



Opening Question:

List some of the important questions in life. Why are they important?

We believe in...the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

We humans have one ability that distinguishes us from all other animals. We ask questions. Where did I come from? Where is my life going? Besides questions of origin and destination we can dig deeper. Why do I exist at all? These and many more questions are at the root of Christian faith. They speak to our creation.

I believe in God...Creator of Heaven and Earth

In the Apostles Creed, we profess: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Note what we say. God the Father initiated the creation of the cosmos. He existed before all time and all matter. He brought both into being out of nothing. But, there was a reason for his creation. In the first chapters of Genesis, God revealed his wisdom and goodness when he made an ordered universe.

Reflect on the cosmos for a moment. On the surface, it may seem chaotic but as we probe deeper, we can see its coherence and structure. Creation, however, is not a singular event. It is an ongoing process that reveals God is actively involved in his work but separate from his work. In each step along the way even to this present moment, the Father creates through the Son, his very word, along with the power of the Spirit.

In the beginning was the Word.

The Word stood before God. And the Word was God.



Everything that God created came to exist through him.

Without him, nothing could exist.

Everything that exists in him has God's life.

John 1:1, 3-4a

By the Word of the Lord, the heavens were made:

all their warriors by his Spirit, the breath of his mouth.

Psalms 33:6

Let's consider a few questions we might have about creation

- Why do we exist at all?
- How did God make us?
- How are we to live with others?
- Why is there evil in the world?

Humans Created in God's Image

Let's return to our questions especially one particular question. Why do we exist at all? Christians answer it in the phrase of Genesis.

God said, Let us make humans in our image and our likeness.

Genesis 1:26a

We exist as a reflection of God's image. God made us out of his love for us. We have the ability to know God, serve him, and love him in return. This ability gives us dignity that we can reflect in ourselves and see in others. We are all God's children.

Humans Created Physical and Spiritual

The Lord God molded the first human from the muddy dirt and breathed the living Spirit, into his nostrils. And the human came alive.

Genesis 2:7

God created humans with a physical dimension we call a body and with an inner life we call a soul. The body and soul form the whole person. The body is the result of procreation. But the inner life, the soul, is uniquely created by God to survive death and, thus, be immortal.

Humans Created as Male and Female

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the human to be alone. I will make him a helpmate like him."

Genesis 2:18

When God made the universe, he created different beings to complement and form a communion with each other. Men and women have a difference in gender but, as equals in dignity and rights, they can form a unity of two that causes them to flourish together.

Sin and Original Sin, Struggle and Hope

Why is there evil in the world? Let's consider the question from two different angles. First, from sin and what we call "original sin." Then from our response to our condition: the struggle and reasons for hope.

What is sin? It is an evil act that tears at or even destroys our relationship with others and with God. These acts have been with humanity since the beginning of history.

The story of Adam and Eve used figurative language to illustrate that fact. According to the passage, the first man and woman lived together in harmony

with nature. They could eat of any plant except a certain tree whose fruit contained knowledge of evil. The devil serpent tempted them to eat of its fruit so they could experience this knowledge and put themselves on the same level as God. But, as an act of selfishness, it broke the relationship between God and humanity. It warped human nature to the extent that the drive of selfish desire is humanity's default position. It's me first, God and others second.

In this self-centered world, justice, self-control, and good will are difficult to achieve. Brokenness is the constant state of affairs. Death enters the world. The Church calls this me-focused condition "original sin." Notice it is a condition, not an act. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states

...original sin is called "sin" only in an analogical sense: it is a sin "contracted" and not "committed," a state and not an act.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 404

We live in a world broken by selfish desire. Yet, we can choose the good in life. We do have free will. So we face the battle between what I desire for myself and what is good for others. While we might fail over and over in this test, God gave us hope in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ. By giving of himself on the cross, he became the new Adam who repaired the damage of the original Adam. Sacrifice for others overcame focus on the self.

But, why didn't God save himself all this trouble and just prevent the rebellion of Adam and Eve in the first place? He wanted to make a greater good manifest. He wanted us to live closer to him. He wanted us to live in the Spirit.

Where sin has great power, God's gracious gift has even greater power!

Romans 5:20b

We humans have questions, some of which are of great import. Faith provides us answers. Where do we come from? God created us. Why do we exist? We are here to reflect God's image. How did

God create us? He made us with a body and soul so we can make moral choices. How are we, his creatures, to live with each other? Even though we are unique and different from each other, we are to come together and live in harmony. The union of man and woman represent unique individuals who form a bond of community.

But, why doesn't that perfect world exist? Why is there evil in the world? Evil exists because we all have selfish desires. When we place me first, we sin. Yet, God still desires to draw us closer to himself. He send us his Son to show us the way and give us the power to do so. And that is the answer to the last question, Where is my life going?

Closing Question:

How does faith in God answer the questions you have about life?

Reference to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraphs 279-301, 314-320, 355-373, 385-421.

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