

St. Joseph Society



Objective: Catholic morality is the practical outworking of the great dogmas of the Catholic faith. St. Paul commands us to “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:12-13). Last month, we defined the nature and difference of ethics and moral theology, the various sources of moral theology, and looked at the question of moral relativism. This month, we are going to investigate the nature of the human person. As Romanus Cessario, O.P. says, “Since moral theology concerns the good of the human person, it is necessary to consider the nature of the creature whose good it directs” (*Introduction to Moral Theology*, 21).

- Unit 1 – Introduction to Moral Theology
- Unit 2 – The Nature of Man
- Unit 3 – The End of Man
- Unit 4 – Making Moral Choices
- Unit 5 – Freedom
- Unit 6 – Conscience

Unit 2 Podcast Schedule

- Episode #5 – Image of God
- Episode #6 – Faculties of the Soul
- Episode #7 – Man in Paradise
- Episode #8 – Sin: What Went Wrong

Episode #5 – Image of God

I. Introduction

1. Opening Question:
2. Last month, we defined the nature and difference of ethics and moral theology, the various sources of moral theology, and looked at the question of moral relativism.
3. This month, we are going to investigate the nature of the human person. As Romanus Cessario, O.P. says, “Since moral theology concerns the good of the human person, it is necessary to consider the nature of the creature whose good it directs” (*Introduction to Moral Theology*, 21).
4. This week, we are going to discuss the nature of man, and what it means to be made in the Image of God, and we will discuss the practical implications of each.

II. What is man? (see Rule of Life Episode #2 – What is Man?)

1. “The human body shares in the dignity of "the image of God" . . . it is the whole human person that is intended to become, in the body of Christ, a temple of the Spirit . . . man may not despise his bodily life. Rather he is obliged to regard his body as good and to hold it in honor since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day” (CCC 364).
2. Avoiding Two Reductionistic Extremes
 - a. Platonic/Cartesian Views – I am my soul.
 - b. Naturalistic/Materialistic Views – I am my body.
3. What is the proper view of man?
 - a. Philosophically – Man is a rational animal (his essence).
 - b. Biblically
 - i. The Bible reveals that humans have a material (Rom. 8:23) and spiritual (2 Cor. 11:3) nature.
 - ii. The Bible also reveals that humans will survive death (Mark 12:25).
 - c. Theologically – Man is a soul/body composite (soul animates the body).
 - i. Man is an animal (has a body) and he therefore has passions (appetites or desires) and emotions. However, man is also rational, and he therefore possesses an intellect and a will.

ii. Ludwig Ott – *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*

1. “Man consists of two essential parts: a material body and a spiritual soul” (106).
2. “The rational soul is per se the essential form of the body” (107).
3. “Every human being possesses an individual soul” (107).
4. “Every individual soul was immediately created out of nothing by God” (108).

iii. Why does this matter? When the Church teaches that we are made in the Image of God this does not only apply to the soul, but to the body as well. Therefore, though the soul takes precedence over the body, the soul expresses itself through the body, and the soul and body have reciprocal effects on each other.

III. Man: The Image of God

1. The *Imago Dei* – In order to account for the progressive character of Christian life and holiness, professional theologians distinguish several states or moments in which the human person bears the image of God.
 - a. The Natural Image of God – In the natural order (i.e. without grace), a person can only attain a degree of knowledge of God by reason and love of God as the source and end of good. This image would be examined in natural theology and ethics.
 - b. The Image of Grace – This is the supernatural image of God (i.e. with grace) and since moral theology is concerned to show how the human person created in the *imago Dei* attains the image of conformity which perdures unto everlasting life this image is the starting point of moral theology.
 - c. The Image of Glory – In glory, the *Imago Dei* reaches its final and fullest state when the soul beholds God face to face.
2. We will also discover that man’s biological, moral, and spiritual development also follows a similar threefold progression as well. Biologically, man develops from childhood to adolescence to adulthood. Morally, man moves from the stage of disciple to that of progress, and finally to perfection in freedom. Spiritually, man ascends through the purgative, illuminative, and unitive ways of the interior life.

III. Application:

1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
2. Just as we grow slowly and progressively in our biological development, we also grow slowly and progressively in our moral and spiritual development. We need a training regimen that will help us to maintain progress without burning us out. Just as disuse causes a muscle to atrophy, overuse can also cause deterioration. We need a moderate plan for growth so that we are constantly making progress, yet avoiding the pitfalls of extremes.

Episode #6 – Faculties of the Soul

I. Introduction

1. Opening Question: What powers come with being human?
2. Last week, we discussed the nature of man, and what it means to be made in the Image of God, and we will discuss the practical implications of each.
3. This week, we are going to discuss the four aspects of the human person and introduce you to the virtues that perfect each.

II. Faculties of the Soul

1. What is man?
 - a. Man is a soul/body composite (soul animates the body).
 - b. Man is an animal (has a body) and he therefore has passions (appetites or desires) and emotions.
 - c. Man is also rational and he therefore possesses an intellect and a will.
2. Faculties of the Soul
 - a. Faculty – An inherent mental or physical power
 - b. Appetite – The desire or striving of finite beings for some good
3. The Hierarchy of Being
 - a. God
 - b. Angels
 - c. Man – Rational Soul (ability to reason abstractly)
 - i. Theoretical (or Speculative) Reason – Our capacity for recognizing and knowing the truth.
 - ii. Practical Reason – Our ability to put theoretical knowledge into action – it is our capacity for determining how best to act on the basis of the truth we have comprehended.
 - d. Animals – Sensitive Soul
 - i. External Senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch
 - ii. Internal Senses – Common sense, imagination, estimative (or cogitative) power, memory, etc.)

- e. Plants – Vegetative Soul (ability to take in nourishment, grow, and reproduce)
 - f. Inanimate Objects
4. Four Aspects of the Human Person (and the virtues which perfect them)
- a. Intellect – The human faculty of understanding, judging, and reasoning (Prudence)
 - i. Speculative:
 - 1. Understanding
 - 2. Knowledge
 - 3. Wisdom
 - ii. Practical:
 - 1. Prudence
 - 2. Art
 - b. Will – The rational appetite for what one rationally apprehends as good. (Justice)
 - c. Irascible Appetite – A sense appetite for arduous goods. (Fortitude)
 - d. Concupiscible Appetite – A sense appetite for pleasurable goods. (Temperance)

III. Application:

- 1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
- 2. The mission of the St. Joseph Society to help men “To Order All Things to Christ” by growing strong in mind, body, and spirit. How has our reflection on the nature of the human person and the powers of the human soul reinforced the importance of our mission statement? We must be developing every area of our person in order to become the men that God wants us to be.

Episode #7 – Man in Paradise

I. Introduction

1. Opening Question: What was it like for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden?
2. Last week, we discussed the four aspects of the human person, and I introduced you to the virtues that perfect each.
3. This week, we are going to discuss the original state of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. We need to have a proper understanding of our original condition if we are going to be able to see what went wrong and how it can be made right.

II. Man in Paradise

1. Man in Paradise (CCC 374-379) – The first man was not only created good but was also established in friendship with his Creator and in harmony with himself and with the creation around him, in a state that would be surpassed only by the glory of the new creation in Christ.
2. Original Justice: The Condition of Adam & Eve
 - a. The Natural Gift
 - i. Existence in a particular created nature is always gratuitous and utterly unmerited. No one can lay claim to being called out of nothingness.
 - ii. Ludwig Ott – “Every individual soul was immediately created out of nothing by God” (*Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma*, 108).
 - b. The Supernatural Gift: Sanctifying Grace (Gen. 3:8-10)
 - i. The Council of Trent – “If anyone does not confess that Adam, the first man, by transgressing God’s commandment in paradise, at once lost the holiness and justice in which he had been constituted . . . let him be anathema” (DH 1511).
 - ii. Theology refers to this original gift of intimacy with God by the name of sanctifying grace which would have been accompanied by the three theological virtues—faith, hope, and charity—which flow from sanctifying grace. Without faith, hope, and charity, it is impossible to walk in friendship with God.
 - c. The preternatural gifts are proper to angelic nature, giving Adam and Eve four angelic privileges (which would have been transferred to their offspring):
 - i. Immortality - The gift of immortality can be gathered from the punishment of death attached to disobedience.
 - ii. Immunity from suffering

- iii. Infused knowledge - Infused knowledge is evident in the fact that Adam and Eve had some elevated knowledge of their Creator and His will.
- iv. Integrity - Immunity from the onslaught of disordered passions of the sense appetites. The lack of the gift of integrity is referred to as concupiscence.

III. Application:

1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
2. It is important to meditate on man's condition prior to the fall, because it helps us understand what God is attempting to restore in our sanctification and eventually, God willing, our glorification.

Episode #8 – Sin: What Went Wrong

I. Introduction – What’s wrong with the world?

1. Opening Question: The London Times once sent out an inquiry to famous authors, asking the question, “What’s wrong with the world today?” G.K. Chesterton responded simply, “Dear Sir, I am.”
2. Last week, we discussed the original state of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, because we need a proper understanding of our original condition if we are going to be able to see what went wrong and how it can be made right.
3. This week, we will discover the nature of our problem, and in the next few months, we’ll discover the solution.

II. Original Justice & Original Sin

1. Original Justice: The Condition of Adam & Eve in the Garden of Eden
 - a. The Natural Gift: Existence
 - b. The Supernatural Gift: Sanctifying Grace
 - c. The Preternatural Gifts: Immortality, Immunity from Suffering, Infused Knowledge, and Integrity.
2. Original Sin – “That privation of original justice inherited at birth” (*Handbook of Moral Theology*, Prummer, 69).
 - a. Original Sin (CCC 396-421) – God created man in his image and established him in his friendship. Man, tempted by the devil, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God's command. All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness. In that sin man preferred himself to God and by that very act scorned him (CCC 397-398).
 - b. What are the chief punishments of Adam which we inherit through original sin?
 - i. The chief punishments of Adam which we inherit through original sin are death, suffering, ignorance, and a strong inclination to sin. In short:
 1. The Natural Gift: Yes, we retain this gift.
 2. The Supernatural Gift & Preternatural Gifts: No, these have been lost through Original Sin.
 - ii. The fact of original sin explains why man is so often tempted to evil and why he so easily turns from God.
 - iii. Because of the ignorance resulting from original sin, the mind of man has difficulty in knowing many necessary truths, easily falls into error, and is more inclined to consider temporal than eternal things.

- iv. The penalties of original sin--death, suffering, ignorance, and a strong inclination to sin--remain after Baptism, even though original sin is taken away.
- v. Although we have a strong inclination to evil as a result of original sin, our nature is not evil in itself; it can perform some good actions in the natural order without the aid of grace.

3. The Remedy – Baptism (Ott, 377-381)

1. Baptism – “Baptism confers the Grace of Justification . . . Baptism effects:

- i. *the eradication of sins*, both original sin and, in the case of adults, also all personal, mortal and venial sins
 - ii. *inner sanctification* by the infusion of sanctifying grace, which the infused theological and moral virtues and the gifts of the Holy Spirit are always joined.
2. “Baptism by water is, since the promulgation of the Gospel, necessary for all men without exception, for salvation . . . In case of emergency Baptism by water can be replaced by Baptism of desire or Baptism by blood.”

III. Application:

1. Keep practicing the Rule of Life
2. We need to have a proper understanding of original justice and original sin, so that we can understand what issues we have all inherited from our first parents. You must have a clear understanding of the problem if you are going to understand the solution. As we will see next month, God made us to be perfectly happy with him in heaven for all eternity, but the road to glory must be traversed against the evil inclinations of our sinful nature. However, there is no reason to despair, because God has supplied every grace we need to over our threefold enemy: the world, the flesh, and the devil.