

Sex is of divine origin. It is because of God's blessing that we have procreative power. Human is to "subdue" (1:28) the earth and all that is in it. His rule over the animals won't always be easy. 1:29-30 say that we were initially vegetarian. (God permits Noah to eat meat.) Day 7 is the day of rest, a reminder of the Sabbath. God blesses the seventh day, thus setting it apart. There is no evening of this day: the relationship between God and man continues for ever.

Genesis uses "generations" (2:4) to mark important stages in God's actions, starting with creation. The text shows him as creator in his total and uncompromised power, the intrinsic order and balance of the created world, and mankind's importance and his key role in the scheme of creation. God's creation is also peaceful, unlike the warring factions (gods) of Enuma Elish. The focus is on the emergence of a people; the earth serves as an environment for the human community. Genesis 1 works within the science of its time to tell of divine power and purpose, and the unique place of humans.

Psalm 8

This is a psalm of praise of God as creator and of man as head of creation. Because of the modest means God uses ("babes and infants", v. 2), his majesty is even more evident. The "foes" may be the powers of chaos, as in Genesis 1:1. In vv. 3-4, the psalmist contrasts God's majesty with "the work of ... [his] fingers", especially humans, for whom he cares. ("Mortals" is ben'adam, literally son of man.) Vv. 7-9 recall Genesis 1:26-28: we share in God's dignity for he has conferred on us mastery of, and responsibility for, the rest of creation.

2 Corinthians 13:11-13

This letter, which Paul now concludes, shows a lack of harmony among Corinthian Christians. Paul exhorts them to restore the "order" and "peace" which God expects. The "holy kiss" (v. 12) was a symbol of communal love among Christians; it was shared at the Eucharist. The "saints" are other Christians. Note the order in v. 13: the "grace of ... Christ" leads us to "the love of God"; this love flows into common participation in God and with each other. This verse is known as the Grace.

Matthew 28:16-20

After his resurrection, Jesus has told Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" (v. 1) to "tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me" (v. 10). Now Jesus appears to "the eleven" (v. 16, less Judas) on "the mountain" where he was transfigured. Some worship (v. 17) him, but others doubt. He has received "all authority" (v. 18) from the Father, so he now sends out his followers to "all nations" (v. 19, not just Israel) to: baptise in the possession and protection ("name") of the Trinity, and to carry on his teaching ministry. To help in this daunting task, he is, and will be, with them until the Kingdom of God comes fully.

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~ Notices ~

Clare Music Makers – Student recitals

Sun 11th June, 2.00pm, St Columba's

Jaskane Trio – Sat 10th June – 5.00pm – St Columba's

Sinead Nic Sioda & friends – Sat 30th Sept – 7.00pm
St Columba's

Mindfulness Zoom sessions - The Church of Ireland's Ministry of Healing: Zoom course for meditative prayer and mindfulness practice. May 28th, June 4th, June 11th, from 9pm to 9.30pm Eventbrite at <https://tinyurl.com/yzaak6xd>

Website: clareanglicans.ie

YouTube: www.youtube.com/c/clareanglicans

Facebook: www.facebook.com/clareanglicans

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Trinity Sunday

(Year A) 2023

Readings and Hymns

Collect

Holy God, faithful and unchanging: enlarge our minds with the knowledge of your truth, and draw us more deeply into the mystery of your love, that we may truly worship you, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen

Hymns

With YouTube links for online viewers:

1) Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty (321)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=39ZfrO0UW_s

2) God whose almighty word (324)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJugdIVH8VY>

3) Lord of beauty, thine the splendour (029)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPgy8djUbs4>

Genesis 1: 1 - 2: 4a

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God* swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

And God said, 'Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.' So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

And God said, 'Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear.' And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas. And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it.' And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

And God said, 'Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth.' And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

And God said, 'Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky.' So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.' And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

And God said, 'Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind.' And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, 'Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.'

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.'

God said, 'See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.' And it was so. God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Thus, the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.

Psalm 8

O Lord our governor, ♦
how glorious is your name in all the world!
Your majesty above the heavens is praised ♦
out of the mouths of babes at the breast.
You have founded a stronghold against your foes, ♦
that you might still the enemy and the avenger.
When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers, ♦
the moon and the stars that you have ordained,
What is man, that you should be mindful of him; ♦
the son of man, that you should seek him out?
You have made him little lower than the angels ♦
and crown him with glory and honour.
You have given him dominion
over the works of your hands ♦
and put all things under his feet,
All sheep and oxen, ♦
even the wild beasts of the field,
The birds of the air, the fish of the sea ♦
and whatsoever moves in the paths of the sea.
O Lord our governor, ♦
how glorious is your name in all the world!

2 Corinthians 13: 11-13

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of* the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

Matthew 28: 16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'

Post Communion

Almighty and eternal God, you have revealed yourself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and live and reign in the perfect unity of love: hold us firm in this faith, that we may know you in all your ways and evermore rejoice in your eternal glory, who are three Persons yet one God, now and forever. **Amen**

Commentary

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

This passage says much about God and his relationship to humans. Long ago, people in the Near East asked how the earth came to be. A single creation story (with variants) was known throughout the region; one such, dating from at least 1700 BC, is Enuma Elish from Mesopotamia (now Iraq.) It and Genesis 1 have a similar sequence of events, so studying what the authors of the Genesis story added, and what they left out, tells us about our God.

First, "In the beginning when God created ...": God pre-exists all creation; he existed before all time. The whole visible world came into being as a result of divine activity. At first, there was no order to the earth; it was chaotic; it was empty; "a formless void" (1:2). However here, unlike in Enuma Elish, a force is present, a life-giving power: "a wind [or Spirit] from God". From 1:3 on, the creation story is in the form of a hymn, with a refrain, "God saw that ... [it] was good" (1:4, etc), This ancient story is divided into seven days, or stages of creation. The sequence is like Enuma Elish.

On the first day, God creates light, thus overcoming the "darkness" (1:2). In the Semitic mind, God's ability to give names to light and darkness shows that he controls them. To grasp Day 2 (1:6-10), we need to appreciate that people saw the earth as covered by a huge inverted pudding bowl, the "dome", above which were the upper waters: snow, hail and rain. The "waters" surrounded the "dry land", which God again names. On Day 3 (1:11-13), God has vegetation created through his agent, Earth. Other peoples worshipped some kinds of vegetation; in not creating vegetation directly, God reduces the chances of Israel doing the same: they are to worship only God. On the following days, living things (as seen by the ancient mind) are created or made. People then thought plants were unable to transmit life. The Sun and the Moon, created on Day 4 (1:14-19), are inanimate to us, but to ancient people they were beings, moving on fixed tracks on the under-side of the dome. To Israel, they are beings under God's command. On Day 5 (1:20-23), God creates animals of the sea and air. Even the "great sea monsters" (e.g. Leviathan) were seen as creatures of the one God, and are therefore good. They, the fish and the birds get a special blessing because people thought they did not have the same ability to reproduce as land animals. On Day 6, land animals are created. 1:24 says that God caused the earth to "bring [them] forth"; however, in 1:25, God creates them directly. The creation story was handed down orally for centuries, and a tale varies in the telling. As we often find in Genesis, the author (or editor) is not afraid to include divergent versions.

"Let us" (1:26) is like a royal we; the creation of humans is the climax of the creation story. Human is made (created) in God's "image" (the Hebrew word implies an exact copy or reproduction); but he is also a "likeness" (resemblance, similarity). He rules over all creatures.