

Genesis 1:1-2:4a
Matthew 28:16-20

DOMINION

On the sixth day of creation, God gave human beings dominion over the other living creatures, which includes responsibility to make sure they are cared for. It's a huge responsibility, and one that humanity, over the centuries, has not been attentive to.

I wonder, as you read the creation story this morning, if you found yourself truly astonished and amazed at God's great work. And I wonder, too, how much time and attention you gave to reflecting on the length of one day in this account.

It is certainly not the 24-hour day we know.

Look at the third day, for example.

God calls forth the dry land and then calls for earth to put forth vegetation of every kind, each with its own seed for multiplication.

The earth did indeed bring forth vegetation, fruit and seeds—but this could not possibly have happened in one 24-hour period!

Each of these days may indeed have lasted a thousand years.

With each stage of creation God looks at His handiwork and declares it is very good.

He is pleased and content.

At the end, He gives himself a day of rest, and declares the Sabbath is for His people, too.

Even later when creation falls prey to the evil one,
God is disappointed but He continues to love and care for all
that He created, especially us people.

Isn't it wonderful that the Bible tells us about the creation
of the sun, the moon and the stars?

The lights of the heavens that are gifts to all of us on earth—
they offer illumination in the dark, and a compass to find our way.

This is a good time to think about and pray for the astronauts
on the International Space Station:

the time they spent training for this mission and
the courage they had to trust that a rocket shot from earth
would smoothly and successfully carry them to their destination.

And it certainly did.

We will continue to pray for their safe return to earth.

Our gospel reading today is often referred to as the Great Commission.

It's short and simple: Jesus gathers his main disciples,
and for the sake of those who doubted—this is after his resurrection,
after all—he tells them that God has given him

“all authority in heaven and on earth.”

What a huge and exciting responsibility!

So Jesus then uses his authority to direct the disciples to go out,
to make disciples of people from all known nations.

And when they do, their additional responsibility, and joy,
is to baptize all new believers in the names of the Trinity:

the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus reminds them that baptism is just the start of an entirely new life.

The disciples must teach these folks (and remind themselves while they're at it) to obey all of Jesus' teachings and commands.

His final blessing as he sends them out to do this exciting and hard work is to remember that he is with us all, always, to the end of the world.

C.S. Lewis reflected that far too often “we regard God as an airman regards his parachute: it’s there for emergencies, but he hopes he’ll never have to use it.”

Far better than this, Lewis wrote, “God has infinite attention to spare for each one of us. You are as much alone with Him as if you were the only being He ever created.”

We have so much to be grateful for!

Let us pray:

Wherever we are, Lord,

We know we are together, united in faithful prayer.

We thank you Father God, Lord Jesus and Holy Spirit,

we glorify you, we worship you,

and we count on you, especially during these devastating times,

to bless us with continuing faith and health.

You are our Rock and our Redeemer.

You sustain us with your never-ending love.

You encourage us to express with joy our love for you.

In your precious name we pray,

Amen.