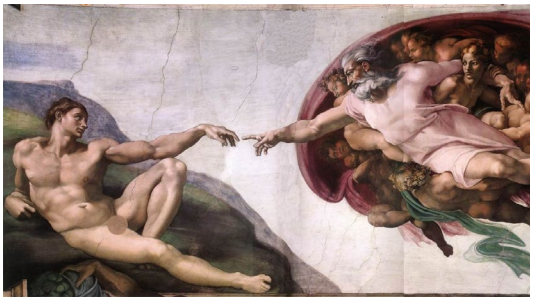

God's Creation

A Gift of His Love

Sacred Scripture begins with the words, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). For all eternity God had a "plan of loving goodness" and creation is the foundation of His plan. The story of creation answers the deepest questions of life. These words from Scripture reveal that God alone is Creator and He sustains all things. Every part of creation, from the smallest seed to the most distant star, reflects God's goodness and wisdom.

The act of creation is an expression of God's overflowing love. He called all things into existence from nothing: the vastness of the sky, the beauty of the land, the rhythm of the sea, the light of the sun and the moon, and the human person.

The first words from Scripture also reveal who we are in God's plan. As the crown of His creation, God formed man and woman in His image and likeness. In His infinite, generous love, God desired to share His life and goodness with human persons, who could freely respond to Him in love.

We have a unique dignity; God wants us to know Him and invites us to share in the life of the Blessed Trinity. In the whole of visible creation, only man and woman were created for union with God. This is the purpose of our lives and the reason why God created each and every one of us.

Being created in God's image means that each person has an immortal soul, with the powers of intellect – our capacity to think – and will – our capacity to choose good over evil. We can know the truth, and we can freely choose the good. God gives us freedom because love must be freely given. He never forces us, but gently calls us to Himself, inviting you and I to share in His divine life.

Creation is not just something God did long ago. The same divine love that spoke the world into being continues to hold it in existence. God sustains us and guides all of creation toward perfection by Divine Providence. Every breath we take is a gift. Every sunrise, every newborn child, every friendship: all of it flows from the Creator's hand.

As disciples of Christ, we are called to see the world with new eyes, to recognize in all things the presence of God's love. To live as good stewards of creation means to respect life, to live with gratitude and to care for the earth. When we see creation as a gift, not a possession, we naturally respond with praise. The beauty of the created world draws us toward worship of its Maker – our Heavenly Father.

Through Jesus Christ, creation is renewed and redeemed. In Him, the harmony that sin disrupted is restored through His grace. Christ reveals the full dignity of the human person and invites all creation to share in the glory of God.

There is a connection between our pondering the gift of God's creation and our lives of faith, hope and love. "The more we know about God's loving work of creation the more we can believe and trust Him. With the eyes of *faith*, we see Him at work everywhere and in everything. With this knowledge we are not afraid and can give reasons for the *hope* that is in us. *Love* is the only response we want to make toward the Lord. Jesus came to show us how to love sacrificially and gives us the grace to do so. Loving Him here and loving our neighbor prepares us for the life and love in Heaven" (*Echoing the Mystery*, 126, Barbara Morgan).

May we pause this week to see the beauty of God's work. Let us give thanks for the gift of creation and for the Creator, our Heavenly Father, who guards and protects us, His beloved son and daughters. May our lives reflect His goodness so that, in all we do, we may proclaim with joy: "Bless the Lord; all you works of the Lord; sing praise to Him and highly exalt Him forever." *(Daniel 3:57)*

By Ann Lankford