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GOD, THE CREATOR

Modern science aims to answer the questions: How did things come about? How was this planet and the universe formed? How did plants and animals develop? What are the laws that govern the life and activity of things and especially of human beings?

Religion - and the Church, and the Scriptures - do not pretend to have the scientific answers to questions such as these.

The Church is very interested in any progress that science makes in solving how things came into existence. We follow with great interest the work of scientists who have discovered immense power in the universe and amazing delicacy in microscopic life.

But our Christian faith has the answer to another question. We Christians believe in the Creator who governs the life and activity of everything, and we know why things came about. Not how, but why.

But why do natural catastrophes overpower us today? We don't know why God allows these things to happen. Only God knows why. We are not God. We acknowledge our dependence on God the Creator.

Ever since God revealed himself, men have experienced their dependence on the God who made himself known to them. They have come to believe that God has complete power over the world and over everything that has happened and is happening, including painful and destructive events.

This is what the Bible means when it presents God as the Creator. This is what the Church teaches in the Creed: "I believe in God ... Creator of heaven and earth." God has always had complete control over everything, and that's a very good reason why I should trust God, whatever happens to me or to the world I live in.

The Bible tells us why things came about. The stories in the first chapters of Genesis give us part of the answer. There's no scientific explanation there of how the world came about, but we learn that everything in the world is meant for the benefit of mankind.

The human being is the masterpiece of God's work. All things are meant to be subject to man and man is subject to God. God said: "Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild animals and all the creatures that creep along the ground" (Gen 1:26).

God also imposed a duty on us to continue looking after creation, to cooperate with God in ruling and ordering the world: "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and subdue it" (Gen 1:28).

So that's why things came about. At least, that's part of the reason. In the New Testament, God reveals the full answer. All creation was made for mankind, but for one man in particular, for the God-Man, the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

The Letter to the Colossians expresses it well:

"He is the image of the unseen God
and the firstborn of all creation,
for in him were created all things
in heaven and on earth:
everything visible and everything invisible,
... all things were created through him and for him.
He exists before all things
and in him all things hold together" (Col 1:15-20).

There is the full answer to why things came about. From the beginning, God wanted everything to lead up to his divine Son. Everything, and mankind especially, is directed to him and is placed under him, and reaches its perfection in him.

The Letter adds immediately: "He is the Head of the Body, that is, the Church." Jesus is not just a particular man who lived and died a long time ago. Jesus is our risen Lord, the second Person in the Blessed Trinity, alive in the Church on earth and active in all creation and in all events.

Today, switched-on people are looking for "happenings". If they can't find them, they make them. The great "happening" in Christian life is the Mass. We should not only find that this is so, but we should also make it so.

In every Mass, Jesus Christ the Head and we the members of his Body are associated with all creation in worshiping our Creator. Creation is dumb. It relies on us and our human voice to express its dumb worship. When we are united in every possible way with the God-Man, we can offer adequate worship to God our Creator on behalf of all creation.

At the end of the Eucharistic Prayer, we reach the climax of the "happening" in the Doxology: "Through [Christ our Lord], and with him and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, for ever and ever."

St Augustine says that in the basilicas of Rome, the people's "Amen" to this prayer sounded like a mighty clap of thunder.

When we say, "I believe in the Creator of heaven and earth", we have reason to be confident in God and to surrender ourselves completely to him who always upholds us, in good times and in bad, just as God upholds the universe we live in.

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to all local Assistants of our Order in the Regional Fraternity.**