatures. It culminates in the creation of man and woman in God's own image, giving them dominion over creation.

God the Creator

The story of our salvation begins at the very beginning—with creation—for it is from this very first moment that we can see God's plan begin to unfold. Sacred Scripture opens with God creating the heavens and the earth by merely speaking his command: "Let there be light."¹

No one but God can truly "create," for creation connotes that something is made out of nothing. Scripture continuously tells of the creative power of God and his activity in the world. It affirms that creation is an act of God's love, that God created all that exists, and that all of creation reflects God's goodness and wisdom.

The story of creation in Genesis is perhaps the best-known passage of the Bible. Over the first five "days" of creation, God, by his spoken command, created light, the sky and oceans, the dry land and its vegetation, the sun, moon, and stars, the creatures of the sea and the birds of the air, and then the animals and insects.²

On the sixth day, in his final act of creation, God created the first man and woman.

God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him: male and female he created them. (Gn 1: 26-27)



Creation of Adam, Byzantine Mosaic.
On the sixth day, in his final act of creation, God created the first man and woman.

WHAT THE CHURCH TEACHES ABOUT EVOLUTION



God Creates Eve from Adam's Rib. Bible Miniature ca. 1372. In Genesis, the creation stories are valued for the truths they transmit rather than as a plainly literalistic account.

In courtrooms, classrooms, and television specials, there rages a debate between so-called "creationists" and "evolutionists." Did the world come into being by a creative act of God as described in Genesis, or did the universe, the world, and living beings develop autonomously by a process of natural selection over millions of years? More specifically, did God create Adam and Eve, or did modern man evolve from lower species, such as the apes, as Charles Darwin and later scientists have speculated?

The question unfairly presupposes that Christianity and science are inherently opposed to each other. Pro-evolution scientists sometimes claim that Christians are trying to impose a particular religious view upon empirical science, while Christians complain that pro-evolution scientists are inserting into public-school textbooks a theory of godless evolution.

The Catholic Church, however, has always taught that faith and science are innately compatible and that faith and reason work together in the pursuit of truth. The Bible is not a science textbook, nor is a science textbook a source of Divine Revelation. Science is the study of the world that God created, while God reveals to his Church certain truths that science cannot determine on its own.

In Genesis, the creation stories are valued for the truths they transmit rather than as a plainly literalistic account of how creation may have occurred. The theory of evolution is not incompatible with the Faith of the Church, so long as it does not deny that God is the Creator, who infused our first parents with an immortal soul; claim that evolution of the universe and of all living things took place apart from the plan of God; or maintain that the entire human race does not derive from one set of parents.

God then blessed the man and woman, who were named Adam and Eve. He encouraged them to "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it,"³ and to use the seed-bearing plants and fruits for food. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished," and God rested on the seventh day.⁴

A second creation story follows the first. It describes God creating the heavens and the earth, forming man out of clay, breathing "into his nostrils the breath of life," planting a garden in Eden, and placing man there to cultivate it. He allowed man to eat from every tree in the garden but one. Eventually, God created a woman from the man's rib, saying, "It is not good that the man should be alone."⁵

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- ❑ What conflict seems to exist between creation and evolution?
Some Christians argue that prevalent scientific hypotheses about evolution are inherently godless, whereas others argue that Christian beliefs about creation are inherently religious and anti-scientific.
- ❑ How does the Catholic Church respond to the notion that faith and science are incompatible?
The Catholic Church has always taught that faith and science are compatible; faith works together with human reason as agents to discern truth.
- ❑ From the Catholic perspective, what is the difference between science and religion?
Science is the study of the properties and workings of the world that God created, while God reveals to his people certain religious truths that science cannot determine.
- ❑ How does the Church read the creation narratives in the Book of Genesis?
The Church values them for the truths they transmit rather than a literalistic account of how the universe came to be.
- ❑ What notions, which claim to be derived from scientific evolution, has the Church declared to be incompatible with the Faith?
She has rejected (1) any denial that God is the Creator who infused our first parents with an immortal soul; (2) the claim that the evolution of the universe and of all living things took place apart from the plan of God; and (3) the assertion that the entire human race does not derive from one set of parents.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

What is polygenism?

There were many sets of first parents rather than just one.

What is the problem with polygenism?

It contradicts a fundamental revealed truth.

In *Humani Generis*, what opinion did Pope Pius XII teach could not be held by the Catholic faithful?

"The opinion which maintains either after Adam there existed on the earth true men who did not take their origin through natural generation from him as from the first parent of all or that Adam represents a certain number of first parents" (no. 37).

Of what fundamental revealed truth does polygenism lead to the denial?

It leads to the denial of Original Sin.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

What is *ruah*?

It is Hebrew for the "breath of life" or "spirit." God breathed into man.

Does the Book of Genesis support the idea that man is *singular* among all of creation?

Yes. Both creation narratives show how human beings hold a unique place among all of God's Creation and were created in a state of intimacy with God that is unlike anything else in visible Creation. God gave human beings alone the "breath of life" or "spirit." God also gave them dominion over Creation.

Made in the Image of God

Both creation stories reveal that human beings occupy a unique place among all of God's creation and that man was created in a state of intimacy with God unlike anything else in the physical world. Man and woman were God's finishing touch on creation. He gave them dominion over all the earth. He breathed into man the "breath of life"—*ruah*, the Hebrew word for "breath," also means "spirit"—and assigned him special tasks and instructions. No other creature received this kind of personal and loving attention from God.

Most striking of all is the statement that God created man in his own *image* and *likeness*. These terms are next used together in the fifth chapter of Genesis in describing the birth of Adam's third son, Seth.

ONE SET OF PARENTS

While the creation account in the Bible tells us God is the origin of the material universe, scientists attempt to explain how creation came into existence by an examination of the material universe. The Church has always encouraged research and discussions among learned men and women in science and sacred theology.

However, when a theory of evolution conflicts with the Bible, the Church will indicate the truth Catholics must believe. When, for example, the theory of evolution raised the possibility of *polygenism*—the belief that there were many sets of first parents on the earth—it contradicted a fundamental revealed truth.

To counter this and other false beliefs, Pope Pius XII wrote the encyclical *Humani Generis* in 1950. In this encyclical, he stated, "The faithful cannot embrace that opinion which maintains either after Adam there existed on the earth true men who did not take their origin through natural generation from him as from the first parent of all or that Adam represents a certain number of first parents" (no. 37). The acceptance of polygenism leads directly to the denial of Original Sin.

The great interest accorded to these studies is strongly stimulated by



God Blesses Adam and Eve by Master Vergius.

a question of another order, which goes beyond the proper domain of the natural sciences. It is not only a question of knowing when and how the universe arose physically, or when man appeared, but rather of discovering the meaning of such an origin: is the universe governed by chance, blind fate, anonymous necessity, or by a transcendent, intelligent, and good Being called "God"? And if the world does come from God's wisdom and goodness, why is there evil? Where does it come from? Who is responsible for it? Is there any liberation from it? (CCC 284)

84 Chapter Four

FOCUS QUESTIONS

What do the terms *image* and *likeness* mean when used to describe the relationship between God and Adam?

Adam bears qualities of God similar to the way a child reflects the qualities of his or her parents.

What do the terms *image* and *likeness* mean when used to describe the relationship between Adam and Seth?

All people, who are descended from Adam, bear qualities of God in the same way Adam reflected those qualities of God. Every person thus shares certain characteristics with God and is in a family relationship with him as children of God.



Creation of Adam by Michelangelo.
We have a family relationship with God, being created to be his sons and daughters.

When Adam had lived a hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. (Gn 5:3)

That the terms "image" and "likeness" are used to describe the relationship between Adam and Seth is very significant. It indicates that every person bears an image and likeness to God that is similar to the way a child bears the image and likeness of his or her parents. It is more than a theoretical likeness; we share innate characteristics with God. We have a family relationship with him, being created to be his sons and daughters.

Having been created in God's image and likeness reveals certain other truths of our existence:

- ✦ **We are like God.** God's "image" refers to a similarity between the natures of mankind and God. Like him, we have rational souls, possessing intelligence, free will, and the ability to love. When we love, especially within the context of our families, we image the love and life of the Blessed Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ✦ **Human life is sacred.** Old or young, healthy or sick, born or newly conceived, every human life is sacred because every person is created in God's image. The Faith affirms that the soul of each human person, which is spiritual and immortal, is created immediately by God. This sacredness is intrinsic to our being; it is never lost. Even those who have committed horrible acts or despicable crimes remain sons and daughters of God, created in his image.
- ✦ **Our work has special value.** We bear the image of God not only in our natures but also in how our natures are expressed in action. Our work has dignity because we imitate God our Father, who labored to create the universe.

Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead. (CCC 357)

Created in communion with God, Adam and Eve enjoyed an intimate friendship with him in the paradise that he had created for them. The world had been created for mankind, and mankind had been created for God.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- ❑ How are human beings like God?

Human nature is similar to the divine nature insofar as human beings have intelligence, free will, and the ability to love.

- ❑ Why is human life sacred?

Every human person is created in God's image, who is All-holy.

- ❑ Why does human labor have special value?

Human labor has dignity because it is an imitation of God the Father, who worked to create the universe.

CLOSURE

Have each student write a **paragraph** with the topic sentence, "The human person is the singular crown of God's creation," using evidence from this lesson.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

- ❑ Study Questions 1–4 (p. 101)
- ❑ Practical Exercise 1 (p. 101)
- ❑ Workbook Questions 1–10
- ❑ Read "The Fatherhood of God" through "Natural Law" (pp. 86–91)

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

Have each student **free write** for five minutes in response to the following prompt:

- ❑ The world is created for human beings, and human beings are created for God.

The Fall

(pp.86–91)

OBJECTIVES

- ☐ God as the ideal Father
- ☐ The consequences of Original Sin
- ☐ Natural law
- ☐ Angels

BASIC QUESTIONS

- ☐ How is God an ideal Father?
- ☐ What is Original Sin, and what are its consequences?
- ☐ What is natural law?
- ☐ Who are the angels?

KEY IDEAS

- ☐ God is a good Father who provides everything that is necessary.
- ☐ Deceived by Satan, Adam and Eve committed Original Sin, which brought disorder, evil, and sin into the world for them and their descendants.
- ☐ Some of the consequences of Original Sin were the loss of paradise, suffering, moral evils of every kind, and death.
- ☐ While evil has no intrinsic existence but is an absence of good, God permits evil out of respect for human freedom.
- ☐ Natural law is the internal and knowable law of good and evil that every person possesses.
- ☐ Angels are pure spiritual beings who serve God, their Creator.
- ☐ Every human being has their own guardian angel.

GUIDED EXERCISE

See page 104a for a *Guided Exercise* about the message of the Book of Genesis.

THE MESSAGE OF GENESIS

The first thing the Bible tells us is that God created the heavens and the earth—the whole universe. In addition to this, there are other important truths of faith found in the creation stories. Among these are the following:

- ✦ Matter was created out of nothing by God at the beginning of time.
- ✦ Time itself is a creation of God.
- ✦ The creation of human beings—in whatever manner humans arose in history—was an act of God.
- ✦ God gave Adam and Eve rational souls.
- ✦ Human beings are descended from Adam and Eve.
- ✦ Adam and Eve were created without sin.
- ✦ Human work is a participation in creation.
- ✦ Adam and Eve were commanded to be obedient to God.
- ✦ Adam and Eve sinned against this command.
- ✦ As a result of that sin, our ancestors fell from their state of sinless innocence.
- ✦ Even at the time of the Fall, God made clear the promise of a future Redeemer.



Creation of Man, Stained Glass, ca. 1490.
The creation of human beings—in whatever manner humans arose in history—was an act of God.

The Fatherhood of God

We recognize that in God there is absolute truth, goodness, and beauty. As humans, however, we experience these divine attributes in a limited way. In theology, we often reason from the finite to the infinite, comparing our experiences with God's perfection. Because we are made in the image and likeness of God,⁸ we can understand something of what God is like by examining ourselves.

Although our human fathers are imperfect individuals, our experience of human fatherhood can help us to understand the characteristics of the ideal father, who is God. An ideal father is responsible for his family and provides everything that his family needs. He is willing to die for his children if necessary. He forms them in faith and intellect and prepares them to live righteous lives modeled after his own virtues. The closer a human father comes to this ideal of life-giving love, the more perfect a father he becomes, because he more perfectly resembles the fatherhood of God.

86 Chapter Four

ANTICIPATORY SET

Incorporate the Fall of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3) into the class's **opening prayer**.

Have each student **free write** for two minutes about his or her greatest difficulty in accepting this account as true.

Briefly share responses.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- ☐ **Why can people understand something about God by looking at themselves?**
Faith reveals that human beings are made in the image of God. Harkening back to St. Thomas Aquinas's "Five Ways," since God possesses all perfections, whatever good qualities are in people are perfected in God.

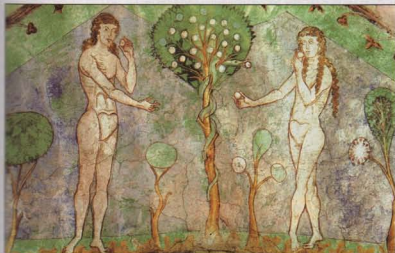
God as the Father of creation is a concept beyond our understanding. Each person is called into existence by the Father's creative love at a particular moment in history and is given all the graces necessary to accomplish the specific tasks that God asks of him or her. Living out these tasks is necessary for our personal salvation and for the salvation of others. The Father thus seeks to guide each person to share in his eternal life in and with the Blessed Trinity.

The three Persons in one God are distinct only in their loving relation to one another, which in some ways mirrors the relationships within a human family. Divine Revelation teaches us that the Father eternally begets the Son, who is co-eternal with the Father, and that the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son. The Blessed Trinity thus manifests the love of the perfect family. So, it is not just the individual person who is created in the image of God, but rather, the entire human family—father, mother, children—is formed in the image of the perfect love of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The Fall

Scripture tells us that God created the world and saw that it was good. Adam and Eve lived in God's grace in a beautiful world without evil, pain, war, shame, sickness, or death. They, however, did not remain in this state of divine bliss for long.

The serpent was more subtle than any other wild creature that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, and he ate. (Gn 3:1-6)



The First Sin by Unknown Master, Fresco ca. 1250. When Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge, they lost something much greater than their natural life—they lost supernatural life, the life of grace in their souls.

Chapter Four 87

FOCUS QUESTIONS

What was the original condition of the world?

It was good; in fact, with the advent of human beings, it was very good (cf. Gn 1:31). Adam and Eve lived in God's grace in a beautiful world without evil, pain, war, shame, sickness, or death.

What lie did the serpent tell Eve?

Were she to disobey God and eat of the forbidden fruit, she would not die as God had warned. He said, "God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gn 3:5).

FOCUS QUESTIONS

How can someone form an adequate idea of what God the Father is like?

He or she can use reason to create a model of the ideal father based on experiences with earthly fathers. Since God possesses all perfections, he must possess the perfect attributes of a father.

How does God act as a good Father?

He calls each person into existence at a particular time and with a particular vocation, giving him or her the graces necessary to accomplish it. At the end of life, there is a share in eternal life with the Blessed Trinity—the greatest possible good—for those who cooperate.

How is the human family created in the image of God?

The human family is a community of life-giving love. In the Blessed Trinity, God the Father eternally begets God the Son, who is eternally begotten by the Father, and God the Holy Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father through the Son.

GUIDED EXERCISE

Have each student work with a partner to compose a bullet-point list of the characteristics of an ideal father.

- He is responsible for his family.
- He provides everything his family needs.
- He is willing to die for his children.
- He forms his children in faith and intellect.
- He prepares his children to live virtuously by modeling the virtues himself.

FOCUS QUESTIONS

- ❑ What motivations does the Sacred Author assign to Eve for having disobeyed God?

She "saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise" (Gn 3:6).

- ❑ According to the New Testament, who is the serpent?

He is the Devil, or Satan the deceiver, who works against God's plans for his people.

- ❑ What death did Adam and Eve experience immediately?

They lost supernatural life, the life of grace in their souls.

- ❑ What was the effect of the Fall on all of Adam and Eve's descendants?

Except the Blessed Virgin Mary, every human person is conceived with the stain of Original Sin and is afflicted with a vulnerability to temptation, evil, and death. **Extension:** As a divine Person who took on a human nature, neither is Christ subject to any stain of Original Sin.

- ❑ Why does the Church baptize infants who have not committed any personal sins?

Everyone is born with the stain of Original Sin, which is cleansed in the waters of the Sacrament of Baptism.

God had told Adam, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."⁷ The serpent told them, "You will not die."⁸ The serpent's opposition to God's truth was a lie, a deception that cost Adam and Eve dearly. The New Testament identifies the serpent as the Devil, or Satan,⁹ the deceiver, who works against God's plans for his people.

Pope Bl. John Paul II explained that this passage illustrates how God's laws relate to human freedom:

With this imagery, Revelation teaches that the power to decide what is good and what is evil does not belong to man, but to God alone. The man is certainly free, inasmuch as he can understand and accept God's commands. And he possesses an extremely far-reaching freedom, since he can eat "of every tree of the garden." But his freedom is not unlimited: it must halt before the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," for it is called to accept the moral law given by God. In fact, human freedom finds its authentic and complete fulfillment precisely in the acceptance of that law. God, who alone is good, knows perfectly what is good for man, and by virtue of his very love proposes this good to man in the commandments.... God's law does not reduce, much less do away with human freedom: rather, it protects and promotes that freedom. (VS 35)

When Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge, they did not immediately suffer physical death. They, however, lost something much greater than their natural life—they lost supernatural life, the life of grace in their souls.

Following St. Paul, the Church has always taught that the overwhelming misery which oppresses men and their inclination towards evil and death cannot be understood apart from their connection with Adam's sin and the fact that he has transmitted to us a sin with which we are all born afflicted, a sin which is the "death of the soul."¹⁰ Because of this certainty of faith, the Church baptizes for the remission of sins even tiny infants who have not committed personal sin.¹¹ (CCC 405)

So serious was this offense against God that it affected all of mankind for all time. With one notable exception—the Blessed Virgin Mary—every human person is conceived with the stain of Original Sin and is afflicted with a vulnerability to temptation, known as *concupiscence*. (Being a divine person, Jesus Christ is likewise without any stain of Original Sin.)



Paradise by Cranach the Elder.

God had planned an existence for mankind far different from what we experience today: a life in the Garden of Eden in complete harmony with God and his creation.

GUIDED EXERCISE

See page 104a for a *Guided Exercise* about freedom and moral obligations.