


Catholic Religious Education: The Human Being as part of Creation

Author

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Abstract

The aim of the seminar session is to introduce the students to the biblical creation narratives (Gen 1:1 - 2:25). The focus is on the question of the creation of man as woman and man - the uncovering of exciting, contradictory, and possibly surprising things in the text. The students were asked to grasp the text as a narrative, critically questioning their prior knowledge and understanding. The relationship of the sexes to each other, as outlined in the creation accounts, is then counter-read and reflected with their own experiences of being a woman and a man.

Timescale

One lecture (approximately 90 minutes)

Key Terms

Creation narratives

Key competences / Learning outcomes

A deeper understanding of the biblical creation narratives:

Critical-reflective approach to biblical sources,

Critical-reflective approach to the question of womanhood and manhood,

Critical and reflective approach to the question of the relationship of the sexes to each other,

Verbalising own experiences.



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Teaching Steps

Teaching Steps			
Phase/ Time	Approach	Method	Social Form/ Tasks for Students
Introducti on 5min	Introduction, presentation of the topic, and explanation of the Reading assignment. Handing out the reading material.	Course by the lecturer	Plenum
Thinking phase I 15min	The students first read and edit the text in Individual work. In a first partner work, the results are reviewed and discussed with each other.	Text work	Individual work Partner work
Discussion 25min	The students present to each other the results of the Partner work. The insights and results are presented under the headings: -being-a-woman -being-a-man -being-human clustered and bundled with a view to today's situation.	Exchange and Discussion in the group	Plenum
Thinking phase II Discussion 45min	The students thought about the question of what it means being a woman or a man means to them - what they like about it and what they experience/have experienced as problematic. The students exchange their results in plenary and reflect on their experiences against the background of the biblical creation narratives.	Presentation and Discussion	Individual work Plenum

Material and Texts

Worksheet on the creation narratives Gen 1:1 - 2:25



The Book of Genesis, Chapter 1

The beginnings: 1,1 - 2,25

Related to the human being:

What stands out? What irritates?

What is unclear? What is clear?

Who is acting? Who speaks? What is exciting?

What is boring?

The creation of the world

- Gen 1,1** In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;
- Gen 1,2** But the earth was desolate and confused, darkness lay over the primeval flood, and God's spirit hovered over the waters.
- Gen 1,3** God said: Let there be light. And it became light.
- Gen 1,4** God saw that the light was good. God separated the light from the darkness
- Gen 1,5** and God called the light Day and the darkness He called Night. And there was evening, and there was morning: the first day.
- Gen 1,6** Then God said, "Let a vault be formed in the midst of the waters and separate the waters of water.
- Gen 1,7** So God made the vault and separated the water below the vault from the water above the vault. Thus it came to pass
- Gen 1,8** and God called the vault heaven. And there was evening, and there was morning: the second day.
- Gen 1,9** Then God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, that dry things may be seen. And so it was done.
- Gen 1,10** God called the dry land and the accumulated water he called the sea. God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1,11** Then God said, Let the land grow young green, every kind of plant that bears seed, and of trees that bear fruit on the earth with their seed in it. Thus it came to pass.
- Gen 1,12** The land brought forth young green, all kinds of plants bearing seed, all kinds of trees bearing fruit with their seed in them. God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1,13** And there was evening, and there was morning: the third day.
- Gen 1,14** Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night. They shall be signs and for the determination of feasts, of days and years serve;



- Gen 1,15** they shall be lights in the firmament of the heavens, shining above the earth. Thus it came to pass.
- Gen 1,16** God made the two great lights, the greater which rules over the day, the lesser which rules over the night, even the stars.
- Gen 1,17** God set the lights in the firmament of the heavens to shine upon the earth,
- Gen 1,18** rule over day and night and separate the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1,19** And there was evening, and there was morning: the fourth day.
- Gen 1,20** Then God said, Let the waters swarm with living creatures, and let birds fly above the land in the firmament of the heavens.
- Gen 1,21** God created all kinds of large sea creatures and other living creatures with which the water teems, and all kinds of feathered birds. God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1,22** God blessed them and said: Be fruitful and multiply and populate the waters of the sea and let the birds multiply on the land.
- Gen 1,23** And there was evening, and there was morning: the fifth day.
- Gen 1,24** Then God said, Let the land bring forth every kind of living creature, of cattle, and of creeping things, and of beasts of the field. So it came to pass.
- Gen 1,25** God made all kinds of beasts of the field, all kinds of cattle and all kinds of creeping things on the face of the earth. God saw that it was good.
- Gen 1,26** Then God said: Let us make man in our image, in our likeness. They shall have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, over the cattle, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.
- Gen 1,27** So God created man in his own image; in the image of God he created him. As man and woman he created them.
- Gen 1,28** God blessed them and God said to them: Be fruitful and multiply, populate the earth, subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over all the animals that stir on the land.
- Gen 1,29** Then God said: I hereby give you all the plants on the face of the whole earth that bear seed, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit. They shall serve you for food.
- Gen 1,30** To all the beasts of the field, to all the birds of the air and I give all green plants for food to everything that stirs on earth, that has the breath of life in it. This is how it happened.
- Gen 1,31** God looked at everything he had made: it was very good. It was evening and it was morning: the sixth day.

The Book of Genesis, Chapter 2

- Gen 2,1** Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their structure.



- Gen 2,2** On the seventh day God finished the work he had created, and he rested on the seventh day after he had finished all his work.
- Gen 2,3** And God blessed the seventh day, and declared it holy: for in it God rested, having finished all the work of creation.
- Gen 2,4** This is the History of the creation of heaven and earth when they were created. At the time when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,
- Gen 2,5** **Paradise** there were no bushes yet on the earth, and no field plants yet grew; for the Lord God had not yet caused it to rain on the earth, and there was not yet a man to till the ground;
- Gen 2,6** but moisture came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the field.
- Gen 2,7** Then the Lord God formed man from the earth of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Thus man became a living being.
- Gen 2,8** Then the Lord God laid out a garden in Eden, in the east, and placed there the man whom he had formed.
- Gen 2,9** The Lord God caused all kinds of trees to grow out of the ground, tempting to look at and with delicious fruit, but in the middle of the garden the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- Gen 2,10** A river rises in Eden to water the garden; there it divides and becomes four main rivers.
- Gen 2,11** One is called Pishon; it is he who flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.
- Gen 2,12** The gold of that land is good; there is also bdellium resin there.
- Gen 2,13** The second river is called Gihon; it is it that flows around the whole land of Cush.
- Gen 2,14** The third river is called the Tigris; it is the river that flows east past Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.
- Gen 2,15** So the Lord God took man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.
- Gen 2,16** Then the Lord God commanded the man: Of every tree of the garden you may eat,
- Gen 2,17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you must not eat, for as soon as you eat of it you will die.
- Gen 2,18** Then the Lord God said: It is not good that man should remain alone. I will make him a help meet for him.
- Gen 2,19** The Lord God formed from the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air and brought them to man to see what he would name them. And as man named every living thing, so it should be called.



- Gen 2,20** Man gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air and to all the beasts of the field. But a help that corresponded to man found he does not.
- Gen 2,21** Then the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, so that he fell asleep, and took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh.
- Gen 2,22** The Lord God built a woman from the rib he had taken from man and brought her to man.
- Gen 2,23** And the man said, This at last is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she is taken from Man.
- Gen 2,24** Therefore a man leaves his father and mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.
- Gen 2,25** Both Adam and his wife were naked, but they were not ashamed in front of each other.



Glossary

Important terms for students

Encounter learning:

Encounter learning refers to the didactically guided and accompanied topic-centred exchange between participants who are as similar in status as possible in a framework that is limited in terms of content, time and space (safe space), which provides for multi-perspective reflection processes taking into account a conflict hermeneutics that lead to the initiation of content-related and process-related competences.

The project "Sharing Worldviews: Encounter Learning for common Values in Diversity" is based on a 4-phase concept of Encounter Learning: preparation, presentation, exchange and reflection.

Worldviews:

The concept of **Worldviews** has various culturally determined meanings. In our project we use it as "Worldviews" (individual or collective perspective on the world):

World interpretation (dt.: Weltdeutung) Refers to the fundamental anthropological existential that man brings his fellow man, his environment and himself into an explanatory and interpretive context, regardless of whether this context has religious, spiritual or secular connotations.

World view (dt.: Weltbild) Coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, of the development of life and the structure of the universe, of a certain image of man and history etc. from a certain theoretically underpinned (e.g. scientific or mythological etc.) perspective.

Worldviews (dt.: Weltsichten/ Weltansichten/ Perspektiven auf die Welt) Individual or collective perspective on the world. Worldviews as perspectives can also be shaped by influences (events, media, etc.).

Worldview (dt.: Weltanschauung) Refers to a coherent overall conception of the whole of reality, which shapes one's perception of reality and in turn shapes that perception. Beyond 'worldviews', they are embedded in a specific framework of thought and action and thus also include evaluative statements and corresponding options for action. Worldviews unite their adherents into a secular community (e.g. humanism, atheism, materialism).

Such an understanding of worldview is shaped in Europe by the Enlightenment, which sought to free itself from traditional communities (such as religions) and grant the individual more independence from them.

