

«Behold, I make all things new »

(Revelation 21 :5)

Lent Retreat 2022

I AM CREATED

Genesis 1

We meditate Genesis and the story of the creation of the world. We will see that the Lord took the initiative of this creation and gradually moved His creation from the light to the organism then to the plants and the animals on land and seas all the way to the creation of the human being. Everything is set in its place and is in complementarity with the rest of the creation. The importance of this process lays in its symbolism as it lets us perceive how we were among the creatures God had thought about. God created me because He loved me and I was in God's thoughts right from the beginning. And those who are in God's thoughts are surely born with love. We will meditate how we are born because we were loved.

While reading this passage, I pause and rest at a happy thought: God Himself is looking after the earth. How beautiful is it that we live in a world that had been created by God's own hands. A wide-range of thoughts goes through our imagination; and we use our creativity to produce pictures and symbols around each of the 6 days of creation. However, we need to also dive into the depth of the Creator to search for our place inside of Him.

I pause at the words "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The spirit of the Lord has been fluttering since the beginning of times and is still operating in the world today; and here it is fluttering, above our heads and in our hearts, and constantly renewing us. It is guiding our spiritual retreat and providing us with empowering thoughts should we weaken, comforting ones should we be sad, and answers should we have questions. So let us count on the Holy Spirit through whom the Lord has created the world.

God spoke to the Holy Spirit and said: “Let there be light...” God creates the universe with His words. God has a word for each one of us, shall we then hear it? That who has created the universe is capable of creating us with His word. And how much of His heart and love has he then put in the word when He announced: Let this or that be born. It was at this time that the Lord has substantiated his thought and soul in the form of a word and created this life in me. The first aim of your birth should be for you to learn that God is love.

What we learn through this passage is quite logical: the first creation of God was the light. God is the light who has given Himself to enlighten the path of humanity. With the Psalm we chant “The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?” Let’s praise the Lord, the Light that comes from light. How beautiful our praises are in the liturgies of the ascension: “Come receive the light from the Light that is never overtaken by night.” I also bring to my mind the famous vesper of the Byzantine church: “Oh gracious light, pure brightness of the ever living father...now as we come to the setting of the sun and our eyes behold the vesper light, we sing your praises, O God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” You see, the sun set is followed by the rise of the moon light just as the Lord created them on the second day. Most importantly is that this light stays with us and never leaves us. These praises help us in our practice to praise the Lord and thank Him.

There was nothing that could be of importance to the human being and which the Lord had forgotten to create. From the water to the land and the all the nourishment of this earth and its animals and whales and fishes, they all praise the Lord and are all for the service of man.

After creating man, the Lord rested because this man is a creature that can love just as the Lord can. God gave this world to a creature that looks like Him; a creature that can hear, talk, pray and praise the Lord. He created man as a male and a female so they complete one another in love and growth. God’s commandment to man is: “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it...” God has not feared to give the universe to the man he loved.

What should attract my attention in these passages is the language of perfection. The Lord has given everything to man and this has been repeated several times: “have dominion [...] over every living thing that moves on the earth,” “let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds...”

Finally, “God saw that it was good” is a sentence that was repeated because the Lord has loved the work of His hands. Not only that, but He also loved man who was created after His image; and everything the Lord had created before was for the service of His beloved man.

Where do I stand from all this universal activity? I am a cycle of all the other cycles of creation, but I am an essential one because I am loved from the Lord.

Have you ever felt that the Lord loves you personally and with the same extent and quality with which he had created the world? Try to meditate on your journey with the Lord so far. If you wish to renew your relationship with Him, return to the story of the Creation. Start from the beginning, when you were still a thought in the heads of your parents, to when you were born, to when you gave those who brought you up a hard time; but they were still happy. Then you moved on with your life until you arrived to this day. Wasn't the hand of the Lord behind all those who embraced you? Therefore, praise the Lord and pray that you may be granted the blessing to move on.