

## **The Special Creation of Adam and Eve: The Foundation of the Church's Teaching on Holy Marriage**

*Fr. Thomas Hickey*

Any definitive statement made by the Church regarding holy marriage has always been based on the historical reality of the special creation of Adam and Eve. As a result of the widespread skepticism today regarding the historicity of Genesis, the Church finds herself increasingly challenged to combat the societal trends that are undermining marriage and the family. There never has been any rational reason to doubt or dismiss the special creation of Adam and Eve as presented in Holy Scripture, and only if the Church can maintain and continue her unbroken affirmation of this truth can she hope to sustain her witness to the world of marriage as a divine institution.

The Nuptial Blessing in the Rite of Marriage beautifully states the foundation upon which a man and a woman are joined in Holy Marriage.

Father, by your plan man and woman are united, and married life has been established as the one blessing that was not forfeited by Original Sin or washed away in the flood.<sup>1</sup>

This short portion of the Blessing affirms what the Church has always taught and believed: marriage is a plan initiated by God in which a man and a woman are united in a blessing that predates sin. Furthermore, by referring to Original Sin and the flood, this prayer places the beginning of marriage in history. Marriage is thus not a human idea that slowly emerged from the mists of antiquity, but a fully-formed concept inaugurated by God Himself at the very beginning of time, as the same Nuptial Blessing states earlier.

Father, by your power you have made everything out of nothing. In the beginning you created the universe and made mankind in your own likeness. You gave man the constant help of woman so that man and woman should no longer be two, but one flesh, and you teach us that what you have united may never be divided.<sup>2</sup>

This prayer of the Church implies the special creation of Adam and Eve as the foundation of marriage, a doctrine made explicit in various authoritative declarations of the Church. It is no surprise, then, that when the special creation of Adam and Eve is no longer believed that the clear teaching of the Church on marriage begins to disintegrate.

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<sup>1</sup> The Rite of Marriage, English Translation Approved by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Confirmed by the Apostolic See, Catholic Book Publishing, 1970, par. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## The Foundation of Holy Matrimony

*When God created human beings, he made them in the likeness of God; he created them male and female. - Gen. 5:1-2*

Pope Leo XIII affirmed a universal understanding of marriage in the 1880 encyclical *Arcanum*, pointing to the “never-interrupted” teaching of the Church that accords with “the testimony of all nations and of all times.”

The true origin of marriage, venerable brothers, is well known to all. Though revilers of the Christian faith refuse to acknowledge the never-interrupted doctrine of the Church on this subject, and have long striven to destroy the testimony of all nations and of all times, they have nevertheless failed not only to quench the powerful light of truth, but even to lessen it. We record what is to all known, and cannot be doubted by any, that God, on the sixth day of creation, having made man from the slime of the earth, and having breathed into his face the breath of life, gave him a companion, whom He miraculously took from the side of Adam when he was locked in sleep. God thus, in His most far-reaching foresight, decreed that this husband and wife should be the natural beginning of the human race, from whom it might be propagated and preserved by an unending fruitfulness throughout all futurity of time.<sup>3</sup>

This universal teaching of the Church on the first marriage is inseparably linked to the creation of Adam “from the slime of the earth” (*de limo terrae*) and Eve from “the side of Adam.”<sup>4</sup> It must not escape notice that in both cases we are told of the creation of the *bodies* of Adam and Eve.<sup>5</sup> And beyond that, the Scriptures recount that Eve was specially created to be Adam’s wife and that Adam was “alone” until he became her husband.

The LORD God said: It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suited to him.... So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man, and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. The LORD God then built the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman. When he brought her to the man, the man said:

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<sup>3</sup> Pope Leo XIII, *Arcanum* 5.

<sup>4</sup> For an excellent presentation on this subject, see Fr. Maximilian Mary Dean, F.I. at <http://absoluteprimacyofchrist.org/appendix-ii-creation-of-adams-body>, accessed 9/8/2015.

<sup>5</sup> This precludes any speculation that the inspired account of our origins only deals with the creation of the *soul* of humanity. In fact, it would be hard to devise any language that could more adequately dismiss the notion that Adam and Eve were conceived in the womb of an ape-like creature.

*“This one, at last, is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
This one shall be called ‘woman,’  
for out of man this one has been taken.”*

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body. (Genesis 2:18, 21-24)

Jesus refers to this passage when questioned about divorce. He bases His argument for the indissolubility of the marriage bond on the fact that marriage is ultimately an act of God.

He said in reply, “Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’ and said, ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate. (Matthew 19:4-6)

When questioned as to why Moses allowed divorce, Jesus refers to “the beginning” as a fact of history that settled the matter: *from the beginning it was not so.* (Matthew 19:8)

That the special creation of Adam and Eve constituted the first marriage and that the Church has always believed this is beyond question in any Magisterial declarations. Fifty years after *Arcanum*, Pope Pius XI in *Casti conubii* referenced our Lord’s view of marriage, stating that it was based on the historicity of the marriage of Adam and Eve as the “prototype” of every marriage.

“What God hath joined together let no man put asunder,” must of necessity include all true marriages without exception, since it was spoken of the marriage of our first parents, the prototype of every future marriage.<sup>6</sup>

Though not in reference to marriage specifically, Pope Pius XII followed his predecessor in defending the special creation of Adam as a truth that should not be disputed.

For the faithful cannot embrace that opinion which maintains either that after Adam there existed on this earth true men who did not take their origin through natural generation from him as from the first parents of all, or that Adam represents a certain number of first parents. Now, it is in no way apparent how such an opinion can be reconciled that which the sources of revealed truth and the documents of the teaching authority of the Church proposed with regard to Original Sin which proceeds from a sin actually committed by an individual Adam in which through generation is passed onto all and is in everyone as his own.”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Pope Pius XI, *Casti conubii*, 34.

<sup>7</sup> Pope Pius XII, *Humani generis*, 37.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* continues this unbroken testimony of faith, quoting *Gaudium et spes* that states that marriage was “established by the Creator... God himself is the author of marriage.”<sup>8</sup> Thus the Church has always followed our Lord in linking marriage to creation, specifically the creation of Adam and Eve. This is abundantly evident and undeniable.

### **An Eroding Foundation**

*If foundations are destroyed, what can the just one do? - Psalm 11:3*

The Church has always been able to explain, defend, and uphold her teaching on the sanctity of marriage by referring to the foundation of marriage in the special creation of Adam and Eve. Pope Leo XIII specifically acknowledged this when he addressed the “revilers of the Christian faith [who] refuse to acknowledge the never-interrupted doctrine of the Church on this subject...”<sup>9</sup> He argued quite forcefully that when the doctrine of the original creation of Adam and Eve—as recounted in the inspired text of Holy Scripture—is dismissed or disbelieved, there is no basis for the Church’s teaching on marriage.

Pope Leo noted that the echoes of the first marriage, so to speak, have been heard throughout time, and thus marriages around the world have always carried a sacramental sense even among unbelievers.

Marriage has God for its Author, and was from the very beginning a kind of foreshadowing of the Incarnation of His Son; and therefore there abides in it a [sic] something holy and religious; not extraneous, but innate; not derived from men, but implanted by nature. Innocent III, therefore, and Honorius III, our predecessors, affirmed not falsely nor rashly that a sacrament of marriage existed ever amongst the faithful and unbelievers.<sup>10</sup>

In *Casti conubii* Pope Pius XI quotes Pope Leo as he too noted that the universal sense of the sacred is due to a divine imprint left upon marriage by God Himself.

Even by the light of reason alone and particularly if the ancient records of history are investigated, if the unwavering popular conscience is interrogated and the manners and institutions of all races examined, it is sufficiently obvious that there is a certain sacredness and religious character attaching even to the purely natural union of man and woman, "not something added by chance but innate, not imposed by men but involved in the nature of things," since it has "God for its author and has been even from the beginning a foreshadowing of the Incarnation of the Word of God."<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1603.

<sup>9</sup> *Arcanum*, 5, see above.

<sup>10</sup> *Arcanum*, 19.

<sup>11</sup> *Casti conubii*, 80.

However, both Popes noted that something was changing in the modern world. The divine echo or imprint of the first marriage was being ignored, marriage was being redefined, and the state invoked as the sole arbiter of what constitutes a marriage. Pope Leo lamented the “gradual extinction” of the ideal of marriage.

But, now, there is a spreading wish to supplant natural and divine law by human law; and hence has begun a gradual extinction of that most excellent ideal of marriage which nature herself had impressed on the soul of man, and sealed, as it were, with her own seal; nay, more, even in Christian marriages this power, productive of so great good, has been weakened by the sinfulness of man.<sup>12</sup>

And Pope Pius went even farther in condemning the attack on marriage which seeks to consign the Church’s teaching on marriage to the status of an “antiquated opinion.”

For now, alas, not secretly nor under cover, but openly, with all sense of shame put aside, now by word again by writings, by theatrical productions of every kind, by romantic fiction, by amorous and frivolous novels, by cinematographs portraying in vivid scene, in addresses broadcast by radio telephony, in short by all the inventions of modern science, the sanctity of marriage is trampled upon and derided; divorce, adultery, all the basest vices either are extolled or at least are depicted in such colors as to appear to be free of all reproach and infamy.... The doctrines defended in these are offered for sale as the productions of modern genius... which... considered to have *emancipated* itself from all those old-fashioned and immature opinions of the ancients; and to the number of these antiquated opinions they relegate the traditional doctrine of Christian marriage.<sup>13</sup>

There can be no mistaking the urgent tone of these encyclicals as they warn the faithful against the assault on marriage and its consequences. Pope Leo XIII called attention to the “efforts of the archenemy of mankind” which endangered both the moral and the social fabric of the “commonwealth.”

Yet, owing to the efforts of the archenemy of mankind, there are persons who, thanklessly casting away so many other blessings of redemption, despise also or utterly ignore the restoration of marriage to its original perfection. It is a reproach to some of the ancients that they showed themselves the enemies of marriage in many ways; but in our own age, much more pernicious is the sin of those who would fain pervert utterly the nature of marriage, perfect though it is, and complete in all its details and parts.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Arcanum*, 27.

<sup>13</sup> *Casti conubii*, 45.

<sup>14</sup> *Arcanum*, 16.

No one, therefore, should wonder if from such insane and impious attempts there spring up a crop of evils pernicious in the highest degree both to the salvation of souls and to the safety of the commonwealth.<sup>15</sup>

When the Christian religion is [rejected] and repudiated, marriage sinks of necessity into the slavery of man's vicious nature and vile passions, and finds but little protection in the help of natural goodness. A very torrent of evil has flowed from this source, not only into private families, but also into States.<sup>16</sup>

Pope Pius XI excoriated the “neo-paganism” of the “enemies of marriage,” full of “reckless opinions.”

These enemies of marriage go further, however, when they substitute for that true and solid love, which is the basis of conjugal happiness, a certain vague compatibility of temperament.<sup>17</sup>

The advocates of the neo-paganism of today have learned nothing from the sad state of affairs, but instead, day by day, more and more vehemently, they continue by legislation to attack the indissolubility of the marriage bond, proclaiming that the lawfulness of divorce must be recognized, and that the antiquated laws should give place to a new and more humane legislation.<sup>18</sup>

Opposed to all these reckless opinions, Venerable Brethren, stands the unalterable law of God, fully confirmed by Christ...<sup>19</sup>

Pope Pius identified the source of these modern attacks on “the uninterrupted Christian tradition”<sup>20</sup> of marriage.

To begin at the very source of these evils, their basic principle lies in this, that matrimony is repeatedly declared to be not instituted by the Author of nature nor raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a true sacrament, but invented by man... How grievously all these err and how shamelessly they leave the ways of honesty is already evident from what we have set forth here regarding the origin and nature of wedlock, its purposes and the good inherent in it.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Arcanum*, 25.

<sup>16</sup> *Arcanum*, 27.

<sup>17</sup> *Casti conubii*, 78.

<sup>18</sup> *Casti conubii*, 85.

<sup>19</sup> *Casti conubii*, 87.

<sup>20</sup> *Casti conubii*, 56.

<sup>21</sup> *Casti conubii*, 49-50.

If marriage is believed to be “invented by man,” then the biblical account of the first marriage cannot be believed. The modern attacks on marriage are thus attributable to a denial of the divine origin of marriage in the special creation of Adam and Eve, a truth that could only be known by the divine revelation contained in Holy Scripture. Pope Pius ties this denial of the supernatural origin of marriage to the inherent limitations of natural science.

They are greatly deceived who having underestimated or neglected these means which rise above nature, think that they can induce men by the use and discovery of the natural sciences, such as those of biology, the science of heredity, and the like, to curb their carnal desires. We do not say this in order to belittle those natural means which are not dishonest; for God is the Author of nature as well as of grace, and He has disposed the good things of both orders for the beneficial use of men. The faithful, therefore, can and ought to be assisted also by natural means. But they are mistaken who think that these means are able to establish chastity in the nuptial union, or that they are more effective than supernatural grace.<sup>22</sup>

The Pope further distinguishes between this legitimate pursuit of science and that which is only a “vener of science” used to promote ideas contrary to the teaching of the Church.

Books are not lacking which dare to pronounce themselves as scientific but which in truth are merely coated with a veneer of science in order that they may the more easily insinuate their ideas.... These thoughts are instilled into men of every class, rich and poor, masters and workers, lettered and unlettered, married and single, the godly and godless, old and young, but for these last, as easiest prey, the worst snares are laid.<sup>23</sup>

He goes on to accuse “the latter day subverters of marriage” of using this “vener of science” to make “a mockery of matrimonial purity.”

... the latter day subverters of marriage are entirely devoted to misleading the minds of men and corrupting their hearts, to making a mockery of matrimonial purity and extolling the filthiest of vices by means of books and pamphlets and other innumerable methods...<sup>24</sup>

The inescapable conclusion of Pope Pius XI’s stern warning was that the Church needed to address the bad science of the day that was wreaking so much havoc. And so far, the Church has only rather timidly attempted anything in that direction. Since the Pope’s warnings have proven their validity in the current state of marriage and the family, it seems imperative that the Church

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<sup>22</sup> *Casti conubii*, 101.

<sup>23</sup> *Casti conubii*, 45-46.

<sup>24</sup> *Casti conubii*, 106.

today courageously peel back the “vener of science” that continues to fuel the assault on this most foundational pillar of human life.

### **The Cause of the Erosion**

*While claiming to be wise, they became fools. - Rom. 1:22*

Today, the faithful are taught that the opening chapters of Holy Scripture are a myth or a poetic story, not to be taken literally. One need only peruse the notes and commentary in the various Catholic Study Bibles to see that the account of the creation of Adam and Eve in Genesis is not believed to be an accurate history of our origins. Indeed, various forms of critical study have arisen to try to contrive a *genre* or to devise a cultural context that can excuse the biblical author for creating a story that isn't true. The mantle of infallibility is passed to the world of science to tell us the truth about our origins, even though the domain of science is limited to what can be observed and tested, and any speculation about events no one observed in the past can only be called theorizing at best.

There were voices from men of clear thinking, great learning, and strong faith who saw beneath the “vener of science” that in the nineteenth century proposed a supposedly more believable account of our origins drawn from the well of evolutionary thought. Orestes Brownson<sup>25</sup> was one such voice who wrote with great alarm of the faulty logic, flawed science, and philosophical absurdity he found in the writings of Charles Darwin.

We have read Mr. Darwin's books with some care, and, though not an absolute stranger to the subject he treats, or to the facts he narrates, we are a little surprised that even a professed scientist could put forth such a mass of unwarranted inductions and unfounded conjectures as science.<sup>26</sup>

He went so far as to call Darwin “imbecile” in his reasoning ability.

In reading Mr. Darwin's books before us, while we acknowledge the vast accumulation of facts in the natural history of man and animals, we have been struck with the feebleness of his reasoning powers. He does not seem to possess, certainly does not use, the simplest elements of the logical understanding, and apparently has no conception of what is or is not proof. He does not know how to reduce facts to their principles, and never, so far as we have been able to discover, contemplates them in the light of the principles on which they depend; but looks

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<sup>25</sup> Orestes Brownson (1803-1876) was one of the greatest Catholic apologists in the history of the United States—some would say the greatest. A convert to the Catholic Faith, Brownson entered the Church after having earned a stellar reputation as an original writer and thinker, a member of the intellectual circle that included Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. His Review offered a bold and uncompromising defense of the Catholic Faith which earned the respect and admiration of the entire episcopate. On May 13, 1849, Brownson received a letter from Bishop Kenrick of Philadelphia, signed by the Archbishop of Baltimore and by all of the American Bishops in attendance at the Council of Baltimore in 1849, to encourage him by their “approbation and influence” to continue his “literary labors in defense of the faith.”

<sup>26</sup> *Brownson's Quarterly Review*, July 1873.

at them only in the light of his own theories, which they as often contradict as favor. Patient as an observer, he is utterly imbecile as a scientific reasoner.<sup>27</sup>

Brownson was one of a vanishing breed of intellectuals who realized that science and philosophy cannot and must not be divorced from one another. If a scientific theory contradicts philosophical first principles then it can never be true and in fact will never be validated by empirical evidence. Brownson astutely recognized that Darwin's theories redefined progress into a philosophical absurdity.

We will only add here, that progress is motion forward, if taken literally, and is, if taken figuratively, an advance from the imperfect toward the perfect and necessarily demands a principle or a beginning, a medium, and an end, none of which can be asserted without the supposition of a Creator, who in his creative act is at once all three. You must have a starting-point from which progress moves, an end toward which it moves, and a medium in and by which it moves. These three things are essential, and without them progress is inconceivable: and these three are all independent of the progressive subject. There can, then, be no progress without God as its first and last cause, and the divine creative act as its medium, and even then progress only in the line of the specific nature of the progressive subject, whether man or animal. The transformation of one species into another, no matter by what means, would not be progress, but the destruction of one species and the production of another, a higher species if you will, but not the progressive development of a lower species.<sup>28</sup>

In our own day, Fr. Chad Ripperger<sup>29</sup> has likewise refuted Darwin on philosophical grounds, as has Jeffrey Bond.<sup>30</sup> Bond succinctly notes that "Darwin is confused about the metaphysical order of things when he argues that more being can evolve from less, that an effect can be superior to its own cause, and that the parts are greater than the whole."<sup>31</sup> It should be no surprise, then, that the theory of evolution which starts from an absurd premise is unable to sustain itself by empirical evidence.

Darwin's theory of evolution, like the modern scientific outlook which gave birth to it, begins with the rejection of everything but empirical evidence, but ends by ignoring empirical evidence altogether. Modern science fails to see that its own arbitrary first principle - that empirical evidence alone is valid - cannot itself be established empirically. Because form cannot be weighed or measured, modern science rejects it out of hand. But the final result of this hubristic rejection is that

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Fr. Chad Ripperger, FSSP, *the Metaphysics of Evolution*, ISBN 9783848215508.

<sup>30</sup> See <http://kolbecenter.org/a-philosophical-critique-of-darwins-the-origin-of-species>, accessed 9/8/2015.

<sup>31</sup> Jeffrey Bond, A Philosophical Critique of Darwin's *The Origin of the Species*. See note above.

modern science is reduced to speaking nonsensically, since it will not accept that which every child grasps immediately and surely: that dogs are dogs, and not cats... Indeed, by denying the existence of an intuitive faculty of the soul which can grasp self-evident first principles, modern scientists have necessarily lost their ability to reason, to imagine, and even to sense.<sup>32</sup>

Bond cites the French entomologist Jean-Henri Fabre, who as a contemporary of Darwin noted the faults and flaws of Darwin's observations and conclusions. Fabre acknowledged what Darwin was seeking to deny—that all valid science leads us to the Creator.

Fabre... whom Darwin himself called the "incomparable observer," ... along with St. Thomas and Aristotle, recognized that the study of natural science culminates in the proof of the existence of God, for there is no other way to account for the intelligence exhibited by organisms which themselves are utterly lacking in any intelligence.<sup>33</sup>

One can only ponder why these critiques dating from Darwin's own generation were ignored. Brownson called out this supposed science for what it was—an attack on the Christian faith.

Mr. Darwin, though his theory is not original with him, and we were familiar with it even in our youth, overlooks the fact that it denies the doctrine of the creation and immutability of species, as taught in Genesis, where we read that God said: "Let the earth bring forth the green herb, and such as may seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, which may have seed in itself upon the earth. And it was done." "And God created the great whales and every living and moving creature which the waters brought forth, according to their kinds, and every winged fowl according to its kind." "And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds, and cattle, and everything thing that creepeth on the earth." Genesis I, 11,21,25.<sup>34</sup>

He likewise indicated how the Church should have responded to this attack. The burden of proof was on Darwin and his followers, a proof they have never been able to produce.<sup>35</sup>

Now this doctrine, the doctrine of the whole Christian world, and which stands directly opposed to Mr. Darwin's theory, is, as say the lawyers, in possession, and therefore to be held as true until the contrary is proved. It is not enough, then, for Mr. Darwin to set forth his theory and ask us as Christians, as believers in

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Brownson, op. cit.

<sup>35</sup> For an excellent and thorough examination of evolutionary claims, see John M. Wynne, *A Catholic Assessment of Evolutionary Theory, Weighing the Scientific Evidence in light of Thomistic Principles and Church Teachings on Origins*, ISBN 9780692013304, also Fr. Victor P. Warkulwiz, MSS, *The Doctrines of Genesis 1-11, A Compendium and Defense of Traditional Theology of Origins*, ISBN 9780595452439.

Genesis, to accept it, unless able to disprove it; nor is it enough for him even to prove that it may be true. The *onus probandi* is on him who arraigns the faith and convictions of the Christian world, which are the faith and convictions of enlightened and living mankind. He must prove his theory not only may be, but is, true, and prove it with scientific or apodictic certainty, for only by so doing can he oust the Christian doctrine from its possession, or overcome the presumption in its favor; and till he has ousted and made away with that doctrine, his theory cannot be legally or logically entertained even as a probable hypothesis. This he hardly pretends to have done. As far as we can discover, he does not claim apodictic certainty for his theory, or profess to set it forth for anything more than a probable hypothesis, which he leads us to suspect he hardly believes himself. But in the present case we must prove it to be true and indubitable, or he has no right to publish it at all, not even as probable; for probable it is not, so long as it is not certain that the Christian doctrine in possession is false.<sup>36</sup>

That those in the Church have failed in this responsibility and instead almost daily seek to bend, accommodate, and ignore long-held truths of the faith in order to appease what was conceived as a godless attack on the Church is evidence perhaps that we have lost our faith. Indeed, it could be said of us today what was said of Israel of old: *They exchanged their glory for the image of a grass-eating bull.* (Psalm 106:20) We seem not to have the courage to stand and face this attack and argue with sound reasoning and clear conviction that our God has not left us believing a lie for centuries. We have forgotten that the Church alone has the promise of infallibility, as Brownson observed: "...no one has any right to assail or contradict the Christian faith, unless he has infallible authority for the truth of what he alleges in opposition to it. And this no scientist has or can have."<sup>37</sup>

### **The Effects of the Erosion**

*But when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth? - Luke 18:8*

There is a reason that the modern mind is inclined to believe a lie about the truth over the truth about a lie. Fifty years after Darwin, almost everyone was convinced that fossil evidence had confirmed Darwin's theories. That much of the evidence had been falsified and all of the rest would eventually be dismissed when peer reviewed was not yet known, and lamentably is still not known today by those who claim to be well-informed on the subject. Thus G. K. Chesterton in 1908 allowed that evolution may have validity as a biological theory, but he noted in agreement with Brownson that it was, and is, philosophically untenable.

Evolution is a good example of that modern intelligence which, if it destroys anything, destroys itself... it is an attack upon thought itself. If evolution destroys anything, it does not destroy religion but rationalism... it means that there is no

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

such thing as an ape to change, and no such thing as a man for him to change into. It means that there is no such thing as a thing.”<sup>38</sup>

It is strikingly curious that the Catholic Church is one of the only places where one is required to study philosophy, and yet so few in the Church have used philosophical principles to refute the errors of the age. This could well be because the loss of reason required to embrace evolutionary theory has affected virtually all of modern philosophy to the point of absurdity. Nothing can be argued rationally from any of the modern approaches to philosophy, while anything that is old is automatically dismissed simply because it has not evolved.

It would be bad enough if the theory of evolution only contradicted the Genesis account of our origins. But Darwin’s speculation has leapt out of the field of biology and insinuated itself in almost every sphere of study in our world today. Once the premise of evolution was imbibed—that the incredible complexity of life could be attributed to natural forces acting over time with no direction or cause—then the world was left to fantasize that everything improves with an accumulation of changes over time. Change became the new god that made everything better.<sup>39</sup> There was no longer any reason to look to first causes, for anything in the past was *a priori* more primitive, i.e. less evolved.

This explains how the Scriptures could be laid aside, for they were deemed to be the work of less sophisticated minds of the past. The doctrines of the Church could be ignored or refashioned, for they too had to change to become something better. That God could create a perfectly-ordered universe solely by His Will was not allowed to be believed. The universe had to have slowly evolved from something prior and less ordered. And the Scriptures themselves could not be attributed to divine inspiration; they too had to have evolved from prior material.

And thus was born the *coup de grace* to the history of our origins. The Documentary Hypothesis emerged from the morass of evolutionary thinking. The Pentateuch was thus imagined to have evolved from pre-existing material. Despite the almost total lack of evidence of any pre-existing “sources,” the book of Genesis was virtually shredded in the hearts and minds of the faithful. We “discovered” that we did not have in our hands the only infallible account of our origins, but a compilation of competing legends that evolved at the hand of redactors into a quaint story that had very little to do with reality.

As with Darwin’s theory in his day, there have been, and still are today, those courageous individuals who have not lost their ability to reason from actual evidence, and who have called attention to the bankruptcy of the Documentary Hypothesis. R. K. Harrison in his massive *Introduction to the Old Testament* notes the influence of evolutionary thought in the biblical

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<sup>38</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *Orthodoxy*, ch. 3. See <http://www.leaderu.com/cyber/books/orthodoxy/ch3.html>, accessed 9/8/2015.

<sup>39</sup> The author recalls a day a few years ago when teaching a course on Applied Ethics in a secular college, a student offered a definition of marriage learned in a sociology class on campus. It went something like “two people who love each other and have agreed to live a committed relationship.” When I noted to the class that this was a new definition of marriage never before known in the history of mankind, the class virtually all shrugged their shoulders as if to say, “So what?” My mistake was in calling it “new.”

scholarship that followed Darwin: “However, other equally notable scholars were far from being convinced of the merits of many aspects of the evolutionary position that had been set out so plausibly by Wellhausen.”<sup>40</sup> And Umberto Cassuto, one of the most respected scholars of the Hebrew Bible in the twentieth century, was a lifelong critic of the “evolutionary” hypothesis of the JEDP sources of the Pentateuch. In his book defending the integrity of the Hebrew text he loved, an introductory remark by another Hebrew scholar summarizes Cassuto’s own view.

Rarely have such grandiose theories of origination been built and revised and pitted against one another on the evidential equivalent of the head of a pin; rarely have so many worked so long and so hard with so little to show for their trouble.<sup>41</sup>

As an example of the extremes to which “such grandiose theories” can go, Hahn and Wiker tell of nineteenth century German Bible scholar Johann Eichhorn’s “rational retelling of irrational myths.”

So, for example, behind the Adam and Eve story, there was, suggested Eichhorn, a couple who had become aware of their sexuality after eating slightly poisoned fruit, and who had been consequently frightened away from their garden oasis by a thunderstorm that they interpreted as divine displeasure.<sup>42</sup>

Such confusion about a true account of our origins has had devastating effects in the hearts of the faithful. What happens to their faith when they are told by Bible scholars, priests, and even bishops that Adam and Eve were not real historical figures and then hear the words of the Roman Canon “Be pleased to look upon the offerings... and to accept them as once you were pleased to accept the gifts of your servant Abel the just...?” If Adam and Eve never existed, then Abel is some mythical figure who never really offered anything to God in worship. What, then, are we doing at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as we pray that what is before us on the altar may be accepted by God in the same manner as a sacrifice that never happened? And what of baptism? If Adam never existed, then what is Original Sin, and why are we baptized?

Is it any wonder that there is such widespread doubt among Catholics about the Real Presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist? Should we really be surprised that most Catholics who have been taught that Adam never existed do not bother coming to Holy Mass, that far too many of them are not getting married in the Church, and that families are in such turmoil? And for those who have somehow been able to reconcile the practice of their faith with what they believe to be a myth at its base, can we really fault them for openly dissenting from clear Church teaching and ignoring the authoritative declarations of the past? And how effectively can we expect our priests to proclaim the Gospel and defend the teachings of the Church when in seminary their

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<sup>40</sup> R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Prince Press, originally published by Eerdmans Publishing, 1969, p. 23.

<sup>41</sup> Meir Sternberg, quoted the Introduction to Umberto Cassuto, *the Documentary Hypothesis and the Composition of the Pentateuch*, Shalem Press, 2006, p. vii.

<sup>42</sup> Scott W. Hahn and Benjamin Wiker, *Politicizing the Bible the Roots of Historical Criticism and the Secularization of Scripture 1300-1700*, Crossroads Publishing, 2013, p. 559f.

minds are riddled with doubt about the truth of what we say we believe? Well did the apostle Paul speak: *And if the bugle gives an indistinct sound, who will get ready for battle?* (1Corinthians 14:8)

Whatever new definitions the Church needs to write in response to the challenges to marriage today, they cannot and must not be something that changes the nature of marriage altogether. We must go back to the origin of marriage as infallibly revealed by the Author of marriage. If we are not willing to believe that Adam is indeed the first human being and that Eve was drawn from his side for the purpose of forming the first marriage and family, then we will find no solid basis from which we can reason and deliberate. The counsel of St. Vincent of Lerins should surely be heeded by those today who have the responsibility for the oversight of souls, souls that are brought into being through the loving embrace of a man and a woman.

The religion of souls should follow the law of development of bodies. Though bodies develop and unfold their component parts with the passing of the years, they always remain what they were. There is a great difference between the flower of childhood and the maturity of age, but those who become old are the very same people who were once young. Though the condition and appearance of one and the same individual may change, it is one and the same nature, one and the same person... If, however, the human form were to turn into some shape that did not belong to its own nature, or even if something were added to the sum of its members or subtracted from it, the whole body would necessarily perish or become grotesque or at least be enfeebled. In the same way, the doctrine of the Christian religion should properly follow these laws of development, that is, by becoming firmer over the years, more ample in the course of time, more exalted as it advances in age. In ancient times our ancestors sowed the good seed in the harvest field of the Church. It would be very wrong and unfitting if we, their descendants, were to reap, not the genuine wheat of truth but the intrusive growth of error. On the contrary, what is right and fitting is this: there should be no inconsistency between first and last, but we should reap true doctrine from the growth of true teaching, so that when, in the course of time, those first sowings yield an increase it may flourish and be tended in our day also.<sup>43</sup>

May our gracious Lord grant us the faith not to innovate, but to develop what we have been given to believe.

*Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us!*  
*St. Joseph, Guardian of the Holy Family, pray for us!*  
*St. Maximilian Kolbe, patron of families, pray for us!*

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<sup>43</sup> St. Vincent of Lerins, from *Commonitorium* as found in the Office of Readings for Friday of the 27th week of Ordinary Time.