

Year A 2nd Sunday Homily Outline

JOHN 1:29 THE NEXT DAY HE SAW JESUS COMING TOWARD HIM AND SAID, "BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD."

Tolstoy Story – ‘The Forged Coupon’ Illustration of the ripple effect, the snowballing effect of sin in the world.

1. Original Temptation

Genesis 3

1 NOW THE SNAKE WAS THE MOST CUNNING OF ALL THE WILD ANIMALS THAT THE LORD GOD HAD MADE. HE ASKED THE WOMAN, "DID GOD REALLY SAY, 'YOU SHALL NOT EAT FROM ANY OF THE TREES IN THE GARDEN?'" 2 THE WOMAN ANSWERED THE SNAKE: "WE MAY EAT OF THE FRUIT OF THE TREES IN THE GARDEN; 3 IT IS ONLY ABOUT THE FRUIT OF THE TREE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GARDEN THAT GOD SAID, 'YOU SHALL NOT EAT IT OR EVEN TOUCH IT, OR ELSE YOU WILL DIE.'"
4 BUT THE SNAKE SAID TO THE WOMAN: "YOU CERTAINLY WILL NOT DIE! 5 GOD KNOWS WELL THAT WHEN YOU EAT OF IT YOUR EYES WILL BE OPENED AND YOU WILL BE LIKE GODS, WHO KNOW GOOD AND EVIL."

Freedom put to the test

CCC396 God created man in his image and established him in his friendship. A spiritual creature, man can live this friendship only in free submission to God. The prohibition against eating "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" spells this out: "for in the day that you eat of it, you shall die." The "tree of the knowledge of good and evil" symbolically evokes the insurmountable limits that man, being a creature, must freely recognize and respect with trust. Man is dependent on his Creator, and subject to the laws of creation and to the moral norms that govern the use of freedom.

Man's first sin

CCC397 Man, tempted by the devil, let his trust in his Creator die in his heart and, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. This is what man's first sin consisted of. All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness.

Eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – really signifies: "I can't trust God, I must decide for myself what is good and evil, right and wrong."

Two parts to the attack of the enemy

1. Don't Trust God
2. Don't Submit to God

2. The Original Sin

We don't submit to God because we don't trust God

Genesis 3:4... YOU WILL BE LIKE GODS, WHO KNOW GOOD AND EVIL.

Planned Parenthood vs. Casey: "*At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life.*"

We make ourselves like gods with contraception, abortion, redefinition of family, gender theory, war, science, modern ethical and philosophical systems.

St. John Paul II in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life)* – 1995 describes this whole process:

21. In seeking the deepest roots of the struggle between the "culture of life" and the "culture of death" ... We have to go to the heart of the tragedy being experienced by modern man: the eclipse of the sense of God and of man, ... when the sense of God is lost, there is also a tendency to lose the sense of man, of his dignity and his life; (*but also, it is a vicious circle*) in turn, the systematic violation of the moral law, especially in the serious matter of respect for human life and its dignity, produces a kind of progressive darkening of the capacity to discern God's living and saving presence.

22. Consequently, when the sense of God is lost, the sense of man is also threatened and poisoned, as the Second Vatican Council concisely states: "But when God is forgotten the creature itself grows unintelligible". ... He no longer considers life as a splendid gift of God, something "sacred" entrusted to his responsibility and thus also to his loving care and "veneration". Life itself becomes a mere "thing", which man claims as his exclusive property, completely subject to his control and manipulation....

He is concerned only with "doing", and, using all kinds of technology, he busies himself with programming, controlling and dominating birth and death. Birth and death, instead of being primary experiences demanding to be "lived", become things to be merely "possessed" or "rejected".

Moreover, once all reference to God has been removed, it is not surprising that the meaning of everything else becomes profoundly distorted. Nature itself, from being "mater" (mother), is now reduced to being "matter", and is subjected to every kind of manipulation. This is the direction in which a certain technical and scientific way of thinking, prevalent in present-day culture, appears to be leading when it rejects the very idea that there is a truth of creation which must be acknowledged, or a plan of God for life which must be respected.... Thus it is clear that the loss of contact with God's wise design is the deepest root of modern man's confusion.

By living "as if God did not exist", man not only loses sight of the mystery of God, but also of the mystery of the world and the mystery of his own being.

3. Jesus takes away the sin of the world

Objectively

- God makes himself like us. He takes on a human nature, a human body – to be like us. But unlike us, Jesus obediently follows the Father's plan for the salvation of the world: NOT MY WILL, BUT YOUR WILL BE DONE.

Subjectively

- But also, *subjectively* the Lord makes possible how we participate by teaching us how to live like Him and share in the victory over sin.