

— *The New Catholic* —

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THE OLD TESTAMENT

Holy Spirit, fill my mind and heart as
I read about your Holy Word. Show
me what you want me to understand
and help me grow in love for you.

Amen.

GOD CREATES THE WORLD



(Genesis 1–2)

IN THE beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was empty and was not yet formed. A great wind moved over the surface of the dark, deep waters.

God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. God saw that the light was good. God separated the light from the darkness. The light he called “day” and the darkness he called “night.” Evening came, and morning followed—the first day.

Next God said, “Let there be a great space between the waters to separate the waters from the waters.” So God made an expanse between the waters that separated the water above from the water below it, and it was so. God called the great space “sky” or “the heavens.” Evening came, and morning followed—the second day.

Then God said, “Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together in one place and let the dry ground appear.” And it was so. God called the dry ground “earth” and the waters he called “seas.” God saw that it was good.

God said, “Let the earth produce many kinds of plants: plants with seeds and fruit trees with seeds so that they may continue to grow and reproduce.” And it was so. The earth produced grass and herbs and trees





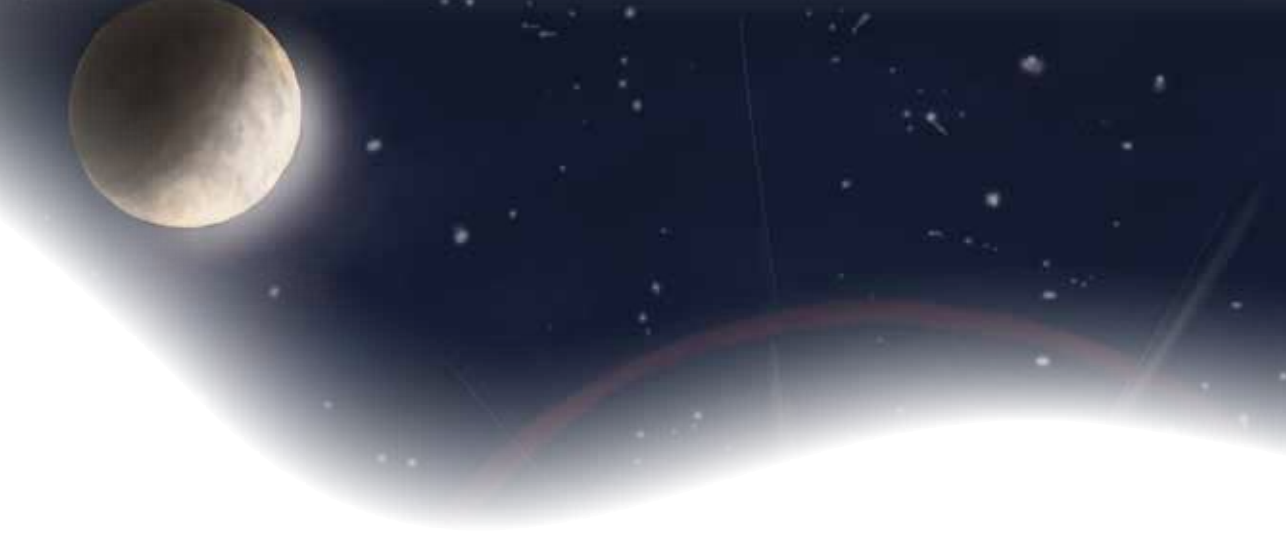
with fruit, each bearing seeds so that it would continue to reproduce according to its kind. God saw that it was good. Evening came, and morning followed—the third day.

Next God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and to mark the seasons, days, and years; and let there be lights in the heavens to give light to the earth.” And it was so. God made two great lights—a greater light to rule the day and a smaller light to rule the night. He made all the stars also. God set them in place in the heavens to give light to the earth, to rule over the day and the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came, and morning followed—the fourth day.

Then God said, “Let the waters be filled abundantly with living creatures, and let the sky and the heavens be filled with birds of every kind flying above the earth.” So God created all the wonderful sea creatures: everything that moves and swims in the water, from the great whales to the numerous schools of fish, each according to its own kind; and every winged bird according to its own kind. And it was so. God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the seas and the skies.” Evening came, and morning followed—the fifth day.

Next God said, “Let the land produce living creatures, each according to its own kind, livestock and creeping things and wild animals, each according to its own kind.” And it was so. God made the wild animals, the many kinds of livestock, and every creeping thing, all according to their own kind. God saw that it was good.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let him rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, over all the animals, wild and tame.”



So God created man in his own image,
In the image of God he created him,
Male and female he created them.

God blessed all the creatures. He said to the man and woman, “Be fruitful and have many children. Fill the earth and make it serve you. Rule over every fish in the sea, every bird that flies in the sky, and every creature that moves over the earth.”

God said, “I give you every plant that has seeds and every tree that bears fruit to be your food. To all the beasts of the earth, the birds, and every being that creeps along the ground, I have given green plants for food.” And it was so.

God saw everything that he had made; it was very good! Evening came, and morning followed—the sixth day.

This is how all the heavens and the earth were created, By the seventh day, God had finished all that he had intended, so he rested. God blessed the seventh day, making it holy, because by that day God had completed all that he had created.

ADAM AND EVE



(Genesis 2–3)

WHEN the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, at first there were no crops in the fields or rain on the earth, because God had not yet created man. Streams of water, like a mist, came up from the ground and watered the whole surface.

The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being with a soul.

The Lord God planted a garden in the land of the east called Eden. This was to be the home for the man God created. The Lord God had filled it with wonderful, beautiful trees that produced delicious fruit. The Tree of Life was in the garden and also the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

A river flowed from Eden and watered the beautiful garden. The Lord God brought the man to the Garden of Eden to work it and to care for it. The Lord God commanded the man, “You may eat freely from any tree of the garden, but do not eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, because on the day that you eat of it you will die.”

The Lord God had formed out of the ground all the creatures of the field and birds of the air. Now he brought them to the man so that he could name them. Whatever the man called each living creature that was

its name. But as Adam observed and named all the wonderful animals, no suitable helper was found for him.

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make him a companion that will be a helper for him."

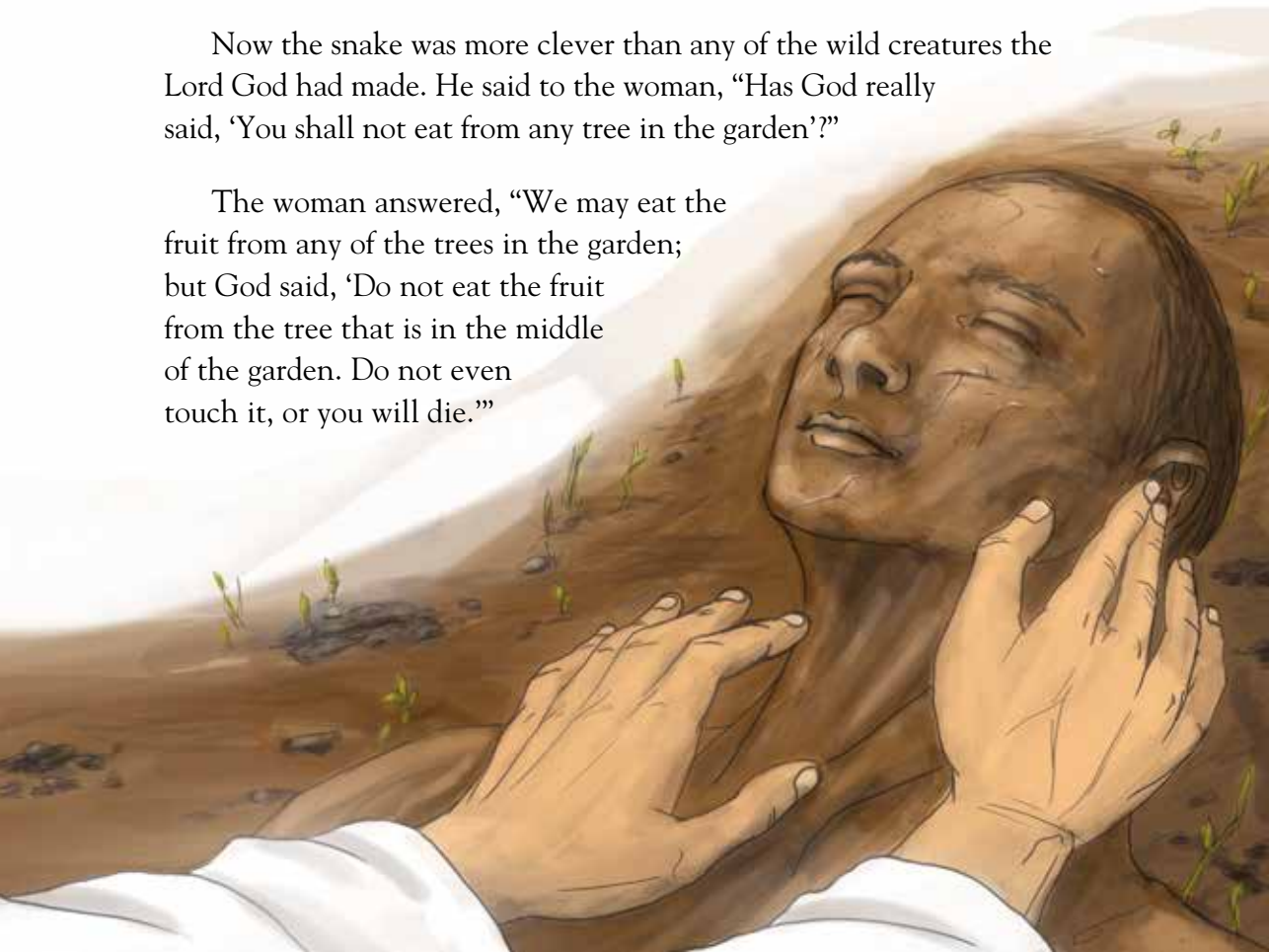
Then the Lord God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep. As he slept, God took out one of Adam's ribs and replaced it with flesh. Using the rib from Adam, the Lord God made a woman. He brought her to Adam. Adam said, "This one, at last is bone of my bones, and flesh from my very flesh. She will be called 'woman,' because she was taken out of man."

Because of this, a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife. They will be one flesh.

Now, even though the man and his wife were both naked, they were not ashamed.

Now the snake was more clever than any of the wild creatures the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Has God really said, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

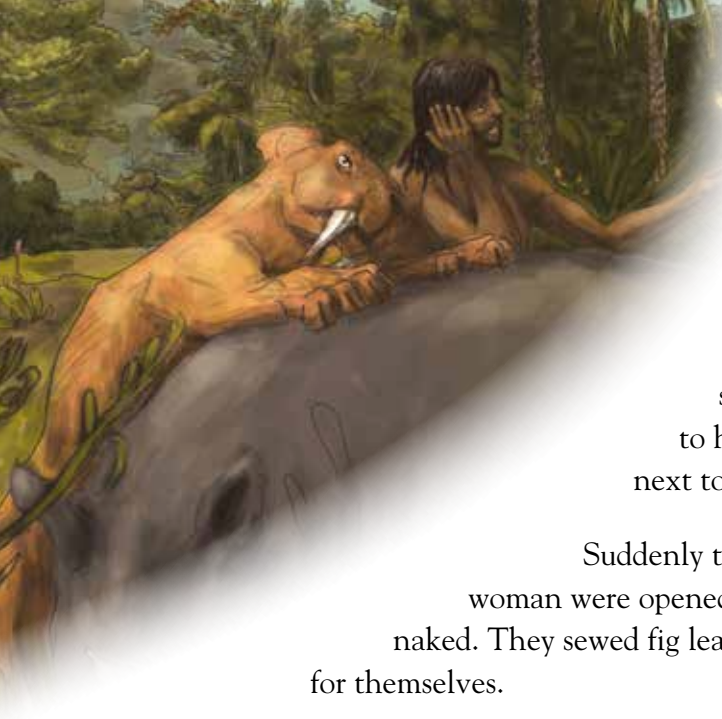
The woman answered, "We may eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'Do not eat the fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden. Do not even touch it, or you will die.'"







“You will not surely die,” the snake said. He told the woman, “God knows that on the very day that you eat of it, you will be like him. Your eyes will be opened. You will be like gods and know good and evil.”



The woman looked at the fruit. She saw that it was good to eat, beautiful, and useful for gaining wisdom. She took some and ate it and gave some to her husband, who was standing next to her. He also ate it.

Suddenly the eyes of both the man and woman were opened. They realized that they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together to make clothing for themselves.

Later that evening, Adam and the woman heard the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool, breezy time of the day. They were terrified and tried to hide from God among the trees. The Lord God called to them, “Where are you?”

Adam answered, “I heard you calling and I was afraid. I hid because I am naked.”

The Lord God said, “Who told you that you are naked? Did you eat from the tree of which I said you shall not eat?”

“The woman that you put here with me gave me some of the fruit, and I ate it,” answered the man.

The Lord God asked the woman, “What have you done?”

The woman answered, “The snake tricked me and I ate it.”

The Lord God said to the serpent “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals. You will eat dust as you crawl on your belly as long as you live. I will put a strong,

festering hatred between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers. She will crush your head and you will bruise her heel.”

To the woman, the Lord God said, “I will greatly increase your pain as you bear children and give birth. You will long for your husband and he will rule over you.”

Finally the Lord God spoke to Adam, “You listened to your wife and ate the fruit which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it.’ Now the ground is cursed because of you. You will have to work hard all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles will grow as you work the crops of the fields. With a face wet from sweat you will eat your bread until the day that you return to the ground. You were made from dust and to dust you will return.”

Adam called his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all the living. The Lord God made tunics of animal skins to clothe Adam and Eve.

The Lord God said, “Now man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil. We must not let him reach out and eat from the Tree of Life so that he lives forever.” So the Lord God sent Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden. He put cherubim with flaming swords flashing back and forth to guard the way to the Tree of Life.