

SESSION 13

"And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed" (Gn 2:25). This tells us that they saw themselves rightfully through "the mystery of creation". They knew themselves this way before they even knew they were naked. This meant that they did not just see themselves on the outside, but also on the inside. It means that they saw themselves totally, along with seeing their place in God's vision of creation.

"Nakedness" shows the original good of God's plan. It shows us the total meaning of the worth of humanity as man and woman, as well as the full meaning of the worth of sex. Remember the Pope called this type of worth "value". This clearly shows that originally there was no "rupture" or differentiation between the spiritual and the physical. It does not show a breakdown between the person as a human, and the person as male or female. This way, man and woman see each other more clearly than they could through human eyes, they did so through the "interior gaze", through the fullness of the "intimacy of persons".

The shame we experience with human eyes is due to our personal privacy being invaded and threatened. On the other hand, when "they were not ashamed", they were showing their total (exterior and interior) humanity, their mutual state of being one as male and female. They also showed that through their community of masculinity and femininity that they were a gift for each other. This gave them a special understanding of what their sexuality meant. The Pope calls this vision of the meaning of the body the "nuptial meaning of the body".

If both versions of Genesis show us original solitude, unity and nakedness, it also shows us and allows us to interpret man in our physical humanity.

"Being "in the image of God" contains within it the basic truth about humanity. We see this when Christ talked to the Pharisees about "the beginning" and our creation as male and female. Our male and female bodies have the divine image imprinted on them from "the beginning". Man and women are two different ways of the human body being created in the image of God.

This is a good time to look at the words "created" and "creator" which will give us a new way of looking at the meaning of "the gift" which gives the truth and meaning of original solitude, unity and nakedness. The gift is also at the heart of creation which allows us to look at the theology of the body as being in existence from "the beginning".

Christ's use of the word "created" means exactly the same as it did in Genesis. God reveals himself as the "creator", and Christ refers to this as the fundamental revelation of Genesis. Creation was not only physical, but theological.

The Creator "called us into existence from nothingness". He established the world, and man in the world because He is love. Although the Bible does not say this specifically, we can see it in the words "God saw what he had made, and behold, it was very good." In these words we can see the love in, and reason for creation.

Only love brings forth and delights in good. God did not just call us out from nothing, his action was a giving, the "radical" giving as it was created from nothing. As a result all of us has the sign of the original gift. This original action cannot refer to nothingness, it has to refer to the one who

gave the gift, and the one who received it, and the relationship between the two. This relationship is primarily shown in the words “God created man in his own image”.

The gift of giving only has meaning for humanity. In the act of creation, the whole visible world was created only for mankind. The entire creation is a gift for man. Being made in “the image of God, man can understand the meaning of the “gift” in the creation from nothingness. Man can answer the creator (return the gift) through this understanding. Not only did man receive the world as a gift, the world received man as a gift. Man received the other man as a gift, and it is through this we can understand the theology of the body.