

Holy Trinity Catholic Church
RCIA Class Transcript
Creation and the Angels
Lecturer: Father Francis Peffley
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Tonight's topic is a wonderful, fascinating topic on the Angels, the Creation of the Angels, the Fall of the Angels, and then the Creation of Adam and Eve, and the Fall of our First Parents.

We'll start first with talking about the Creation of the Angels. The word Angel actually means "messenger." An Angel is a messenger from God. Angels are pure spirits created by God. Above the Angels is only God, because God is uncreated. He always did exist; He does exist, and always will exist. God is pure spirit. The Angels are like God, because they are pure spirit as well. Angels do not have bodies. Angels are mentioned 800 times in the Bible. So, if somebody doesn't believe in Angels, they'd really have to throw out the whole Bible, because the Bible is filled with stories about Angels, from the book of Genesis all the way through the Book of Revelation. Angels have an intellect and a free will. They are rational beings. They're made in God's image and likeness. They can think. They can love. They can choose. All the Angels, according to the Church, were created by God at once. So, God created probably trillions of Angels at one time, even before He created the galaxy, and the solar system, and the human race.

The Angels were given a choice. All the Angels were created good, but they had free will. The choice that they were given was, "Were they going to love and serve God, or not?" And, according to the Bible, about 2/3 of the Angels remained faithful to God, and about 1/3 rebelled (that's found in the Book of Revelation). The Angels that turned against God we now call demons, and the leader of the demons would be Lucifer. The word Lucifer means "the bearer of light." The "Luc" means light, and at the end, the "fer" refers to carry, or to bear. So, Lucifer was the "bearer of light," apparently one of the most brilliant, most powerful Angels that God had created, way at the top of the charts.

Apparently, he was infatuated with himself. He was unwilling to serve God, and so he led a rebellion in the heavens, and said, "I will not serve." The Book of Revelation said, "That the dragon swept a third of the stars from the sky." And, that's where the Church comes out with the understanding that about 1/3 of the Angels turned away from God, and rebelled. We call them demons. Lucifer, we now call the Devil, or Satan, because of his rebellion against God. Apparently Lucifer said, "I am like God." He did not want to serve God. The Bible says there was a great battle in Heaven, that St. Michael the Archangel came, and there's some sort of a heavenly battle. The word Michael means "one who is like God." Remember the "el" at the end of an Angel's name means "God," like the El Shaddai is "God of power." Michael means "one who is like God." Perhaps when

Lucifer said, "I am like God. I am not going to be willing to serve God," Michael said, "Who is like God?" and there was some sort of a battle in the heavens, according to the Book of Revelation.

The other Angels that we know about in Scripture: we have Gabriel, and we have Raphael. Gabriel means "the strength of God. Rafael means "the healing of God." These are all the names of the Angels that we know in Scripture, even though God created probably trillions of Angels. Only four of them are named: Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and then Lucifer, who led the rebellion in Heaven.

It's also important to remember that when the Angels were first created, they were not created in Heaven, in the Beatific Vision of God. If they had been, they never could have turned away from God. Once you see God, you see His beauty, His goodness, and you could never sin. The Angels were created in some sort of a state or a place, some sort of a realm, called the heavens, where they had a choice – a choice, either to love and serve God, or to choose themselves. If they had been created in Heaven, they never could have turned away from God. Once you see God, you could never choose anything, except for God – that's how beautiful and holy He is.

The Angels are pure spirits, of intellect and will. They do not have bodies, so Angels are neither male nor female. It's our bodies that determine whether we're male or female. Angels do not have bodies; but they're not "nobodies"; they are "somebodies!" Realize that the Angels are all created good at the beginning, but some turned away from God; and we now call them demons.

It's also interesting to note that's why Hell was created. Hell was created for Satan and the fallen Angels. The fallen Angels and the Devil are in Hell, but they can manifest themselves here on Earth, and they can act upon Earth in certain ways. Remember Flip Wilson used to say, "The Devil made me do it", right? Well, that's not a true theological statement. The Devil cannot make you do anything. He can tempt you, and the three great sources of temptation are the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The Devil can certainly tempt people, but people do not have to sin – it's their own choice. If they give into temptation, we call that a sin. The Devil or the fallen Angels cannot force anyone to sin. They can entice, or tempt, just like they tempted Adam and Eve; but they cannot force anyone to sin.

The Angels are higher than we are. So is God, as pure spirit. Angels are created pure spirits. And then, after them, is Man (men and women). Now, we are similar to the Angels in the fact that we have an intellect, and a free will, and we can love and think and choose. The difference is that we have bodies, male or female, and God created us that way. But, ontologically, we're lower than the Angels. Philosophically, God is the highest. He's uncreated spirit, Angels are created spirit, and Man is made up of body and soul. We are body and spirit; we are lower than the Angels.

This test that the Angels went through, whether they were going to be faithful to God, or turn away from God, we don't know the very nature of this test exactly. The theologians speculate that what happened was that God gave the Angels a preview of the Incarnation - that God the Son was going to become lower than the Angels. And perhaps this vision, this foreshadowing, this prophetic manifestation is what turned many of the Angels away. That's again speculation, but it does seem to be probably the best speculation that we have on why some of the Angels rebelled, and why others remained faithful.

All the Angels were created at once. God is not creating any more new Angels. The only thing that God continues to create are human beings. And, every time a new life is conceived in the mother's womb, God directly and immediately creates an immortal soul, and infuses that soul into the body of that new life. Life begins at conception. So, the only thing God is creating now is new human beings, made in God's image and likeness.

Angels were all given some sort of a test. This test was probably the fact that God revealed to the Angels that He was going to become man, that God was going to become lower than the Angels. Many of the Angels apparently could not accept this, because of their pride, thinking that, "Why is this? We are above the human race. We are above men and women. And yet God is going to become man in Christ, as Jesus of Nazareth," and that they were going to have to worship Him, because Jesus would be man, but he would also truly be God – the Son of God who became Incarnate. Evidently, some of the Angels could not accept that, and they said, "No way, we're out of here." And so they were off, and they led a rebellion under Lucifer's reign, and again, about 2/3 of the Angels, according to Scripture, remained faithful to God, and were willing, eventually, to serve the Lord. Some theologians also speculate that perhaps the Angels were given a glimpse, or foreshadowing, of the Blessed Mother, Mary, and the fact that she was going to become the Queen of Angels, and the Queen of Heaven and Earth. She was just merely a human being. She's not divine; she's merely a creature of God, a human being, a woman. And yet, the Angels were going to have to serve her as the Queen of Heaven and Earth. Maybe they were unwilling to worship Jesus, the Son of God. Maybe they were unwilling to come under Mary, as the Queen of Heaven and Earth. Whatever that test was, it seems that the Bible says there was some sort of a battle in Heaven, and then Lucifer and the demons were kicked out.

The demons now live in Hell, and they hate God so much they want to drag as many souls to Hell as possible. That's why the devils try to tempt people and lead them away from God. Because the thing that the Devil wants the most is to have more souls wind up in Hell, separated from God in misery and unhappiness, for all eternity. And so the devils, the demons, and the Devil are out there, the Bible says, "prowling throughout the world looking for the ruin of souls."

We have God on our side, because God created us. He wants us to get to Heaven, and He made us in His image and likeness, and He also gives us the good Angels as our guardians and companions. The Church teaches that every single one of us has a Guardian Angel to protect us, watch over us, and lead us to Christ. That's a defined teaching of the Church. Jesus said, "Do not despise the little children, because I tell you, their Angels in Heaven constantly behold my Heavenly Father's face." Jesus talks about how each person, each child, has a Guardian Angel. The Old Testament says, "I send My Angel before you, to guard you in all your ways." There's a beautiful prayer to the Guardian Angels that might be on your prayer card – "Angel of God, my Guardian dear, to whom God's love, entrusts you here. Ever this day, be at my side, to light, to guard, to rule, and guide." Those are four of the things that the Guardian Angels do for us – to enlighten, to guide, to rule, and to guard us and to teach us. That's a prayer that, you know, we might want to be saying every day, to grow closer to our Guardian Angel.

Some people ask, "Well, when does God give us our Guardian Angel?" The answer really is that our Guardian Angel is given to us either at the moment of our conception, or it's given to us at our birth. There's speculation. Some say that while the baby's inside the mother, the child is protected by the mother's Guardian Angel. That's what some of the theologians say. Others say that since life begins at conception, that God would designate a Guardian Angel for every newly conceived child, for every unborn baby, perhaps has his or her own Guardian Angel. So it's a defined teaching of the Church – every single one of us has a Good Angel, that's our invisible companion, that's with us from the earliest days of our life, until we make it to Heaven. It's really interesting to know that, if there's, let's say, 50 people or 60 people in the chapel tonight, there are also at least 60 holy Guardian Angels in this chapel as well. Our Guardian Angel is also in Heaven worshiping God face to face, but it can protect us here on Earth.

Angels also remain in Heaven, even though they can sort of watch us, and help us, and even really save our lives here on Earth. Many times, car accidents are prevented by our Guardian Angels, for they help us in many ways we don't even realize. So, our Angels are in Heaven, worshiping God face to face, but they also could protect us here on Earth, and manifest themselves here on Earth in many different ways, like the Angel Gabriel manifested himself to the Blessed Mother at the Annunciation. The Angel Gabriel went to Zechariah in the temple. An Angel comforted the Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. Angels were all throughout the Bible – I mentioned 800 times that they're talked about in Scripture.

(A question). All the Angels were created good, but they were given free will. They were all made in God's image and likeness, which means that they had an intellect, and a free will; so they could make a choice, they could make a decision. Evidently, their choice, and their decision, was so wrong, so evil, that it has gradually transformed them into, you know, into what we call fallen Angels, or demons. They were all created good by God at the beginning.

One of the points that you remind me of is that the Angels have incredible knowledge. They're so far beyond us intellectually and spiritually, that when they made their decision, it was an eternal choice, an eternal decision. And once they made that decision, they never could change their mind. They can never repent; they can never turn back, because they had full knowledge when they made their decision. Whereas you and I, if we turn away from God and do the wrong thing, we can eventually say, "Well, I went off the wrong track; I can change my ways; I can get back to God." See, when we make our decisions, our choices often times we don't have the full kind of knowledge that the Angels had. But they had, really, complete knowledge, and when they made their decision, it was an eternal choice, and they can never change that decision. Since their decision, the Angels have, I'm sure, the fallen Angels have become very hideous, and very ugly, and become what we picture now as the demons. That's what happens with sin, how ugly sin is, that it can turn a beautiful Angel of light into an enemy of God, who hates God, and hates the human race so much they want to drag people away from God.

It's also interesting, that since Angels do not have bodies, every Angel is a unique creation of God. Every Angel is different from every other Angel. St. Thomas Aquinas says, "That each Angel is its own species." It's so unique that, just as a dog is different from a cat, and an elephant is different from a giraffe, those are all different species of animals, so every Angel is unique and individual; and no two Angels are alike, just like no two snowflakes are alike, no two fingerprints are alike, no two Angels are alike. Each one is completely distinct from every other Angel. Remember the "Star Wars" movie, where they go into the bar on the other planet, and there's all sorts of different creatures, every one is unique and different? Well, every Angel is unique and different as well. They are just completely worlds unto themselves. And, I mean, to see an Angel in Heaven is going to be so incredible.

Often times, artists draw Angels with wings, which represent the fact that they can travel at the speed of thought. If an Angel is here in Virginia, and somebody needs help in Los Angeles, at the speed of thought it can go to Los Angeles, the City of the Angels. Or, it could go to Hawaii, or it could go to wherever, at the speed of thought. That's why Angels are usually pictured with wings, because they can travel at the speed of thought, and manifest themselves and help people. There are wonderful books about stories of how Angels have rescued people or helped people, and there's no other natural explanation except the Realm of the Angels.

We should really try to develop a relationship with our Guardian Angel. Some people say you should even name your Guardian Angel, so that you develop a more personal relationship. Imagine you might be 20, 30, 40, 60 years old, and you haven't even realized that since you've been a little child, you've had an invisible companion, an Angel with you, your entire life. Our Angel should

become one of our best friends. They can help us find parking spaces all the time; send your Angel ahead of you to find you a good parking space at the mall! If you get pulled over by a cop, send your Angel back to the police officer to soften his heart. By the time he walks up to your car, he might not give you a ticket, because everybody has an Angel – the police officer has an Angel, all of you have Guardian Angels. Let's say if you are not getting along with your husband or your wife, pray to your spouse's Guardian Angel to help them. Just a couple weeks ago, I had to go to a meeting in Arlington, and it was in one of the Diocesan buildings, and the door had locked behind, and so I was outside. And so, I was just out there, and knocked on the door, rang the bell, and nobody answered. All of a sudden, this guy comes out. I said, "Did you hear the doorbell?" He said, "No, but something just told me that somebody was outside trying to get in." That was probably his Guardian Angel giving him a little kick in the rear end to get me out of waiting outside.

Your Guardian Angels can help a lot. You can send your Guardian Angels on missions. If your kids are going out on a date, send your Guardian Angel out there to watch over them to make sure they don't get into any trouble. If your kids are going on traveling, driving to a long distance place, if your husband is over in the war, the military, you can send your Guardian Angel to protect that person. Keep in mind that you can really make use of your Guardian Angel, and pray to your spouse's Guardian Angel, and your kids' Guardian Angel, to watch over them. Because with kids, you have to watch them all the time – when they're two years old, make sure they don't fall down the steps. You can have your Angels work overtime to help you.

The Realm of the Angels is a fascinating truth, and often times, we've, like I said, been 30, 40, 50 years old, we've never really talked to our Guardian Angel, which we should. We should develop, not only have devotion to the Angels, but have a relationship with your Guardian Angel. When I was in college, and in the seminary, I'd always pray to my Guardian Angel to help me to remember, and help me to study the right thing. And the Angels are far superior intellectually, so they can help us remember things; they can help us study for tests; they can help us in many different ways.

Do we have a fallen Angel? The answer is no. Sometimes the cartoons have a good Angel on this shoulder, and a bad Angel on that shoulder. That's really to represent conscience, that we can sort of go either way; or when we're tempted, we can either say no to the temptation, or give in to the temptation. Our conscience can either go one way or another. So the Church teaches that we're not given a bad Angel to harass us. Isn't that good news? The Angels are a sign of God's loving providential care, that He loves us so much that He wants us to get to Heaven, so much so that He assigns one of the Angels to be our constant guide and companion.

In Scripture, there are actually nine different Realms of the Angels, called the Nine Choirs of Angels. To answer your question again, we don't have a bad Angel assigned to us. However, there is the Devil and the demons that sort of generically try to lead souls away from God. That's why we should especially try to develop a good devotion and relationship with our Angels. There's a wonderful series of Christian books by Frank Peretti. Has anyone ever read those books ([Piercing the Darkness](#), [This Present Darkness](#)?) Wonderful Christian books, and even though Frank Peretti's not a Catholic, his theology is so Catholic in regard to the Angels. I'd really recommend reading those books. It talks about the invisible warfare between the Good and the Bad Angels that we don't even see, and it sort of goes on behind the scenes. We don't have a Bad Angel, but we do have a Guardian Angel, and we should really develop a close relationship. The closer we are to our Guardian Angel, the more help we'll get in finding those parking spaces. That's sort of trivializing the work of the Angels. The Angels are primarily to keep us safe from spiritual harm. Let's say you're tempted to steal something, or do something bad, realize that your Angel is right there. How many times would people commit terrible crimes if somebody was watching? But the Angel is always there to help us in times of temptation, not to give in.

(A question). The question has to do with addictions and are they just temptations? Can they be resisted? Of course, temptation in general, they say, comes from the three sources – the world, the flesh, and the Devil. And by the world, we're not talking about trees and nature, because God created the world good. When it's referring to the world, the Church is referring to the evil elements of the world, the hedonism, the materialism, the secularism, the part of the world that leads people away from God – the paganism of the world. And then the flesh is referring to our weakened, sinful nature. After the fall of our first parents, which we'll talk about after the break, we're born into this world with concupiscence, which is unruly passions, or disorderedness, that are passions enough, follow necessarily, what we would like to do, sort of unruly passions, or emotions that we have difficulty controlling. The world, the flesh, flesh is referring to sort of the lust of the world, where the temptations that affect people, through things like alcohol, or drugs, or other forms of immorality. And then the Devil, demons are the third source of temptations for us.

There are addictions that many people have over the course of the years. Sometimes people get addicted to drugs or alcohol, or gambling, or shopping, or promiscuity. Many people are addicted to a whole lot of things. So, with God's grace, people can overcome addictions. With God's grace, and often times with counseling from good Christian counselors, they can get over their shopping addiction, their spending addiction, their drug addiction, or their alcohol addiction. Now, they might remain an alcoholic their whole life, but with God's grace, they maybe will not give in to that temptation again. I guess you're asking are people born, sort of, into this world, as addicts, or do they become that way? (Inaudible response) Oh, sure, maybe what first started out as a temptation, that with alcohol or drugs, for example, the people had a choice. But maybe some people,

chemically, are predisposed towards alcoholism too, so that can be part of it. And genetically too, that some people maybe don't have as high of a resistance. Some people, alcohol doesn't bother them; it's not a temptation. For others, it really is a serious temptation. But over the course of the years, as people abuse their free will, by always giving in to the drugs and the alcohol, they can lower their resistance. So pretty soon, they're enslaved to a particular sin. And what a terrible thing that is, because God wants us to be free. He created us in His own image and likeness, and He wants us to experience the true freedom of the Children of God, as the Bible says.

But because of sin, and attachment to sin, people become enslaved to sin. We'll talk about the Seven Deadly Sins later on. We'll talk about how, sort of, these sins begin to enslave people more and more, so people become a slave of alcohol, or the slave of drugs, or the slave of immorality. And they gradually lose their strength of will, or their willpower, to resist temptation. But God's grace can really transform a person. I think I talked about Father Corapi at one time, who was a cocaine addict and alcoholic. He had been away from God, but with God's grace, he gave up that sinful way of life, and is no longer involved in those things. God's grace can bring a person out of addiction. God can break the chains of slavery to addiction by His grace, and He can bring the person into true freedom. See, the person who is truly free is the one who can resist the temptation and say no. That's a truly free person. If a person can't say no to these sinful things, then they're not truly free.

(A question). That actually brings me up to the Nine Choirs of Angels. The Bible talks about these nine hierarchies of Angels. Seraphim are the highest. The Cherubim are second. And the third are called the Thrones. The fourth are Dominations. Then Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels, and then Angels. It really is a fascinating study when you look at the Nine Choirs of Angels. Usually, they say that you can divide them into three different Realms. They say (this is just a speculation of theologians) that the three highest Realms, their role or job or what they do, is to be in Heaven with Almighty God, praising, singing, worshiping Almighty God. These next three, the Dominations, Virtues and Powers, more or less have the job of taking care of the visible world - things like the rotation of the planets, and the galaxy, the stars, and the movement of the planets around the sun. And again, that's the speculation of theologians. That's why things go in such harmony and order because of the workings of the Angels.

Before the Blessed Mother appeared to the children at Fatima, an Angel appeared to the children and called himself the Guardian Angel of Portugal. So it does seem that countries, and states, and cities have an Angel assigned to them as well. The Chosen People, the Jewish People, have St. Michael as their patron. It talks about, in the Old Testament, how St. Michael was there to lead The Chosen People into the Promised Land. St. Michael might have manifested himself as this Pillar of Fire in the Old Testament. These last three Realms, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels, these, according to theologians, would

deal with giving messages to the human race. This is where you would get St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael – those were the three Archangels that are mentioned in Scripture. An Archangel is higher than an Angel, and they have special roles in God's plan in giving messages to Earth. When somebody was going to be sent down to Earth to ask Mary if she would be willing to become the Mother of the Messiah, the Mother of Jesus, God chose St. Gabriel, an Archangel, because that was a very special mission. In the Old Testament with Tobit and Tobias, God sent Raphael to help out them in the Old Testament. So, Archangels are higher than Angels. Most of our Guardian Angels would probably be chosen from these three categories: Angels, Archangels, and Principalities. And they say that people like the Pope and the President might be given by God sort of an Angel from one of these upper echelons. That's always a possibility. Just because of their special role that people have in this world, maybe God might give them the super-duper, more powerful Angel.

(A question). The question is where did some of these teachings come from? Many of them are based in Scripture, because St. Paul does talk about things like Powers and Principalities and Dominations. So, some of it is actually found in the writings of St. Paul. But, the Nine Choirs of Angels, that was more or less extracted from Scripture and put together by theologians like St. Augustine, and St. Thomas Aquinas. That's really the speculation of theologians, but there are certain defined teachings that the Church has said, for example, that every one of us has a Guardian Angel, and that certain things we do know as official Catholic teachings. Other things, for example, like the fact that the Angels might help to govern the solar system by the spinning of the planets, that's mostly the speculation of theologians. But the fact that we have a Guardian Angel, that's official teaching of the Church.

(A question). Yes, the question is do the Angels manifest themselves physically? And the answer is yes. I imagine that when the Angel Gabriel went to the Blessed Mother, he took the appearance or the form of some Angelic Being, or maybe some messenger from Heaven, or maybe he looked like a man, we don't exactly know. St. Michael has manifested himself in different ways, usually you'll see an image of St. Michael with the pitchfork and stabbing the dragon, and St. Michael with his large wings. So, sometimes the artistic renderings are based upon apparitions or visions where people saw some of the Angels. There's a cave in Italy called the Cave of St. Michael. It's said that St. Michael appeared to some people in this cave way back in the fourth century. You can visit that cave, and they have some images there of what St. Michael probably looked like, or how he probably manifested himself. The Angels can manifest themselves in different ways here on Earth. It seems that in the Book of Genesis, Lucifer manifested himself to Adam and Eve in the form, it says, of the serpent, or the form of a dragon, that the word in the original language could either be interpreted serpent or the form of a dragon.

(A question). Usually they speak of it as the Nine Choirs of Angels. Maybe they would say the Nine Realms of Angels. But usually, they refer to them, I guess, as the Nine Choirs of Angels, beginning with the highest and going down to the lowest.

Over the break, there were a couple of questions. One of them is why are Angels called saints? There are a couple of different definitions of a saint. One definition is a saint is anybody that's in Heaven. And so, since the Angels that remained faithful to God are in Heaven, we can call them St. Michael, St. Gabriel, St. Raphael.

Another question came up - Do we become Angels when we die and go to Heaven? See, a lot in Hollywood, like Michael Landon in "Highway to Heaven," those are all good shows, obviously, but they always have a confusion. They think that when we die, we become Angels. And of course that's not true. Angels are a different form of Creation. Angels are pure spirits, and yet you and I have body and spirit, body and soul. When we die, we don't become Angels; we remain human beings. Our souls go to Heaven; our bodies remain in the Earth, or are cremated until the end of time where God resurrects all of our bodies, glorifies them, and reunites them to our souls. We will get a perfected, beautiful, glorified body in Heaven one day, after the Second Coming of Christ. When we die, we don't become Angels; we remain souls. However, Jesus says we become, "like the Angels in Heaven." We become like Angels; we don't become Angels.

Another thing that usually comes up is what about exorcism and diabolical possession, and do those things happen? Of course, the answer is yes. There is such a thing where the Devil can manifest himself either through a possession or an obsession. A diabolical obsession is where the demon sort of attacks somebody externally. I had to visit somebody who was complaining that the dishes would just fly across the room, and that, you know, handfuls of coins would just go flying across the room. I did some prayers, blessed the apartment with Holy Water, and those things stopped, thank God. So, there can be some diabolical manifestations.

Possession is when the Devil or one of the demons tries to get inside the person, and usually the Church has to be called in and do a real exorcism. Now, the average priest is not equipped to handle those kinds of cases. Normally, they'd have to go to the Bishop, and the Bishop has designated one priest in every diocese to be the Diocesan Exorcist. I don't know who it is; I know it's not me. That's about all I know. Usually it's a very old, saintly, holy priest that's lived 50 years in the monastery on bread and water. Usually, it's that kind of priest that's chosen to be the Diocesan Exorcist. But every diocese is supposed to have one. Rome has one; Paris has one. The Exorcist of Rome wrote a book a couple of years ago, called An Exorcist Tells A Story. It's a very good book, and he tells about some of the cases that he had to deal with.

The Devil is very alive and active. He is a fallen Angel, so his intelligence is far superior to ours. However, God is on our side, and we can protect ourselves through the use of Holy Water, by wearing a cross or a crucifix, by going to church, by avoiding things like Ouija boards, the occult, and all those things that could open us up to demonic influence. So, we do have to be very close to the Lord, and if we don't open ourselves up to demonic influence, then we'll be protected. Keep that in mind, that those things are out there. We should never go to fortune tellers, or soothsayers, or get involved in the occult in any way. We should always stay away from those things.

The other thing to realize is that the Devil is not the opposite of God. God is way up here; He's a pure spirit, uncreated. Whereas the Devil is just an Angel, a great Angel, but he's a fallen Angel. And so, God does not have an opposite. God is God, and He's a million gazillion times more powerful than the Devil. The Devil is just a fallen Angel, far more powerful and superior than human beings. So really, does the Devil have an opposite? If he does, it'd be St. Michael the Archangel. Don't think that God is here, and the Devil is here; and that they're equal in power, that's not the way it is. God is God – He's uncreated. He's eternal. Whereas, the Devil is a fallen Angel, is down here, and his opposite is St. Michael the Archangel, an Angel that remained faithful to God.

(A question). The question is do we become saints? Yes, when we go to Heaven, and any of us, God-willing, all of us, who die and go to Heaven, we all will become saints in Heaven. Now, we might not be canonized; we might not get our picture on a nice holy card, and have a day named after us, or churches named after us, like St. Peter's and St. Paul's, and St. Teresa's, but anybody who makes it to Heaven becomes a saint. And really, if you're living in God's grace right now, if you died right now, and were on your way to Heaven, you would obviously be a saint. Like I said, you wouldn't be canonized, because the Church has only canonized just a few thousand, maybe two or three thousand, and of course, many more are beatified, on their way to being officially declared a saint by the Church. So, anybody that makes it to Heaven is a saint. Like, if your Grandmother's there, or your Mom or your Dad, then they're a saint up in Heaven. Not canonized, but certainly still a saint.

With the topic of Creation, the Church teaches that God created everything from nothing. In Latin, it's called Ex Nihilo. It means "from nothing." So everything God made, the Angels were created by God out of nothing. The galaxies, the stars, were created by God out of nothing by an act of His will. He made everything out of nothing. And we then know that the Book of Genesis tells us that God created everything. The Book of Genesis tells us that He created everything in six days, and rested on the seventh day. Now, these days are not necessarily 24-hour periods. If someone wants to hold that, they're welcome to hold that, but the Church does not require us to hold that these days are 24-hour periods, for a couple of reasons. One is that, even the Bible says, "For God, a thousand years

is like a day. A day is like a thousand years.” And that these days could refer to, and probably do according to most theologians, longer periods of time. Maybe 50 million years, a 100 million years, 5 million years, we don’t really know. But, we do believe that God created everything, and that God

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made the sky and the firmament, and divided the waters. On the third day, He created land, and brought forth plants. On the fourth day, God made the Sun, Moon, and stars. Now, what’s interesting is that if God only made the Sun on the fourth day, well then, how do we determine what a day is? Because obviously, a day is how long it takes for the Earth to completely revolve. And then of course, it’s a year it takes for it to go around the Sun. So, the Church would hold that these days are referring to, most likely, longer periods of time. The fifth day, God made the creeping things, birds, and fish. The sixth day, the beasts and the cattle. And finally, He made man in His own image and likeness. So, man is higher than the animals. So it goes God, then the Angels, then human beings, and then the animals, then plants, and then minerals underneath them. In the Hierarchy of Creation, God made us in His own image and likeness. Then it says on the seventh Day, He rested for all the work He had done. Now, it doesn’t mean God was tired or anything like that, because if God were tired, He wouldn’t be God. But again, it’s the way that the Bible describes the fact that God created everything, and is no longer creating at this time. The only thing He continues to create is new human souls, immortal souls, with every new life that is conceived. But, it says when He’s resting, really we’re now living in the seventh day. That’s where we’re living, in the time after the Creation. And so, all of it, since the Creation ended, until now, is the seventh day. Now, there’s no contradiction between the Book of Genesis and science, because God is the Origin and the Creator. He’s the Author of both science and religion, true science and true religion. Both come from Almighty God.

We know that we’re made as men and women, with a body and a soul, made in His image and likeness. And the Bible says, “That God formed man out of the dust of the Earth, and that He breathed into man a soul, which is the very breath of God.” A soul is the immortal spirit that God created for us, which will live forever. Our bodies will die, they’ll go back to the dust, or be cremated, or disintegrate. But our souls, once God made our souls, they will live forever, eventually either in Heaven or in Hell, for all eternity. Ultimately, those are the only two places. So, God made us with an immortal soul, different than the animals. The animals have senses, and have instinct, but one thing we have, is we have free will. We have intellect and free will, so we’re higher than the animals. The Church teaches that we have what’s called an *immortal soul* that makes us up as human beings, whereas animals have what’s called a *material soul*. The speculation is that when an animal dies, its soul ceases to exist at that point. That always, of course, upsets a lot of people, because sometimes they think that their animals are people too. Animals are incredibly wonderful gifts of

God, and dogs and cats are wonderful creations of God, and yet they are different. We're made in God's image and likeness. We have an intellect and free will. God has put animals on this world for us to enjoy and to keep us company. They are wonderful gifts of God. Whether they are immortal, the Church says, as far as we know, they don't have immortal souls. They have souls that live until the body of that animal dies, and then that soul ceases to exist. But, then again, you know, God is God, and we don't know everything; and it's possible that in the new World of Heaven, and the new Heavens and the new Earth that He's going to create, maybe there will be animals in the new Heavens and the new Earth after the Second Coming of Christ. But all we do know, though, is that human beings have immortal souls made in God's image and likeness.

Now, it does talk about how God made man out of the dust of the Earth. This could reconcile with evolution. So, remember that evolution is a theory, and obviously there's some sort of evolutionary process that has taken place over the years. If there were an evolutionary process, the Church says that we have to believe that God oversaw that entire process, that His hand was there before, during, and after that evolutionary process of Creation, and how the Earth at the beginning might have been a formless void and a ball of fire and how the gases eventually formed the cloud system and how the rain came down and how the land separated from the water and how the Earth took shape over the course of millions of years. God oversaw that process of Creation. We believe that, obviously as Christians.

Then God formed our first parents, Adam and Eve, it says out of the dust of the Earth. Well, could He have the body of man evolve over the years? The answer is yes. The Church says that it is possible, that *material evolution* can be reconcilable with the teaching of the Church, but not *spiritual evolution*. Basically what this means, is it possible that the body of Adam and Eve could have evolved over the course of time, and then God chose a male and female, and then infused an immortal soul made in God's image and likeness, into that first man and first woman? The answer is yes. God could have done that, and that's called material evolution.

What we don't believe as Christians or as Catholics, is that monkeys evolved into apes, and apes evolved into human beings. Remember, animals have a different kind of soul than we do. We have an immortal soul made in God's image and likeness. Animals do not. So, it's not right to hold that there was some evolutionary process where we came from the monkeys, and that these monkeys sort of, at one point, gave birth to human beings. That's not what the Church teaches. And really, in the theory of evolution, that wouldn't even hold water. Sometimes you'll see these diagrams where you have like a monkey hunched over, and he gets taller and taller, and then he turns into a human being. That's just not true. Scientifically, there's no evidence of that archeologically to show the bone structures going in that way. So anyway, evolution is a theory. Obviously,

part of it is true. But even if there were evolution, we as Christians still hold that God oversaw that whole evolutionary process.

If God created the entire world and the galaxy and all that with the Big Bang, that's fine. But God is the One that produced the Bang. He can't have something go Bang without something produced. If I go "bang," I'm the one that produced that noise. So God perhaps, decided to create the world that way. That's not irreconcilable with the teachings of Christianity. God created everything out of nothing. He oversaw this whole process of the world and the creation of animals, obviously. And God created our first parents, we believe, and the Bible calls them Adam and Eve. Adam meaning "man," and the fact that He made them with special gifts. And we talk about in the Church that God made Adam and Eve in His own image and likeness, and He gave them *Sanctifying Grace*, which is *Friendship with God*. And He gave them many gifts. The gifts that Adam and Eve had were the fact that they were never going to die; they were never going to experience illness, or disease. There was harmony in the Garden of Eden, and the animals all got along. Remember, it says in the Bible that, "The lion can lay down with the lamb." There was harmony in the Garden, and when they worked, it was not laborious. It was not painful. They would go out and they would pick the fruit of the Garden, and it was harmonious. For example, women would have given birth without labor pains. So, wouldn't that have been nice, right? Man would not have to toil with the sweat of his brow to produce a living. God had given Adam and Eve all these special gifts. They had bodily immortality as well.

Adam and Eve were tempted. It says that the fallen Angel Lucifer appeared in the form of a serpent or a dragon to them, and gave them some sort of a temptation. The Bible talks about it being a tree with Forbidden Fruit. That's what the Bible tells us. The Church says that it could have been some other form of a temptation. All we do know is that it was a sin of pride, a sin of disobedience, where our first parents said, "No, we do not want to remain creatures; we want to become like God." And they rebelled against God. They committed the Original Sin. And because Adam was the head of the human race, when he sinned, then all his descendents would lose all those supernatural gifts that God had intended for the human family, for all their children and descendents. You might say, "That's not fair." Well, it's unfortunate.

Let's say that if your grandfather was a multi-millionaire, and he was going to leave you an inheritance, but he got involved in all sorts of bad deals and he lost all his money. Unfortunately, you're out the inheritance. Did you deserve the inheritance? No, that would have been a bonus. That would have been a free gift. But it's not something that you had earned or merited, or even deserved. It was a free gift from God. The same thing with Adam. He was given special gifts. They would have been passed down to us, but because of his sin, we did not get to inherit all those blessings; just like the grandkids don't get to inherit the million dollars if the grandfather goes to jail and loses everything of his own free will and decision. And remember, Adam was the head of the human race, so when he

made his decision against God, it affected all of us. Just like if a president of a country, or the United States, decides to go to war, then the whole nation is at war. Did we choose that? No, but we're all part of it together. So, when the president of the country makes a decision, it affects all of us, because we're part of that country. When Adam, the head of the human race, made that decision, it affects all of us, as members of the human family. That's something to keep in mind. Because of the sin of Adam, we lost God's grace – we're not born into this world in the state of grace, we're born into this world with Original Sin on our soul, which is passed down to us through human generation. So, every one of us is born into this world with Original Sin on our soul, which Baptism takes away.

We're also born into this world with the three effects of Original Sin, and they are *a weakened will, a darkened intellect, and concupiscence*. Our will has been affected. We have a weakened will. Our intellect has been darkened. We are not as smart as we would have been had not Adam and Eve sinned. And we have concupiscence, which is unruly desires, or passions that are harder to control. Now, remember that after the fall, we did not become totally corrupt. That was sort of Martin Luther's belief, that after the fall the human race became depraved and totally corrupted. The Church doesn't teach that. The Catholic Church says that we are fallen, not corrupted completely. We have a weakened nature, not an evil nature. So we have a weakened will, a darkened intellect, and concupiscence.

When we're baptized, it takes away the Original Sin, but we still maintain these effects. We still have a weakened will, we still have a darkened intellect; and we still have concupiscence. Some of the sociologists say that human beings probably only use, what, about ten percent of their brain capacity. Why is that? Well, I would think the answer could be with Original Sin. The facts that we have the effects of Original Sin, then we're not able to use the full 100 percent of our brain power; we probably only use what they say, you know, ten percent.

The sin of Adam also affected the realm of nature. Because of the Original Sin of Adam, harmony was lost. That's why animals now fight each other, and bears attack lions, and things like that in the wilderness. There's an effect that has occurred in nature as well. Had Adam and Eve not sinned, we would probably always have perfect weather all the time. We wouldn't have, I'm sure, things like tornadoes, earthquakes, and hurricanes, and other things which are sort of are an effect of the disharmony that occurred because of the sin of our first parents. And this also explains why we have sickness, illness, and disease in the world. Had not our first parents sinned, we would not have illnesses, or cancer, or arthritis, or any of these illnesses. So, keep that in mind, because people often ask the question, "Well, why was my baby born with Down's Syndrome? Or, why does my child have cancer? Or, why do they have a miscarriage? Or, why do I have one of these other illnesses? Why is a child born with a particular problem?" Well, it does go back to the Original Sin of our first parents, especially Adam. He was the head of the human race. The problems that occur in nature affect all of

us. All of us will experience some sort of physical illnesses, health problems, and we will all die. Even though Jesus did come and die for our sins, and enable us to go to Heaven, we still have to deal with the effects of Original Sin. We're still going to have illnesses and disease in this life which we would not have had, had not our first parents rejected God, and committed that very grave sin called the Original Sin. It wasn't our sin, but we do inherit the effects of that Original Sin.

(A question). It does say that, from the quote here, "On the first day, God said, 'Let there be light', and light was made. Then He divided light from darkness and called it daylight, and the darkness night." On the second day, the Sun, Moon, and stars. Some speculate it could have been the Angels. Angelic light is one possibility. But, if you also notice that the way the narrative is written, days one, two, and three correspond with days four, five, and six. And so, in Hebrew, they would often use parallel verses to give emphasis. For example, on the first day, when you have God creating, and it does make sense when you look at it, in the first day it says, "God said, 'Let there be light.'", and on the fourth day, it says, "He created the Sun, Moon, and stars," so that would correspond. The second day it says, "God made the sky, the firmament and the waters," and on the fifth day, that's when it says, "He created the creeping things, birds, and the fish." So, that corresponds to the second day. And the third day, "God made the dry land, and the plants," and that corresponds to the sixth day, when "He made the beasts, and the cattle, and Man." That's one of the reasons why the Church says that these days represent all of God's creative activity over the course of probably millions of years. The people who often bring up that same question say, well, if God created light on the first day, then why isn't the Sun created until the fourth day? But again, just see the parallels between the first day and the fourth day, the second and the fifth, and the third and the sixth.

(A question). Yes. God created Hell as a place for the fallen Angels to go. And Hell is a place where God is not. Hell would not have been created had not the fall of the Angels taken place. Once Lucifer and the other Angels turned against God, God drove them out of the heavens, or the realm where the Angels were tested; and then the Holy, Good Angels that remained faithful to God, entered Heaven, the Beatific Vision of God, seeing God face to face. The Angels which had turned their will against God now became evil, or the demons. They had to go somewhere; so then God created Hell. That's why, we never want to go there, for a lot of reasons, because it's a place of supernatural evil, created for the Devil and his Angels. And so, for a human being to go there, what a terrible thing that is, because then you're hanging out for all Eternity with the Devil and the fallen demons. It's a place you do not want to go, because it's a place of supernatural hatred and supernatural evil. Not just human evil, supernatural, angelic, demonic evil.

(A question). What is Purgatory like? Well, that's a whole other topic. We're going to get into Purgatory in one of our future classes. So I'm going to wait on that

one. And I did talk about it on Sunday at Mass, which I think everyone was there for that. But, we'll get into that. We're going to spend a lot of time on that.

(A question). To reconcile, a Catholic or a Christian, in good conscience, can believe that the world was created in a long period of time, and that things evolved over many millennia, for example, but that God created everything out of nothing, and oversees that creation of the world and the galaxy, the Solar System, etc. And, what a Christian and a Catholic can believe as well, and still reconcile Evolution with the teachings of Genesis, is that when the Book of Genesis says, "God created Adam out of the dust of the earth," well, Evolution would hold the same thing, that over time, the body of man evolved out of the earth, whether it be from organisms into other forms of life, and eventually grew into something far superior. So, a Catholic could hold that position, which is called Material, or the Evolution, of matter, that material things did evolve over time. However, as a Catholic, we have to believe that, at the bare minimum, is that at one point God chose a male and female, and infused an immortal human soul, made in God's image and likeness, into that male and female body. That's sort of the bare minimum. But that's different than what's called Spiritual Evolution, which we don't believe as Catholic Christians, namely that monkeys evolved into apes, and apes into man. Obviously, for a lot of reasons, one is that we have intellect and free will. The animals don't. There is a big difference between animals and man. But, there is a form of Material Evolution that a person can reconcile with the Book of Genesis, and the teachings of the Church.

(A question). A wonderful question, it has to do with Mary. We believe that there were two persons born into this world after the Fall that did not have Original Sin. One was Jesus, because He's the Son of God, and He was not tainted by the sin of Adam. And the other one was Mary, and we're actually going to have a whole class on Mary and talk about the Immaculate Conception, where we believe, since Mary was the new Eve, that God preserved her from being tainted by Original Sin. Just as the first Eve was created without sin, so the new Eve (Mary) would have also been preserved at the moment of her conception, in her mother's womb, from being tainted by the sin of Adam, the Original Sin. And there was a special grace given to Mary to preserve her from Original Sin, because she was to be the chosen Vessel to bear within her womb Jesus, the Son of God. Now, Mary's mother, St. Anne, had Original Sin. Her father, Joachim, had Original Sin. But at the moment of Mary's conception in Anne's womb, the Church teaches that God preserved Mary from being tainted by Original Sin in her womb, since she was to be the Mother of Jesus, the Son of God. And there's a whole lot more we'll go into, when we get to the topic on Mary, and why we believe that God preserved her from Original Sin, and we call that the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

(A question). Well, it's interesting, that even in the Book of Genesis and the Garden of Eden, it seems that there was harmony in the Garden, and it doesn't indicate that there were any animals eating one another. But then, it seems that

after the Fall, there was discordancy that occurred even in the animal kingdom and the animal world. And again, that's just speculation, that's not defined teaching of the Church, just speculation that the sin of Adam was such a great offense that it did affect the order of nature, and because Man lost the special gifts of the immortality of his body, and all these other blessings, that it also affected the order of nature, including the animals. Again, it's just speculation, but it seems to make sense. That's why there's disharmony and discordancy in the world of nature as well.

(A question). Well, because animals are part of God's creation, and that animals are a special gift of God. And we have St. Francis of Assisi, who's the Patron Saint of animals. He loved animals; he didn't drive around with a bumper sticker that said, "I love animals; they're delicious!" I don't think he had that on the back of his cart! He loved the animals, and we should too, obviously. But God does allow us to use them for food, like the steak, and fish, and seafood dinners, and Big Macs, and everything else that we have. If animals did have immortal souls, then it would be murder to eat a cheeseburger, or whatever. And I guess if people didn't believe that their animals' souls went to Heaven, they'd also have to hold that their animals' could go to Hell too. But of course, it doesn't seem obviously, they don't deserve Heaven; but they don't deserve Hell either, for biting the postman. They have an instinct that that guy's an evil guy, or a bad person (just joking). Animals don't deserve Hell. They don't deserve Heaven. And if animals were immortal, and made in God's image and likeness, then we should never kill them, and use them for food or clothing; and it would be murder to kill a cow or a chicken. If you did hold that dogs and cats went to Heaven, then other animals would have to be there too, like scorpions, snakes, cockroaches, mosquitoes, and other things of the animal kingdom as well. So, it's logically, if we did take it to that, we would have to hold that all the animals would be either in Heaven or in Hell.

(A question). We don't know what happened to the Garden of Eden. The Bible says that God stationed an Angel with a flaming sword, so that no one could go back into the Garden. We don't know exactly how to interpret that. It does say they were cast out of the Garden. And then they had to earn their living by tilling the soil, and by raising animals, and killing them, etc, etc. They were driven out of the Garden of Paradise, which meant that they also lost all these special gifts that God had wanted to give them.

Make sure that all of you get the list of Catholic scientists. I just brought you that because it does show that, to be a Catholic and Christian, it's not irreconcilable with science, because some of the greatest scientists were Catholics, like Dr. Ampere, who invented electrodynamics; Dr. Braille, who invented the Braille system for the blind; Cassiodorus, who was a Catholic priest, invented the watch. Isn't that interesting? Copernicus was a Catholic priest. Eustachias, whom the Eustachian Tube is named after. Fallopius, whom the Fallopian Tube is named after. Gutenberg was a Catholic scientist. Marconi, Louis Pasteur, the founder of

the Pasteurization process of milk. So, it's a neat thing to look over that list of scientists, to show that really some of the greatest scientists were men of Faith. And it's not irreconcilable to believe in science and to also be devout Catholics and Christians.