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Reader's Guide to Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation

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Reader's Guide to *Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation*

The papal message *Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation* contains numerous biblical citations and three references to other documents. The notes in this reader's guide have been prepared as a convenience for those readers who wish to examine the papal message in detail as well as in substance.

The sequence of these notes corresponds with the sequence of the citations and references in the papal message. The short biblical passages are quoted in their entirety. The source for these quotations is *The New American Bible*, which is an edition authorized by the United States Catholic Conference and which received the blessing of Pope Paul VI in 1970. The long biblical passages are only summarized in these notes and the references to the other documents are merely clarified.

1. Genesis chapters one through three contain the first and second stories of creation as well as the story of the fall of man. The refrain of the goodness of creation appears in the first story of creation which provides the day-by-day account of creation. The second story tells of the creation of Adam, the Garden of Eden, and then Eve. The story of the fall of man is the story of Eve and then Adam eating the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge and, consequently, their banishment from the Garden of Eden.

2. Genesis (1:31): "God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good. Evening came, and morning followed—the sixth day."

3. Genesis (2:3): "So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work he had done in creation."

4. Genesis (1:28): "God blessed them, saying: 'Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on the earth.'"

5. Genesis (3:17-19): "To the man he said: 'Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat, 'Cursed be the ground because of you! In toil shall you eat its yield all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to you, as you eat of the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face shall you get bread to eat, until you return to the ground, from which you were taken; for you are dirt, and to dirt you shall return.'"

6. Genesis (4:12): "If you till the soil, it shall no longer give you its produce. You shall become a restless wanderer on the earth."

These statements were originally addressed to Cain who had killed his brother Abel.

7. Romans (8:20-21): "[F]or creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God."

8. Colossians (1:19-20): "For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile all things for him, making peace by the blood of his cross, whether those on earth or those in heaven."

9. Revelation (21:5): "The one who sat on the throne said, 'Behold, I make all things new.' Then he said, 'Write these words down, for they are trustworthy and true.'"

Chapter 21 of Revelation recounts John's vision of a new heaven and a new earth.

10. Romans (8:21): This verse is part of the earlier citation of Romans (8:20-21), *supra* note 7. Verse 21 is the part starting "that creation itself would be set free. . . ."

11. Second Letter of Peter (3:13): "But according to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

12. Ephesians (1:9-10): "[H]e has made known to us the mystery of his will in accord with his favor that he set forth in him as a plan for the fullness of times, to sum up all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth."

13. Hosea (4:3): "Therefore the land mourns, and everything that dwells in it languishes: the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and even the fish of the sea perish."

14. The Second Vatican Council was held in four sessions during 1962-1965. It promulgated four constitutions plus nine decrees and three declarations. *Gaudium et Spes*, which is the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, was promulgated on December 7, 1965. The quotation is the first sentence in section 69.

15. The Charter of Human Rights is apparently the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.

16. Genesis (1:4ff): This citation is a reference to the refrain of the goodness of creation that appears in the day-by-day account of creation.

17. Psalms (8:2): "O Lord, our Lord, how glorious is your name over all the earth! You have exalted your majesty above the heavens."

18. Psalms (104:1ff): Psalm 104 is a religious song which is in "Praise of God the Creator." It is composed of 35 verses, many of which note the beneficence of nature.

19. Wisdom (13:3-5): "Now if out of joy in their beauty they thought them gods, let them know how far more excellent is the Lord than these; for the original source of beauty fashioned them. Or if they were struck by their might and energy, let them from these things realize how much more powerful is he who made them. For from the greatness and the beauty of created things their original author, by analogy, is seen."

The prior verse (Wisdom 13:2) mentions fire, wind, water, stars, the sun, and the moon.

20. Sirach (39:16): "The works of God are all of them good; in its own time every need is supplied."

21. Sirach (39:33): "The works of God are all of them good; every need when it comes he fills."

22. Sirach (43:1): "The clear vault of the sky shines forth like heaven itself, a vision of glory."

23. Sirach (43:9): "The beauty, the glory, of the heavens are the stars that adorn with their sparkling the heights of God. . . ."

24. Psalms (148:96): Psalm 148 calls upon all of creation to praise the Lord. It contains 14 verses. The citation to verse 96 is a typographical error that appears in the papal message.

25. The 1979 proclamation of Saint Francis of Assisi as the patron of those who promote ecology appears in volume 71 of the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* [AAS] at pages 1509 and 1510. The AAS is a compilation of official church documents that are in Latin.

Saint Francis of Assisi lived from 1181/82 to 1226. He founded the Franciscan Order. He is well known for his relationship with nature and is often depicted in the presence of birds. He composed the "Canticle of Creatures," which is also known by other titles including "Canticle of Brother Sun" and "Song of the Sun." The papal message's use of the phrase "Brother Sun and Sister Moon" is an explicit reference to this hymn. The "Canticle of Creatures" is mentioned in the 1979 proclamation as one of the reasons for naming Saint Francis of Assisi as the patron of those who promote ecology.

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