

Creation and Fall

1.—The Creation of the World.

1. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was void and empty, and darkness was on the face of the deep. Then God said: "Let there be light!" and light was made. This was the work of the first day.

2. On the second day was created the firmament with all its expansive beauty.

On the third day God gathered together the waters into one place, and commanded the dry land to appear; the waters He called sea, and the dry land earth. Thus were formed the fountains, the streams, and the rivers.

3. Then God commanded the earth to bring forth plants, and green trees, and flowers of many various forms and different colors.

On the fourth day were made the great lights that shine in the heavens: the sun, the moon, and the stars. On the fifth day the fish that are in the waters, and the birds that are in the air were created.

4. The sixth day God created all manner of living creatures that are upon the earth, each in its kind.

At last He said: "Let us make man to our own image and likeness, and let him have dominion over the whole earth." So God formed man out of the slime of the earth, and breathed into him an immortal soul, and called him *Adam*; that is, taken from the earth. God saw all the things that He had made, and they were good. So He rested on the seventh day, and blessed it.

5. As God created man on the sixth day of creation, so on Good Friday, the sixth day of Holy Week, He redeemed him. And as the body of the first Adam was formed from the earth whilst it was yet pure and blessed, so was Jesus Christ, the second Adam, born of Mary, a virgin, pure and without original sin.

2.—Happiness of Adam and Eve in Paradise.

1. The heavens and the earth being finished, God planted a garden, a terrestrial paradise, in which were all manner of trees and precious fruits. In the

midst thereof He placed two trees, one the tree of life, the other the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God then told Adam he might eat of the fruit of every tree in the garden, but "of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil he should not eat; for on the day he would eat, he should surely die."

2. Then God brought before Adam all the beasts of the earth, that he might give to each its name. But for Adam there was not found a companion like to himself. And God said: "It is not good for man to be alone; let us make a help-mate like unto himself." So God cast a deep sleep upon Adam, and from his side took a rib, which He formed into a woman. When Adam awoke, God brought the woman to him, and he called her *Eve*; that is, the mother of all the living.

3. Whilst Adam and Eve were in Paradise, God treated them as a father does his children, and they were happy; at the same time the tree of life preserved them from sickness and death.—The tree of life was a figure of the Sacrament of the Altar, of which it is written: "He who is fed by it shall live forever."

3.—The Angels and the Fall of our First Parents.

1. Besides the visible, God also created an invisible world, namely His angels. At first they were good and perfectly happy; but in time some became dazzled with their own perfections, and, yielding to pride, revolted against God. Michael, and the other angels that remained faithful, fought against them, vanquished and overthrew them, together with their leader, *Lucifer*, who is also called Satan.

2. But Satan, fallen and lost, began to contrast his misery with man's happiness, and, raging with anger and envy, resolved to seduce man from his obedience to God. For this end he made use of the serpent.

3. One day, while Eve was looking at the forbidden tree, the serpent, coming near, asked her why she did not eat of its fruit. Eve answered, God had forbidden them to touch it, lest they should die. But the serpent artfully replied, they would not die; on the contrary, their eyes would be opened, and they would be as gods, knowing good and evil. Eve looked again upon the tree; her curiosity was excited: the more she looked, the more the forbidden fruit appeared enticing. At length she stretched forth her hand, plucked the fruit, eat and gave to Adam, who also eat. This was their first sin.

4. Immediately their eyes were opened, but far otherwise than they had expected. Covered with shame, they sewed together fig-leaves and made garments for themselves, and, trembling, hid among the trees.

5. From one tree came ruin: from another, the tree of the cross, came redemption and victory over sin and the devil.

4.—The Punishment of Sin and the Promise of a Redeemer.

1. In the evening God came into the garden and called Adam, who, trembling with fear, approached and acknowledged that he had eaten the forbidden fruit, but threw the blame on the woman. She, in turn, blamed the serpent.

2. Then God cursed the serpent, condemning him to crawl upon the ground and to eat dust all the days of his life: besides, He said, enmity should exist between the serpent and the woman, but in the end the woman would crush his head.

3. Then God told the woman she should bring forth her children in sorrow, and, for her disobedience, be subject to her husband. To the man He said: "Cursed is the earth in thy work: thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread, until thou return to the earth from whence thou earnest: for dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return."

4. Then God made garments of skins, and clothing Adam and Eve in them, drove them out of Paradise. At the entrance of the garden angels, with a fiery sword, were placed to guard against their return.

5.—Cain and Abel.

1. Adam and Eve had many children; of these, the eldest were Cain and his brother Abel. Cain was a husbandman, and wicked; but Abel, a shepherd, was just and good. Both offered sacrifice to God—Abel, a lamb; Cain, of the fruits of the earth. God, who knew the secrets of their hearts, looked with favor on the sacrifice of Abel, but turned away His face from the sacrifice of Cain.

2. When Cain saw this, his mind was filled with anger and jealousy against his brother. His countenance fell; and though God chid him in kindness, telling him if he did well he would be

rewarded equally with Abel, yet Cain would not be appeased.

3. So, nourishing his anger and giving way to his spite, Cain one day asked Abel to go with him into the fields. There he rose up against his brother and slew him. As soon as the blood of the innocent Abel stained the ground, God cried out to Cain: "Where is thy brother?" but Cain, hardened in his crime, answered he did not know, nor was he his brother's keeper.

4. But God, from whom nothing can be hid, told Cain that Abel's blood cried to Him for vengeance, and, because he had dared to touch his brother, he should be a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth. When Cain heard this sentence of God, he gave way to despair, saying: "My sin is too great to be pardoned." So God set a mark upon him, and he went forth, a wanderer and a fugitive upon the face of the earth.

5. The murdered Abel is a figure of Jesus Christ, while Cain is a figure of the traitor Judas and the Jewish people, who put our Savior to death.