

Adam and Eve and Proposal One – Sunday, October 6, 2024

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Today's glorious first reading from the Book of Genesis begins by highlighting the beautiful creation God has made. Imagine the joy Adam is having as he is given the task of naming all the various animals, wildlife, and birds as they are being created and formed by God. Having named them means he has a special relationship to them – It is such a blessing! ... Nevertheless, as he comes to the end of this incredible experience and call to take care of all of creation, he still is without a suitable partner for himself.

At this point in the story, God decides to put Adam into a deep sleep... Try to use your creativity and imagine Adam has been cast into this deep sleep right next to a pool of beautiful crystal-clear water. And as he awakens, he turns and glances into the pool of water and he sees not only his reflection, but the reflection of another face...

And on seeing her, he ecstatically breaks out, 'This at last is it! Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh!'

It would not be far-fetched to believe that Adam may have expressed what he was feeling with a song and words like this:

"Such a feelin's comin' over me
There is wonder in 'most everything I see
Not a cloud in the sky, got the sun in my eyes
And I won't be surprised if it's a dream!

Everything I want the world to be
Is now comin' true especially for me
And the reason is clear, it's because you are here
You're the nearest thing to heaven that I've seen!

I'm on the top of the world lookin' down on creation
And the only explanation I can find
Is the love that I've found ever since you've been around
Your love's put me at the top of the world...

Your love's put me at the top of the world!"
(Top of the World, The Carpenters)

Adam must have been so exuberant and ecstatic at encountering his more than amazing and beautiful suitable partner! God's plan is so far beyond anything he could have imagined or thought!! Eve is someone on equal terms with Adam. She has been created body, mind, and soul to be his equal! Adam and Eve complement each other perfectly physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. She is more than Adam could have ever dreamed! And likewise, so is he to her! ... Their relationship is one of love and harmony on every level imaginable and Their love for God, their love for each other, and their love for creation, is God's vision and dream for humanity and the foundation of married life and children and family ...

Then something happens ... By the end of Genesis chapter 3, this unity and harmony have disappeared. The freedom and innocence of their relationship has evaporated. They are not taking responsibility for themselves and each other. They are casting blame on each other and their surroundings, they are guarded and hiding from themselves, each other, and God.

What has happened?... As is explained in chapter 3 of Genesis, the 'serpent' or as we have latter come to identify the Devil, "Lucifer" the fallen angel of light - has appeared to them and tempted them into believing that God did not have their best interests in mind when He spoke to them. The cunning 'serpent' deceives them into thinking that God in His instructions to them was depriving them of something good... that God was not telling them the truth and therefore, should not be trusted. And they should not listen to what God said, but they should do the very opposite of what He told them ...

And sadly, this is what our first parents do - the very opposite of what was good for them. The reality is God's warning was a given to protect them from the natural consequences that would take place if they were to eat of the fruit of this forbidden tree. And as soon as they ate of it, just as God knew it would happen, these automatic negative consequences began affecting everything – Adam and Eve, the first representatives of humanity, began hiding from God, they began blaming each other, their relationship with the creation became harsh, and where once they were naked and not ashamed, now they were covering themselves with fig leaves because they were self-conscious and no longer completely and truly free... Tragically, Satan, the liar, the accuser, the deceiver had acquired a certain domination over them.

Unfortunately, this turning away from God which happened eons ago, is still taking place. The 'serpent' continues to deceive humanity in ways that takes us away from the glorious vision of God for human life, our marriages, our children, our families, our relationships, and the whole of creation. Lucifer continues to appear and tempts us to eat the forbidden fruit which will only result in a further tragic eroding of our human potential to live the vision of the fulness of life that God has for us.

This reality of deception and temptation to eat the forbidden fruit will be quite evident as we go to the polls to vote in New York State this year... Anyone voting in New York State will be asked to vote on what is called Proposal One. It is the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). It will amend the New York State Constitution. The New York State Constitution supersedes any and all state laws, statutes, and regulations. On the surface it will sound like something we should have no problems with. It will say that no person shall be denied the equal protection of the laws of this state for any reason.

However, when it lists all the reasons why no one should be denied equal protection of the law.. Among them are sex, gender identity or expression, and pregnancy outcomes and reproductive healthcare and autonomy... And then in addition to these and other reasons it adds the category of age, which means anyone of any age has a right to make these life-changing decisions whether they are a child or an adult... Once again, at first glance, the forbidden fruit looks good, but it never is!

Voting "Yes" for Proposal One, means that the New York State government could have more authority than parents in making medical and other important decisions for their children... And the question is, should children who are minors have the right to have chemicals put into them and to have irreversible surgical and non-surgical transgender procedures without parental notice or approval? Should schools not disclose to parents that their children may be struggling with their sexual identity or are becoming transgender?

"Best Practices" statements from the New York State Department of Education say they should. Referring to gender identity I quote: "Students may begin their transition at school without parent/guardian knowledge."

And what about boys playing on girls only sports teams? ... Should we erase girls' sports and allow biological males to compete against biological females in school sports without restrictions?

This is the only ballot initiative in the country to include transgender rights for minors. If Proposal One passes, it will give courts the authority to uphold policies that allow children to change their gender identity as early as pre-kindergarten, without the knowledge or consent of their mothers, fathers, or legal guardians. This is

unfathomable... Countries once supportive of these transgender treatments and procedures are going in the opposite direction due to the overwhelming lack of scientific evidence of the long-term effects of these treatments and the backlash of those who have experienced such negative consequences.

Without great care and labor-intensive counseling with those considering such treatments, the ability to protect individuals from long term negative mental and other psychological effects evaporates. It goes against any reasonable logic or wisdom. As far as minors go, we don't need more scientific research to tell us that children need parents. It's obvious. Nevertheless, Proposal One would deny that... Taking away its deceptive label, "The Equal Rights Amendment", it should be much more truthfully called "The Parental Replacement Act"!

It is inconceivable not to have age restrictions for such life-changing things! We have always understood and operated from the perspective that age restrictions make sense. We set minimum ages to drive, to smoke, drink or consent to sexual activity for the protection of vulnerable youth. Why would we remove restrictions based on age to children regarding gender treatments and surgeries, as well as abortion and the 'right to die' with no parental consent?

Beyond all this, Proposal One could legalize on demand late-term abortion or abortion without restrictions, including for minors, during the second and third trimester of pregnancy right up to the time of birth - also without parental consent. Currently, New York State has one of the most extreme abortion laws not only in our country, but in the world. Proposal One would not only reinforce this, but would enshrine this as a constitutional right, meaning it would make it nearly impossible to pass even the most limited restrictions to protect women and children in the future, even if the minds of New Yorkers were to change regarding abortion.

This also could potentially undermine the religious liberty and freedom of individuals, charitable institutions, and churches who in good conscience do not believe in these made up so called "rights", with the result that protections for these individuals, organizations, and churches could be eroded.

We have information on this as you leave Mass today. It is provided by the Coalition to Protect Kids-NY. I hope you will take the information and share it with others at home, in your family, at work, in your neighborhood, and online with your social media contacts. Most people do not know what this truly entails, and if they did, I believe that a majority of people would oppose it... Please share this with all you can, and vote "No" on Proposal One.

Satan, the liar, the accuser, the deceiver is still at work, trying to do us great harm. However, God never abandons us and is with us, just as He was with Adam and Eve even after they fell. The Lord God was still providing for them and leading them and guiding them and already setting forth the plan that would bring them back to their original beauty and goodness in His Kingdom...

And when God was addressing the serpent, God makes this promise: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between her off-spring and yours. He will crush your head, and you will bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15) God made good on that promise when Jesus was conceived in Mary. This marked the beginning of the end of Satan's dominion and was it was fulfilled by Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection. With Mary, who was faithful to Jesus throughout her life, let us give ourselves completely to God and pray and work that God's vision for man and woman, for marriage and children and family will flourish and become reality for all! ... And let's do our part to help make that happen!