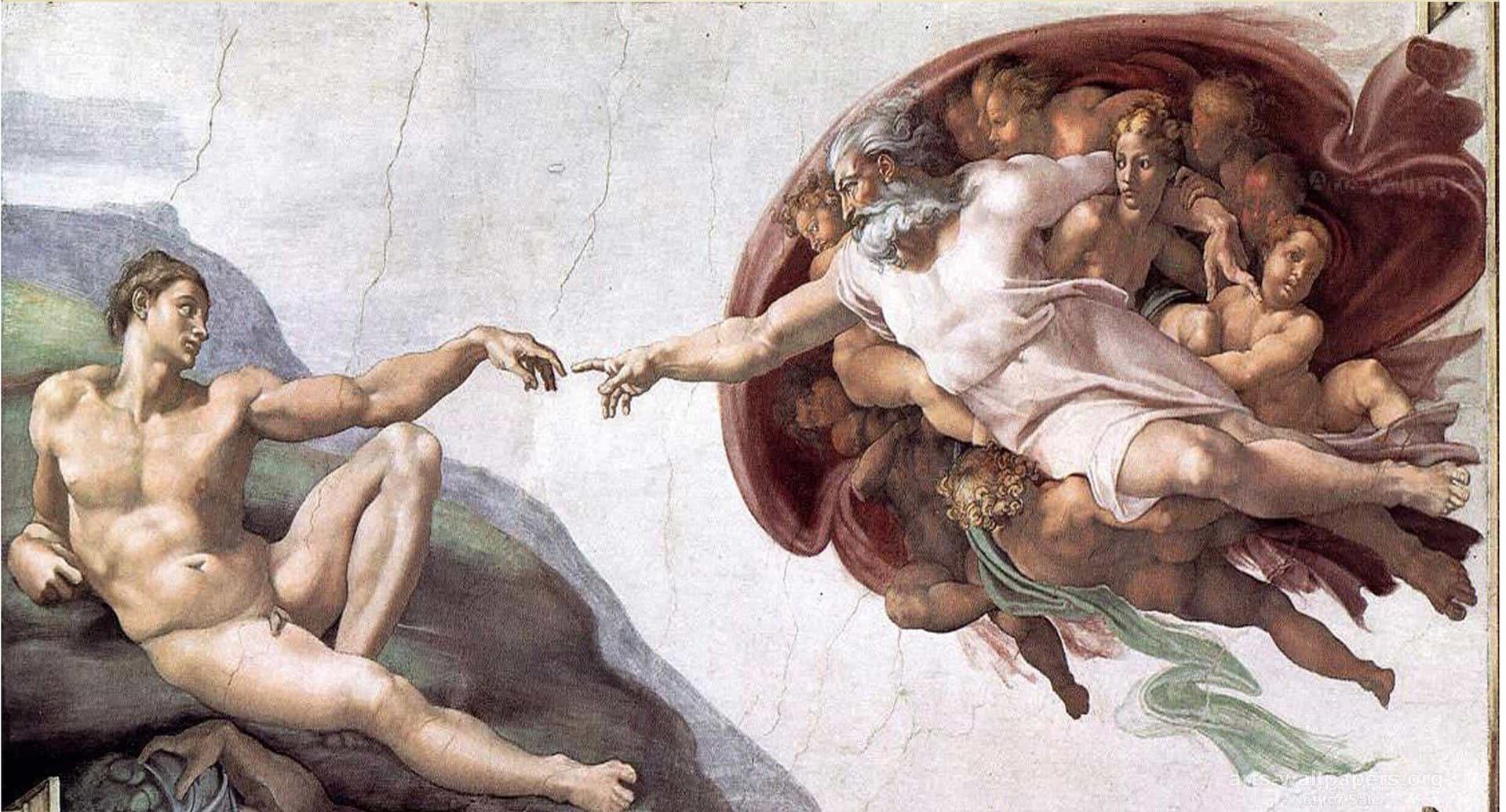


Christian Anthropology: Man in the Modern World



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The Leonine Forum

- Purpose: “To cultivate an emerging generation of virtuous leaders and empower them to form fully integrated lives of faith in order to apply the Social Teachings of the Church within their professional and civic lives” and “reintroduce the tenets of those teachings into political, policy, legal, business and cultural activities of society.”
- Basic pillars of the Leonine Experience: worship and spiritual development, study of Catholic Social Teaching, friendship and community, loving service of neighbor.
- More on the Study pillar
 - Basic methodology: Learning the foundations of Catholic Social Teaching and applying them practically and effectively to current situations
 - Introduction to Magisterial Documents. Literary form. Numbering.
 - Questions and Dialogue



An Adequate Anthropology

- The “isms” of the 20th Century
 - e.g., Nazism and Communism, but materialism, hedonism, individualism, relativism, atheism
- The ante-preparatory commission for Vatican II
 - Responding to the yearnings, questions and provisional answers of persons today and responding to modern despair.
- Wojtyla’s *Person and Act* and phenomenological personalism
- *Gaudium et Spes* 22 and 24
 - GS 22: [Christ] fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear
 - GS 24: Man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself
- The Church’s Mission in the World



An Adequate Christian Anthropology

- We can focus on ten elements:
 1. The person is a creature
 2. The person is fundamentally good
 3. The person is one in soul and body (*corpore et anima unus*)
 4. The person is the image of God
 5. The original differentiation between man and woman
 6. The person has and seeks transcendence
 7. The person has a conscience
 8. The person is a moral agent
 9. The person has inalienable dignity and inalienable rights flowing from that dignity.
 10. The mystery of human suffering and death



Various Anthropological Confusions

- Reductionistic understandings of human anthropology
 - Metaphysical problems
 - Epistemological problems
 - Ethical problems
- Problems with identity
- Problems with regard to love and human sexuality
- Problems with work
- Problems with suffering



Application Questions

- “Human beings seem now to find themselves at a special juncture in their history, in unchartered territory, as they deal with questions both old and new regarding the meaning of human life, its origin and destiny. The key feature of this moment is, in a word, the rapid spread of a culture obsessively centered on the mastery of human beings – individually and as a species – over reality. Some have even spoken of an *egolatry*, a worship of the self, on whose altar everything is sacrificed, even the most cherished human affections. This approach is far from harmless, for it induces people to gaze constantly in the mirror, to the point of being unable to turn their eyes away from themselves and towards others and the larger world. The spread of this approach has extremely grave effects on every affection and relationship in life” (Pope Francis’ October 5, 2017 Address)
- What are the most conspicuous manifestations of this *egolatry* in the culture of young adults in the US today?
- What are the first steps in the evangelization of those who worship themselves?



Application Questions

- “Today, there is great need of a theology of creation and redemption capable of finding expression in words and acts of love for each life and the whole of life, in order to accompany the Church’s pilgrim path in this world. The Encyclical *Laudato Si’* is one sign of this renewed attention to the way God and man regard our world, starting from the revelation found in the first chapters of the Book of Genesis. There we learn that each of us is a creature *willed and loved by God for his or her own sake*, not merely a combination of cells organized and selected by a process of evolution. All creation is in some way part of God’s special love for human creatures, a love extending to every generation of mothers, fathers and children. God’s original blessing and his promise of an eternal destiny are the basis of the dignity of every life; they are meant for everyone. The men, women and children who make up the peoples of the earth are the life of the world that God loves and desires to save, without exception. The biblical account of creation needs to be read and reread, in order to appreciate the breadth and depth of the loving action of the God who entrusts creation and history to the covenant of man and woman.” (*Pope Francis’ October 5, 2017 Address*)
 - How do God and people today regard our world similarly? How do God and people today regard our world differently?
 - Where are the aspects of the breadth and depth of God’s loving action in the biblical account of Creation that faithful Catholics need to read and re-read?



Application Questions

- “The covenant between man and woman is called to be a guiding force for society as a whole. We are invited to be responsible for the world, in the realms of culture and politics, in the world of work and economic life, as well as in the Church. This is not merely a matter of equal opportunities or mutual appreciation. It involves the way men and women understand the very meaning of life and human progress. They are called not only to speak to one another *about* love, but to speak *with* love about what needs to be done so that the human community can take shape in the light of God’s love for all his creatures.” (*Pope Francis’ October 5, 2017 Address*)
 - How is the family meant to guide society as a whole, to guide politics, culture, work and the economy?
 - How ought this be done today effectively – with the wisdom of evangelical “serpents” – in an age when there are so much confusion about the family and “families”?



Application Questions

- “A new start must be made in the ethos of peoples, and this can be achieved through a new culture of identity and difference. The recent proposal to advance the dignity of a person by radically eliminating sexual difference and, as a result, our understanding of man and woman, is not right. Instead of combatting wrongful interpretations of sexual difference that would diminish the fundamental importance of that difference for human dignity, such a proposal would simply eliminate it by proposing procedures and practices that make it irrelevant for a person’s development and for human relationships. But the utopia of the “neuter” eliminates both human dignity in sexual distinctiveness and the personal nature of the generation of new life. The biological and psychological manipulation of sexual difference, which biomedical technology can now make appear as a simple matter of personal choice – which it is not! – runs the risk of dismantling the energy source that feeds the covenant between man and woman, making it creative and fruitful.” (*Pope Francis’ October 5, 2017 Address*)
 - How have you experienced, in your professional work situation, in your family, among your friends, the promotion of the “utopia of the ‘neuter?’”
 - How can we positively advance a “new culture of identity and difference”?



Application Questions

- “A fervent concern to accompany and care for life requires, in the history of individuals and societies, a constantly renewed ethos of compassion and tender love for the birth and rebirth of humanity, in all its differences. We need first to become sensitive once more to the *different stages of life*, especially of *children and the elderly*. Their frailties, their infirmities and their vulnerability are not exclusively the concern of medicine and health care. They also have to do with the soul and with human needs that must be recognized and taken into account, protected and esteemed, by individuals and the community alike. A society that considers these things as buyable and sellable, bureaucratically regulated and technically managed, is one that has already lost its sense of the meaning of life. It will no longer pass on that meaning to its young, or revere it in its aging parents. Almost without realizing it, we have now started to build cities increasingly unfriendly to children and communities increasingly unwelcoming to the elderly. They have walls but no windows or doors; meant to protect, they in fact stifle. Faith’s witness to *God’s mercy*, which refines and perfects all justice, is an essential condition for the growth of compassion between generations. Without that mercy, the culture of the secular city is defenceless before the deadening and decay of the human spirit.” (Pope Francis’ October 5, 2017 Address)
- What are the particular needs of the soul for children and the elderly that must be protected and esteemed?
- How is a clear sense of the “meaning of life” supposed to influence for the better bureaucratic systems of health care and medicine?
- Have you seen particularly timely examples of intergenerational mercy – or can you imagine them – that could defend the secular city before the “deadenning and decay of the human spirit?”



Bibliography

- **Foundational documents of CST on anthropology**
 - *Gaudium et Spes*, 12-39
 - *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 105-159
 - *Redemptor Hominis*, 7-17
 - *Veritatis Splendor*, 6-27
 - *Laborem Exercens*, 4-10, 24-27
 - *Fides et Ratio*, 7-35
 - *Evangelium Vitae*, 39-47
 - Pope Francis, Audience with Participants in the Plenary Meeting of the Pontifical Council for Culture, November 18, 2017

- **Contemporary documents and articles showing the relevance of those principles**
 - Peter Kreeft, *Why a Christian Anthropology Makes a Difference*
 - Cardinal Gianfranco Ravasi, *The Future of Humanity: New Challenges to Anthropology*
 - John Allen, *“Where does Catholic thinking on ‘Gender Theory’ Go from here?”*
 - Benjamin Vail, *“The Battle Over the Sexes: Catholic Perspectives on the Gender Debate*



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Welcome!

I warmly welcome you to this website, put together at the insistence and with the assistance of friends.

During my diaconal ordination, Cardinal Edmund Szoka gave me the following instruction from the Ordination Rite as together we gripped the Book of the Gospels:

*"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are.
Believe what you read.
Teach what you believe.
Practice what you teach."*

Those words have never lost their resonance.

Since that day -- October 8, 1998 -- I have tried to live up to that commission to be a "herald of the Gospel," by striving to teach what the Church believes, to practice what I preach to others, and to spread with joy and enthusiasm the truth Christ has entrusted to His church -- in and out of season, in and out of the pulpit.

This website is a chronicle of those attempts.

It constitutes the "five loaves and two fish" (or even less!) that I have placed into the hands of the Lord as an attempt to feed a hungry crowd, confident that, if He wishes, He can multiply and supplement that meager offering to nourish many more (Jn 6:1-14).

In Christ,
Fr. Roger J. Landry

Most Recent Homilies

- Bearing Fruit Attached to the Vine, 12th Wednesday (II), June 27, 2018
- Following the Lead of the Precursor, Solemnity of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 2018
- Placing Our Heart and Treasure in God, 11th Friday (II), June 22, 2018
- Longing to See God's Face in Prayer and in Others, 10th Friday (II), June 15, 2018
- The Surpassing Righteousness of Christ-like Merciful Love, 10th Thursday (II), June 14, 2018
- Greatest in the Kingdom, 10th Wednesday (II), June 13, 2018

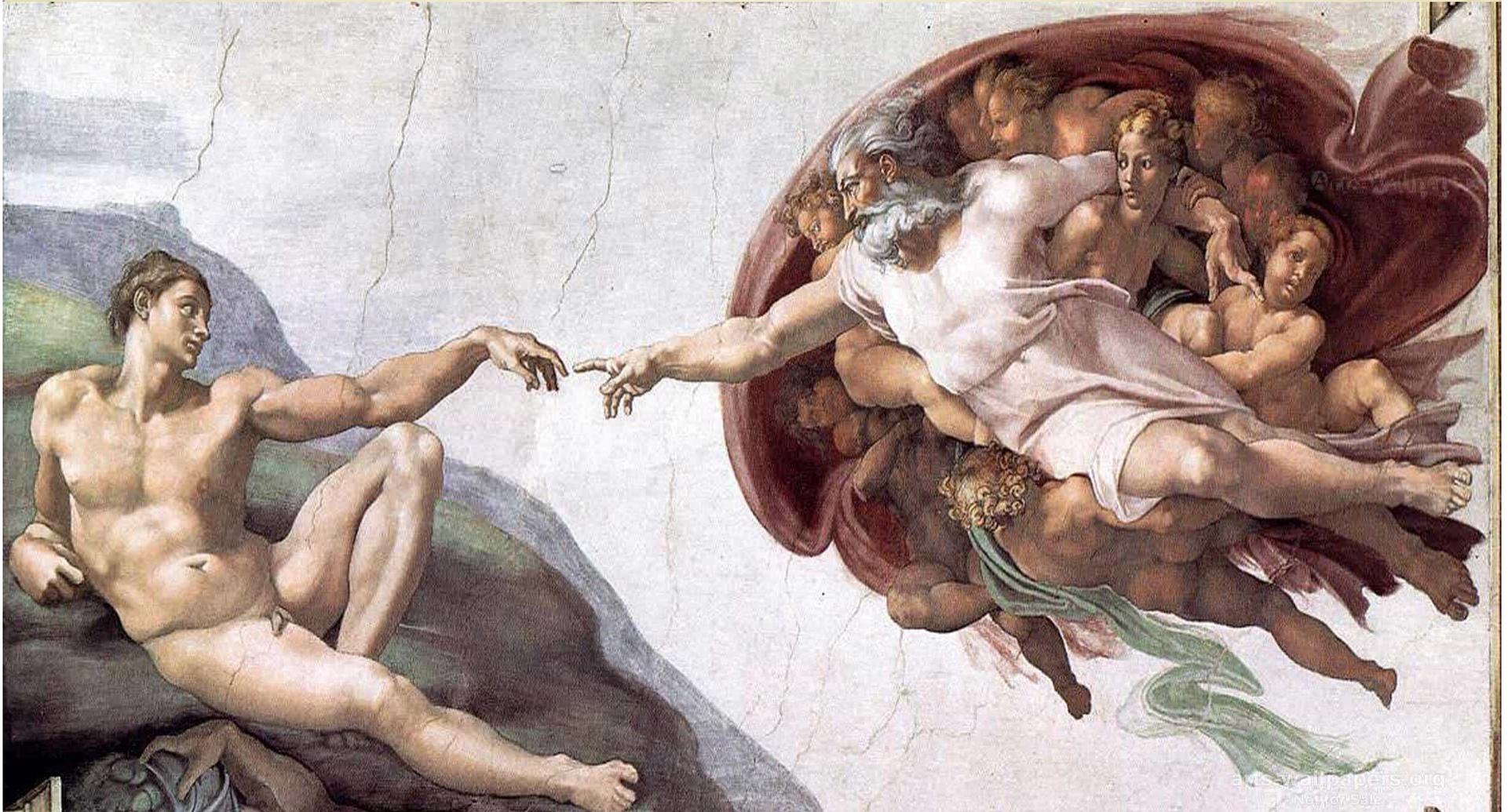
Most Recent Articles

- The Secular Push to Get Priests to Break the Seal, The Anchor, June 29, 2018
- Approaching the Suicide Surge with Honesty and Resolve, The Anchor, June 15, 2018
- The Abortion Exception to the Practice of Discrimination, The Anchor, June 1, 2018
- The Contemporary Attack on Motherhood, The Anchor, May 18, 2018
- The Euthanasia of Alife Evans, The Anchor, May 4, 2018
- "Do Not Be Afraid of Holiness," The Anchor, April 20, 2018

Most Recent Talks

- The Church and International Diplomacy, Acton University, June 20, 2018
- The Entrepreneurial Vocation, Acton University, June 20, 2018
- The Social Teaching of Pope St. John Paul II, Acton University, June 20, 2018
- The Necessity and Art of Trinitarian Prayer, Catholic Medical Association Boot Camp, June 18, 2018
- Christ, the Redeemer of Marriage: Living and Proclaiming the Gospel of the Sacramentality of Marriage at a Time When Sex, Love,

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Questions and Discussion