

Sunday, October 6, 2024 – Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

First Reading: Genesis 2:18-24

18-20 - The LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. But for the man there was not found a helper as his partner.

It is good to know that God knows that it is not good for us to be alone. We need close, intimate relationships. Dogs are wonderful, but we need relationships beyond what we can have with animals.

Adam named all of the animals.

Every time I go to the zoo, I am amazed at the number and variety of all the different kinds of animals. And yet I know that even the zoo has only a small percentage of the different kinds of animals.

Can you imagine the kind of memory Adam must have had to keep track of all the names that he had given and to keep track of all the names of all the different kinds of animals?

Adam before the fall as the fully actualized human.

Adam before the fall as an example of the kind of brain power that we have been blessed with.

What percentage of your brain power – your brain capacity – are you using?

21-24 - So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

One interpretation is that God did not take one of Adam's ribs. Rather He took one of Adam's sides.

A helper/partner was not found in any of the animals, so God divided Adam into two – Adam and Eve.

The complementarity of male and female is based upon creation – the way God created us.

Gospel: Mark 10:2-16

Mark 10: 6 quotes Genesis 1: 27 - From the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female."

Mark 10: 7-8 quote Genesis 2: 24 – 'For this reason (therefore) a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh.

Humanity as male and female is based upon creation.

There is no way to find Biblical support for a variety of gender identities and expressions.

Some would argue that "God made them male and female" means that He made male and female and also a whole variety of identities in addition to and in between, just as He made light and darkness, but He also made dawn and dusk, and He made land and sea, but He also made swamp, bayou, and estuary.

The problem with that interpretation is the word or words "therefore" or "for this reason" at the beginning of Genesis 2: 24. It is because humanity are male and female (two that are different rather than a variety of identities in between) that they are able to become one flesh.

My gender is the way I am created. It is not primarily the way I self-identify, the way I feel about myself, which bathroom I want to be able to use, or how I feel most comfortable.

Part of my trusting the Creator is my trusting the way He created me, including my gender.

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Psalm: Psalm 8

We all have times when we start beating ourselves up because we feel badly about ourselves.

When that happens to you, one of the best passages of Scripture to read is Psalm 8.

1 - O LORD our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth.

3-4 - When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,

what are mere mortals that you should be mindful of them, human beings that you should care for them?

5 - Yet you have made them little less than divine; with glory and honor you crown them.

6-8 - You have made them rule over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet:
all flocks and cattle, even the wild beasts of the field,

the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatever passes along the paths of the sea.

You may feel very badly about yourself, but God considers you worth redeeming – even at great cost.

You have been created with dignity and to exercise dominion.

How are we doing at exercising dominion over God’s creation?

Second Reading: Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12

1: 1-2 - Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds.

1: 3 - He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact imprint of God’s very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word.

1: 3-4 - When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

2: 6-8 - Someone has testified somewhere,

“What are human beings that you are mindful of them, or mortals, that you care for them?

You have made them for a little while lower than the angels;

you have crowned them with glory and honor, subjecting all things under their feet.”

2: 8-9 - Now in subjecting all things to them, God left nothing outside their control. As it is, we do not yet see everything in subjection to them, but we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

2: 11 - Jesus is not ashamed to call them (us) brothers and sisters.