

AN ADVENT WALK THROUGH THE KERYGMA

Why is there something rather than nothing?

Last weekend, before Mass began, I commented on just how vast the kingdom of Jesus Christ is. Using the current NASA estimates, there are somewhere around 1 Septillion stars, which is a 1 followed by 24 zeros. It looks like this...

1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000

Looking down from the vastness of space to our humble tiny home here on Earth, we can see the tiny atoms that make up everything, like a spoonful of sand. One gram of sand is less than 1/8th of a teaspoon, yet it is made of 1×10^{23} individual atoms. That is one less zero than stars in the universe. Now think of all the sand at Sleeping Bear Dunes or the compressed sandstone of Pictured Rocks. God brings Every atom into existence, and our minds cannot fathom the number.

These massive numbers aren't the only 'math' we see in the world. The Fibonacci Sequence is a sequence of numbers where each is the sum of the two preceding numbers: 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21. Many things in nature follow this same pattern and a related "Golden Ratio."



All of this order points to something that brought order. God brings order out of the chaos, but more so than that, brings it into order for a reason. The Holy Trinity was in need of nothing when creation began. So why create anything at all?

It all comes down to love.

The first in intention is the last in execution.

When we look at religious stories of creation, the Judeo-Christian story is unlike that of any other religion. It is not born of destruction or to provide enslaved people for God. Genesis shows that all creation is done in proper order and time. Creation is not done to fulfill God in some way but to share that part of him that is without end: Love.

My favorite retelling of creation is in the book of Daniel 3:52-90 where the three young men in the fiery furnace sing a canticle that shows that all creation gives praise to God: *“Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord, praise and exalt him above all forever.”* In proper order, the angels, the stars, the wind, the mountains, the seas, the birds, all mortal servants of the Lord, and holy men of humble heart, all praise God forever. But all this happens because of God’s desire to love us into existence in the first place.

The phrase “The first in intention is the last in execution” is like the maxim of motivational speaker Stephen Covey, “Begin with the end in mind.” Though humankind was created last in the course of creation, we are the reason God created anything at all.

In this Sunday’s reading from the first letter to the Thessalonians, Paul writes to the people what he prays to God for on their behalf, that *“... the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we have for you, so as to strengthen your hearts, to be blameless in holiness...”* Paul, in a sense, prays that the people of Thessalonica and now, for us all, that we may be like God and overflow with love for all our brothers and sisters. Note that this calls for us not just to love those in Christ but to **“abound in love for one another and *for all*, just as we have for you.”** God loves us before we are, throughout all our faults and errors, and until the end of time. God’s love is not restricted to when we are perfect, and next week, we will explore why we should be thankful for that. But for now, know that:

You are **CREATED** because you are **LOVED**

Let us continue this journey together. In Christ’s Love, Deacon Todd