

Season of Creation: Creating Cover Art and Stations of Creation

Join us on Sunday for a conversation about creating cover art and a Stations of Creation for the Season of Creation, Sept 1 to Oct 4.

Stations of Creation (Via Creationis - The Way of Creation)

INTRODUCTION TO THE "VIA CREATIONIS"

WHAT: Similar to how the Via Crucis commemorates the mystery of the Passion, the Via Creationis commemorates the mystery of Creation. It does so by reading side by side the two sacred books that God wrote: *liber scripturae* and *liber naturae*, the Book of Scripture and the Book of Nature, as St. Augustine and other saints have taught throughout history. By reading both books together we gain a richer appreciation of the great mystery of God's creation of the cosmos.

WHY: As Christians, we have put so much emphasis in our understanding of God as Redeemer (mostly because of theological controversies between denominations in past centuries) that we have neglected the importance of God as Creator. Leaders from different Christian denominations have flagged this, calling for more attention to God's nature as Creator and to the great mystery of Creation. The Via Creationis helps us to prayerfully ponder this mystery and praise our Creator for the marvels of Creation.

WHERE: Similar to our Stations of the Cross, the Stations of Creation will use the walls of the sanctuary. North Wall: The First Three Days: God Creates the Environments.
South Wall: The Second Three Days: God Creates the Inhabitants of the Environments.
Altar: The Seventh Day

WHEN: The Season of Creation (Sept 1 till Oct 4) is a particularly special time to pray with the Stations of Creation.

HOW: Parameters: Images depicting each station (as nature photographs, nature objects, paintings, or homemade artworks) on tabloid sized paper (11x17 inches) that can be placed on the sanctuary walls using binder clips and twine.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE: Reading side-by-side the Book of Genesis and the Book of Creation (via our scientific instruments) by no means implies that both readings match each other. They are different genres and different methods, not meant to match.

This understanding is emphasized by the following facts: (1) On one hand, Genesis 1 is not a literal description of the process of Creation, nor it is meant to be *the* exclusive biblical account of the process of Creation, as there are other Creation stories with different sequences – such as Genesis 2 or the Book of Job (each of them shedding light on different aspects about the mystery of Creation). Of course, Genesis 1 is the most famous one, as it is the Bible's opening chapter, which is why it is featured in the Via Creationis. (2) On the other hand, the Big Bang is a scientific theory and it might change in the future, but it is the best

possible theory at this point in time (2024 AD) with the instruments scientists have available to "read" the Book of Nature; same applies to the other aspects of the state of scientific knowledge.

The majority of Christian denominations warmly welcome the scientific insights about the epic of cosmic evolution. For example, the Catechism of the Catholic Church of 1992 states: "Scientific studies have splendidly enriched our knowledge of the age and dimensions of the cosmos, the development of life-forms and the appearance of humans. These discoveries invite us to even greater admiration for the greatness of the Creator." Bottom line, our extraordinary scientific discoveries require new pastoral resources and devotions for Christians of the 3rd millennium – and this is a humble attempt to help fill that gap.

The First Day: Day and Night

A reading from the Book of Genesis

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

A reading from the Book of Nature

Facilitator to lead a reflection about scientific insights regarding light and the Big Band, and/or sensorial mediation perceiving light in your surroundings.

The Second Day: Sky and Oceans.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

And God said, "Let there be a dome in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters." So God made the dome and separated the waters that were under the dome from the waters that were above the dome. And it was so. God called the dome Sky. And there was evening and there was morning, the second day.

A reading from the Book of Nature

Facilitator to lead a reflection about scientific insights regarding the sky, and/or sensorial mediation perceiving air, breeze, and sky.

The Third Day: Land and Vegetation.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

And God said, "Let the waters under the sky be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear." And it was so. God called the dry land Earth, and the waters that were gathered together he called Seas.

And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let the earth put forth vegetation: plants yielding seed, and fruit trees of every kind on earth that bear fruit with the seed in it." And it was so. The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it.

And God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, the third day.

A reading from the Book of Nature

Facilitator to lead a reflection about scientific insights regarding Earth and plants,

and/or sensorial mediation perceiving Earth and plants in your surroundings.

The Fourth Day: God Creates the Sun for the Day and Moon and Stars for the Night.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

And God said, "Let there be lights in the dome of the sky to separate the day from the night; and let them be for signs and for seasons and for days and years, and let them be lights in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth." And it was so. God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night—and the stars. God set them in the dome of the sky to give light upon the earth, to rule over the day and over the night, and to separate the light from the darkness.

And God saw that it was good.

And there was evening and there was morning, the fourth day.

A reading from the Book of Nature

Facilitator to lead a reflection about scientific insights regarding celestial bodies,,

and/or sensorial mediation contemplating celestial bodies, depending on your time of the day.

The Fifth Day: God Creates the Birds in the Sky and Fish in the Oceans.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

And God said, "Let the waters bring forth swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the dome of the sky." So God created the great sea monsters and every living creature that moves, of every kind, with which the waters swarm, and every winged bird of every kind.

And God saw that it was good.

God blessed them, saying, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth."

And there was evening and there was morning, the fifth day.

A reading from the Book of Nature

Facilitator to lead a reflection about scientific insights regarding water and air creatures, and/or sensorial mediation listening to birds and/or observing water creatures.

The Sixth Day: God Creates Animals and Humankind on the Land.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures of every kind: cattle and creeping things and wild animals of the earth of every kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals of the earth of every kind, and the cattle of every kind, and everything that creeps upon the ground of every kind.

And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food."

And it was so.

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

A reading from the Book of Nature

Facilitator to lead a reflection about scientific insights regarding land creatures,

and/or sensorial mediation observing insects and other land creatures, depending on your setting.

The Seventh Day: God Rests from Work.

A reading from the Book of Genesis

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done.

So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

A reading from the Book of Nature

Facilitator to lead a reflection about scientific insights regarding rest, naps, sleep, down time, Sabbath, and/or sensorial mediation on rest.