

Review: *From your experience at the Cornerstone meeting last week, share something that helped build your faith.*

DAY ONE

Read Genesis 2:1-3

1. The author completed his creation account and summarized all that happened in the first chapter in verse 1. Record this verse.
2. On the seventh day, God finished the work of creation and he rested (verse 2). In resting, God set an example for humankind. How is this practice reflected in today's lifestyle?
3. God blessed and hallowed the seventh day (verse 3). Look up a definition of the word *hallowed* and explain what you think it means in this context.

NOTE: For man, to bear the image of God means to bear the responsibility of imitating God in the weekly rhythm of labor and rest. Hence, the point is not that God had grown tired after creating the world, but that we have need of rest when we labor in imitation of him. *Ignatius Study Bible*

4. At the time of Moses, the seventh day was called the Sabbath. According to the Book of Exodus, God addressed the Sabbath in the Ten Commandments. Read and record the commandment found in Exodus 20:8.
5. In Mark 2:27, Jesus reminded the Pharisees that “the sabbath was made for humankind, not humankind for the sabbath,” indicating that the Sabbath rest is not a burden but is meant to be a blessing. Choose one of the verses below and record the good deed Jesus did on the Sabbath day.

Matthew 12:12-13

John 9:13-14

NOTE: Our Jewish brothers and sisters observe the sabbath on Saturdays, but for Christians its ceremonial observance on Sunday, the day of Christ's resurrection, replaces that of the sabbath. In Christ's Passover, Sunday fulfills the spiritual truth of the Jewish sabbath and announces man's eternal rest in God. CCC2175

6. CONNECTION: On the seventh day, God's final gift of creation was the separation of ordinary and holy time so that humankind would not become burdened with endless work. He gave us a day of rest to worship him, delight in his creation and enjoy the results of our labors. It is easy to get caught up in the busyness of life, but we need to stop, remember, and give thanks that all we have comes from God. What are some ways you rest and honor God in the spirit of the Sabbath observance? What can we do when we are tempted to treat Sunday like any other day of the week?

Remembering that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, read and record Matthew 11:28-29. In your prayer today, ask him to give you peace and rest.

DAY TWO

Read Genesis 2:4-7

NOTE: This chapter begins in verse 4 with the recurring phrase, "These are the generations...", a formula that introduces new phases of history and narrative in Genesis. This or similar phrases occurs eleven times in Genesis pointing the way forward to a new phase or development in the story, usually with reference to a significant ancestor. *Ignatius Study Bible*

7. Today we begin the second account of the creation story. In this version, the poetic, repetitive style of the Priestly writer is replaced by the new style and message of the Yahwist writer. Are you surprised that there are two creation stories in the bible? Why do you think both versions are included? See the Commentary, page 15, for your answer.

8a. In the second half of verse 4 and verse 5, the "LORD God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up." What were the two reasons for this according to the end of verse 5?

b. Refer to Genesis 1:29. Notice the difference between the two creation accounts in reference to plants and man. What does this suggest to you about the different role man will play in this version of the creation story?

NOTE: Beginning with verse 4 in this chapter, God is referred to as the LORD God. The first term in Hebrew is "Yahweh", the personal name of God revered by Israel. The second term is the common noun for a deity and is used throughout the first creation account. Used together, Genesis teaches that the God of Israel ("Yahweh") is none other than the Creator of the universe ("God"). *Ignatius Study Bible*

9. Note a few differences between the creation of water on the earth in the Yahwist's version in verses 5-6 with the creation of the waters in the first creation account in Genesis 1:6-10.

10a. After the creation of vegetation and water, we read about the creation of man in this account. Complete the phrases below from verse 7.

then the LORD God formed man

and breathed into his nostrils

and the man

b. Do you think this version of the creation of man differs from the first account in which human beings were made in God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26)? Why or why not?

11. Look up and record a phrase from one of the following Scripture verses that reflects this bond between God and man.

Job 10:9

Isaiah 45:9

12. CONNECTION: In this second account of creation, we learn that it is the actual breath of God which animates man and turns him from dust into a living being. The fact that you were created by almighty God as his beloved child gives you value and purpose. How does knowing this affect the way you treat yourself and others? Share your thoughts with your group.

In your prayer time today, thank God that he made you with unique abilities and gifts.

DAY THREE
Read Genesis 2:8-14

13. As today's lesson begins, we read that the LORD God planted a garden and placed the man there to live (verse 8). Complete the following phrases from verse 9 that describe the garden of Eden.

Out of the ground the LORD God

that is pleasant to the sight

the tree of life also in the midst of the garden

NOTE: The Greek word for garden translates as "paradise." Geographical data in this chapter suggests that "in the east" indicates a location in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq). *Ignatius Study Bible*

14. According to verse 9, God planted trees in the garden including the tree of life. Look up and record one of the following references to this tree.

Proverbs 3:18

Proverbs 15:4

Revelation 22:2

NOTE: The phrase, knowledge of good and evil, does not suggest a moral awareness of right and wrong, which man possessed from the beginning as a rational creature, but the legal authority to determine what is good and evil. *Ignatius Study Bible*

15. According to verses 10-14, the river that flows out of Eden waters the garden, then divides and becomes four branches. Record something you learned about each branch of the river.

Pishon

Gihon

Tigris

Euphrates

16. Why do you think the author made a point of describing the riches in the garden?

17. The Garden of Eden is described in Scripture as the "garden of God; every precious stone was your covering" (Ezekiel 28:13) and where "joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song" (Isaiah 51:3). What do you imagine it looked like?

NOTE: In Mesopotamia, the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and the land between them are often called the "cradle of civilization." This area was home to some of the world's first civilizations due in large part to the sustaining waters of the rivers which produced rich, fertile soil.

18. CONNECTION: God created a beautiful, peaceful garden for his people. He provided them with trees that were pleasant to look at and good for food, a river that flowed out to water the garden and gold and precious stones from the earth. Has God ever provided you with a time or place that seemed perfect and life-giving? Describe your personal Eden experience and why it felt so satisfying to you.

Write a prayer today thanking God for providing such times and places in your life in his goodness and love.

DAY FOUR
Read Genesis 2:15-17

19. In today's lesson we learn that, from the very beginning, work was an essential part of human life. What two tasks were given to man after God took him and put him in the garden of Eden (verse 15)?

20a. To *till* means to plow or cultivate. Look up the meaning of the word *keep* and, using these definitions, explain how you think man was meant to care for the garden.

b. What does this tell us about the importance of meaningful work in our lives?

NOTE: The terms and conditions of the Adamic covenant are in verses 15-17. The tree of life and the tree threatening death represent the twin sanctions of the covenant--the blessing and the curse (see Deuteronomy 30:19). Adam was to learn from these boundaries that God is not his equal but his Father and Lord. The arrangement is an ordeal designed to test Adam's faith and filial obedience. *Ignatius Study Bible*

21. God bestowed the generous gifts of his creation upon the man but also included limits on man's behavior. Complete the phrases below from verses 16-17.

And the LORD God commanded the man

but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

for in the day that you eat of it

22. What does the fact that God gave this command suggest about his relationship with the man?

23. Death was to be the punishment for eating from the forbidden tree, yet we will learn in the next chapter that this did not happen. Although man was punished, he did not immediately die. To what kind of death might verse 17 refer? Refer to Romans 6:23.

24. CONNECTION: Today we learn something of the man's life in the beautiful garden of Eden. He was commissioned "to till and keep it." From the beginning, man was given work to do. Because it was God-given, it seems to follow that there is an inherent dignity attached to human labor. Have you ever considered your work as a God-given gift? No matter what you do, your job or calling is important and can make the "garden" a more beautiful place. Describe some work you do and the positive impact it can have on the world.

Read and record Psalms 128:1-2. Begin your prayer today thanking God for the work he has given you.

DAY FIVE

Read Genesis 2:18-20

25. In the first creation account, we read many times: "God saw that it was good." However, today in verse 18, we read that the LORD God said, "It is not good." Explain what was not good according to the first part of this verse.

26. God in his wisdom and kindness saw that man needed fellowship. Briefly comment on why human beings need community and are not meant to be alone.

27. At the end of verse 18, the LORD God stated that he would make the man a helper and a partner. Complete the phrases below from verse 19.

So out of the ground the LORD God formed

and brought them to the man to see

and whatever the man called every living creature

28. So the man gave names to all the animals (verse 20). In the ancient world, to name something was to have power and control over it. In allowing the man to name each creature, God gave the man a part in his creation. Think about some things you have named. What is the relationship between naming these things and your responsibility for them?

29. Though the LORD God gave man many creatures with whom he could share the garden, none was found to be a true helper or partner (end of verse 20). Name a few qualities that make an ideal helper, partner, friend, or spouse.

30. **CONNECTION:** The first creation story beginning with the creation of the cosmos depicts God as transcendent, or far beyond our ability to comprehend. The second creation story however, describes God as near to us, with human qualities and actions, such as forming man from the dust of the ground, breathing and planting. How have these different presentations helped you think about your relationship with God and your journey to grow closer to him?

Read and record [Isaiah 6:3](#) and say a prayer that God will reveal his glory to you in a new way.

DAY SIX

Read Genesis 2:21-25

NOTE: The fact that woman comes last in the second creation story is not the result of trial and error, but is God's way of teaching man that he is fundamentally different from the animals... Lower life forms cannot supply the love, help, and companionship man needs to be whole. *Ignatius Study Bible*

31. In yesterday's readings, a helper and partner for the man was not found among all the creatures that God created. The climax of this creation story came when God provided man with a companion. Summarize how this occurred from verses 21-22.

32a. Complete the phrases below from verse 23 in which the man joyfully responds to this new creation.

This at last is

flesh of my flesh

for out of Man

b. In the first creation story (Genesis 1:27), God simultaneously created male and female in his image suggesting equality between them. Does the manner in which woman is created in this verse or Adam's words convey that idea? Why or why not?

33. Verse 24 is often read at wedding ceremonies. Record this verse and comment on what meaning it has for the sacrament of matrimony.

34. How does the sacred union between a man and woman in marriage relate to the relationship between Jesus and his Church? See the Commentary, page 17, for help with your answer.

35. How does the concluding verse of chapter 2 express the simple innocence of life in the garden (verse 25)?

36. CONNECTION: Today's passage emphasizes that humans were not meant to be alone. God provided the first man with a partner and helper, like him but unique, someone with whom he could form a relationship. Your relationships with others are important. Some relationships provide community, fellowship, and encouragement, guiding us closer to God. Others draw us away from him. Share a story about a relationship that helped you grow to be a better person.

Read and record Ecclesiastes 4:10 and pray for strong relationships in which we help each other on our journey to heaven.

Read pages 12-17 in the *Book of Genesis Commentary* by Lawrence DiPaolo, Jr., Ph.D. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New Revised Standard Version Bible, Catholic Edition. Copyright © 1989, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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